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Relæ: A Book Of Ideas



Synopsis

Chef Christian F. Puglisi opened restaurant Relæ in 2010 on a rough, run-down stretch of one of Copenhagen's most crime-ridden streets. His goal was simple: to serve impeccable, intelligent, sustainable, and plant-centric food of the highest quality "in a setting that was devoid of the pretension and frills of conventional high-end restaurant dining. Relæ was an immediate hit, and Puglisi's "œto the bone" • ethos "which emphasized innovative, substantive cooking over crisp white tablecloths or legions of water-pouring, napkin-folding waiters" became a rallying cry for chefs around the world. Today the Jægersborggade "where Relæ and its more casual sister restaurant, Manfreds, are located" is one of Copenhagen's most vibrant and exciting streets. And Puglisi continues to excite and surprise diners with his genre-defying, wildly inventive cooking. Relæ is Puglisi's much-anticipated debut: like his restaurants, the book is honest, unconventional, and challenges our expectations of what a cookbook should be. Rather than focusing on recipes, the core of the book is a series of interconnected "œidea essays," which reveal the ingredients, practical techniques, and philosophies that inform Puglisi's cooking. Each essay is connected to one (or many) of the dishes he serves, and readers are invited to flip through the book in whatever sequence inspires them "from idea to dish and back to idea again. The result is a deeply personal, utterly unique reading experience: a rare glimpse into the mind of a top chef, and the opportunity to learn the language of one of the world's most pioneering and acclaimed restaurants.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

And it's filled not only with ideas, but tips and advice, recommendations, how-to's, lessons learned, and food for thought. But you won't find recipes per se until you reach the Appendix towards the end of the book. So, for the first 370 pages, you will find no ingredient lists, just somewhat general discussions of what the chef did to create the dish, and explanations of the flavors and techniques used. Often there are no quantities or times given. Yeah, like I said, a very different approach to a "cookbook". If you are an "advanced" cook, you will find this book unique and very helpful, and as such, definitely worthy of your time. If you are fairly new to cooking, or if you need to follow recipes exactly, you might find yourself lost and floundering and not sure how to make use of all that the book has to offer. If you need your recipes detailed out, there are 65 of them in the Appendix, plus some "basics". It is a beautiful book. It is well-written. It is a new concept in teaching the "how-to" of cooking and creating wonderful food. In a way, it is a lot like going into the kitchen of the "cooking matriarch" in your family, watching over her shoulder, listening carefully to her words, writing down some notes, then going home and trying to re-create what you learned. I love that about it's style! When considering this book, do not forget that it is a restaurant cookbook. And, like all restaurant cookbooks, the chef has the very best of ingredients at hand, a very well-equipped kitchen, plenty of helpers to do the prep work, plenty of pots and pans and plenty of dishwashers.... You get the idea..... (I got a beautiful, fresh bunch of young turnips at the market the other day. I looked in this book for ideas.

I can't believe the amount of information in it for the price. It starts with some general essays about his philosophy and restaurant history, then there are 175 pages of essays on everything from how he uses different textures, to meats, water (benefit of filtered water vs. tap for example), influences, land, ways he manipulates things, and it goes on and on. Every topic gets a page write up. Then he puts the recipes and page numbers at the bottom that deal with the topic (idea) he is referring to. Then he gets to the dishes. He write a page or so on every dish, explaining its process, influence, and whatever else is applicable. I think an experienced cook could cook from the essays he writes on each dish (kinda like the l'Astrance cookbook). There are about 70 dishes. After all of this, he then gives you detailed recipes for every dish he just wrote about. All 70 or so with weight measurements and very specific details. Every recipe also comes with a thumbnail of the dish so you can also remember what it looks like without needing to flip back and forth. This book is probably set up better than almost any other book I have. So much information, laid out so clearly (the ideas section even has those half moons cut outs on the sides of the pages to help you flip to a section,

like a big dictionary would have to help you find the letter you are looking for). This book is over 400 pages and every page is packed. Very little extra photographs of stuff for the sake of looking artsy. Ability to cook from it?

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