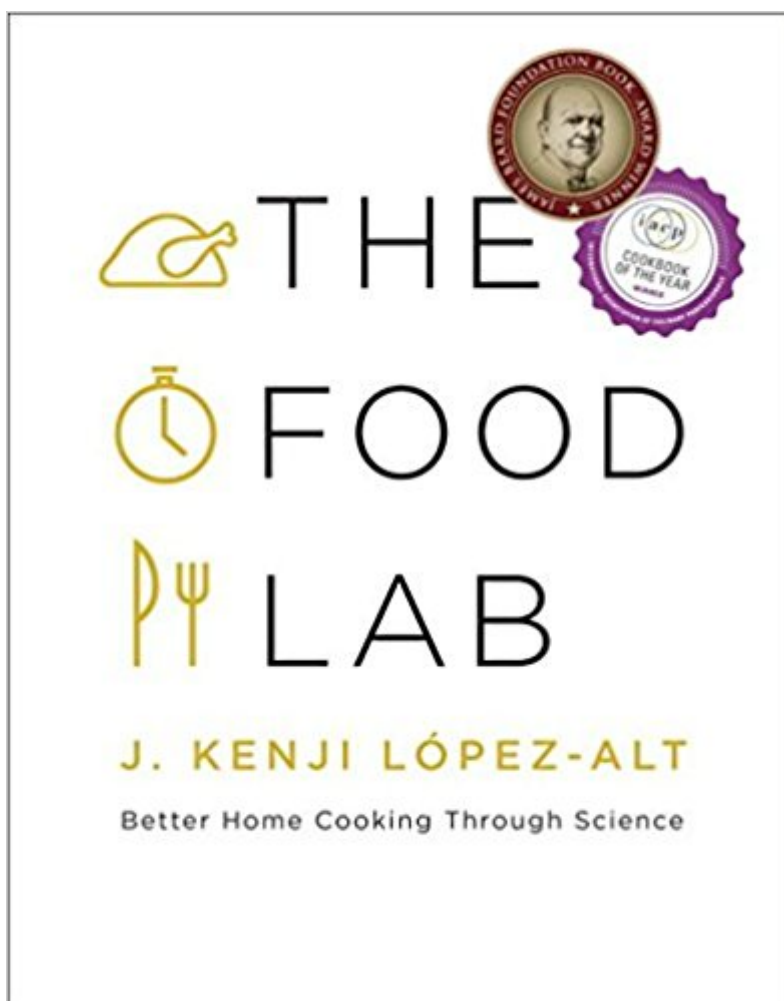


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# The Food Lab: Better Home Cooking Through Science



## Synopsis

The New York Times bestselling winner of the 2016 James Beard Award for General Cooking and the IACP Cookbook of the Year Award. A grand tour of the science of cooking explored through popular American dishes, illustrated in full color. Ever wondered how to pan-fry a steak with a charred crust and an interior that's perfectly medium-rare from edge to edge when you cut into it? How to make homemade mac 'n' cheese that is as satisfyingly gooey and velvety-smooth as the blue box stuff, but far tastier? How to roast a succulent, moist turkey (forget about brining!) and use a foolproof method that works every time? As Serious Eats's culinary nerd-in-residence, J. Kenji López-Alt has pondered all these questions and more. In *The Food Lab*, Kenji focuses on the science behind beloved American dishes, delving into the interactions between heat, energy, and molecules that create great food. Kenji shows that often, conventional methods don't work that well, and home cooks can achieve far better results using new—but simple—techniques. In hundreds of easy-to-make recipes with over 1,000 full-color images, you will find out how to make foolproof Hollandaise sauce in just two minutes, how to transform one simple tomato sauce into a half dozen dishes, how to make the crispiest, creamiest potato casserole ever conceived, and much more. Over 1000 color photographs

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“The one book you must have, no matter what you’re planning to cook or where your skill level falls.” - Cree Lefavour, New York Times Book Review  
“You need *The Food Lab*, as J. Kenji Lopez-Alt’s magnum opus is 2015’s most indispensable

cookbook. — Kevin Pang, The Chicago Tribune — “I love The Food Lab.” — Yotam Ottolenghi, BBC Good Food Magazine — “The ultimate book for science nerds who cook.” — Joanna Pearlstein, Wired — “Loaded with fascinating information.” | Lopez-Alt gives you enough science for the explanations to make sense, but everything is still firmly rooted in practical home cooking. — Russ Parsons, Los Angeles Times — “Five years in the making, [The Food Lab is] a culmination of the wunderkind’s unlikely ascent into a cultish figure and the face of a new kind of home cooking.” — Tara Duggan, San Francisco Chronicle — “An authoritative, instant-classic reference book that’s also an engaging read.” — Rebekah Denn, Seattle Times — “[Kenji] approaches recipe development with monomaniacal zeal, then shares the delicious results with the infectious enthusiasm of the coolest teacher you had in high school.” — Eric Vellend, The Globe and Mail — “The Food Lab is a keeper.” — Chris Kimball, Wall Street Journal

J. Kenji Lopez-Alt is the managing culinary director of SeriousEats.com, author of the James Beard Award-nominated column The Food Lab, and a columnist for Cooking Light. He lives in San Mateo with his wife Adriana.

I have been waiting for this book to come out and it exceeds my expectations! "The Food Lab" by Lopez-Alt is a dense collection of science based tips, explanations, techniques, and recipes for the home cook. This is a must have reference and cookbook for home cooking enthusiasts. I really like the way this book has been laid out:- The introduction is a modest overview of the author and his background followed by some really helpful information on equipment (such as an explanation on techniques for holding knives, how heat transfers through metal for consideration in what type of pan to use, essential equipment to have in your kitchen, and how to store and organize your fridge and pantry).- Recipes in subsequent chapters are divided by meal type. Technique tips and explanations are dispersed through the recipes in every chapter. \* The breakfast chapter is lengthy and starts with explaining eggs - their composition and properties related to how they change when they cook, whether brown eggs are healthier than white eggs, how to hard or soft boil an egg,... and much more. There is a great range of recipes including numerous egg dishes, bacon, pancakes, biscuits, and hot chocolate. \* Soups and Stews has an in depth explanation of stock followed by recipes including black bean soup, tomato soup with grilled cheese, chicken, and dumplings, chili, and French onion soup. \* Meat recipes characterized by how to "Fast Cook" in 30 minutes or less for a variety of steak, pork chops, chicken, and fish recipes. \* Cooked Vegetables has a great range

of side dishes such as Brussels sprouts, Mexican street corn salad, roasted cauliflower, mashed potatoes, glazed carrots, and quite a few more recipes. \* The Ground Meat chapter explains not only how to grind your own meat, but how to season it as well as recipes for making and cooking sausage, meat loaf, and burgers. \* There is a Roasts chapter for poultry, lamb, and pork. There is a ton of great instructions and tips in this chapter that could be used for making a Thanksgiving meal (with recipes of course as well). \* The Pasta chapter covers details around boiling pasta and how he tested different techniques to determine the best way to cook pasta. Recipes in this chapter include mac 'n' cheese, risotto, linguine with clams, lasagna, and spaghetti. \* The Salad chapter emphasizes picking the right types of greens, the complimenting salad dressing tastes, and accompanying textures to add to make a perfect salad. This chapter has recipes such as tomato and mozzarella salad, iceberg wedge, beet and goat cheese salad, potato salads, and coleslaw. \* The final Frying chapter covers types of oil to fry with and different types of vessels to fry in. Recipes included here are French fries, chicken, fish, and onion rings.- The front and back book covers insides have conversion tables to be opened or flipped to quickly as a reference. This book is over 900 pages and has a ton of photos both for techniques and presentations. The author's tone is filled with humor and is not pretentious. The explanations are really clear and educational. I will be updating this review further as I make recipes within the cookbook. I recommend this book to all experience levels of cooks as well as science-minded people.

I've been reading Kenji's column since it started, and have learned so much and made so many of his recipes. So, I know they work. I know his recipes are excellent and that he's someone you can trust implicitly to have a great version of a dish. And this book is great, and beautiful, full of photos, his great sense of humor, and excellent instructions. The thing is, I was slightly disappointed that it is very much more of an all-American, sort of new, scientific, Joy of Cooking. Some of my favorite articles from Serious Eats involve Kenji's Asian, Mexican, and vegetarian/vegan recipes. Now he did include some of his vegan work, and his wonderful chile verde is in here, but there are no stir-fries, no tacos, and his absolutely stellar kale salad with crispy chickpeas was passed in favor of two others which are excellent, but really, that salad is AMAZING. Or his black bean burger, which is the absolute best black bean burger on the planet. But whatever, that's not the point. I was just hoping to see more of that type of food, whereas this book is targeted towards beginners (not to say that experienced cooks can't get value out of this book, because it's full of great info) or more specifically, towards people who haven't been reading his column all this time. Having said all that, I have to review the book on its own merits and how could I possibly give such a stellar tome

anything but 5 stars?! There is no fault to be found with the information provided or how engaging it is to read. Even the quality of the book, with lovely binding meant to last and meant to make the book truly a workhorse that doesn't just look pretty sitting on a coffee table is worth commending!! I'll just have to wait for future books to cover the things I miss from this book. Though in the meanwhile, there are already recipes I've got bookmarked to try out, like his puttanesca, pot roast, oven fries, THAT MEATLOAF, not to mention his excellent egg salad, which I've previously made from the site. I'm so glad to be able to pay Kenji back in some form for the years of free content on Serious Eats and I would recommend this book to anyone with an interest in cooking and improving their skills, in particular beginner cooks. But really, go check out his column on Serious Eats, too. ;) His pie dough, chocolate chip cookies, fish tacos, crispy chicken with white beans and chile verde, chop suey, fried avocado tacos, and his vegan experience (CRISPY TOFU) recipes (AND MORE) are all remarkable!

This book is a monster. At almost 7 pounds and nearly a thousand pages, you can bet that it is comprehensive. Like most cookbooks today, it begins with a background of the author, who is an MIT grad turned culinary scientist. He goes on to discuss gear and technique as well as recommendations for essentials- all pretty standard so far. Though I do appreciate that he adds a premium and budget pick for each gear recommendation. J. Kenji Lopez-Alt then launches into a nine-part collection of recipes. Each one is well-documented with technique and experimentation as the author discusses how and why he made the recipes the way he did. There are some things which go contrary to cooking norms (flip your steak often, and searing does not lock in juice), but there are explanations for the methods behind the madness. I appreciate that this book not only has full-color photos and in-depth articles accompanying each recipe, but it really builds on fundamentals of cooking. Even if you never bother to make a recipe from this book verbatim, it will greatly increase your cooking skills from practical knowledge of physics, chemistry, taste, and technique. Many recipes build on one another, and the flow of the book is very good. There is a lack of baked goods and desserts in this book, but I'm not sure that there would be room for them! Overall, this book is on par with other amazing at-home cookbooks such as *Modernist Cuisine at Home*. I especially enjoy his sections on eggs, steaks, chilis, and fried chicken. There are several vegetarian recipes, but many are meat-based (surprising for someone who does a month-long blog annually about living vegan). I would highly suggest this book. I look forward to cooking and experimenting my way through it.

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