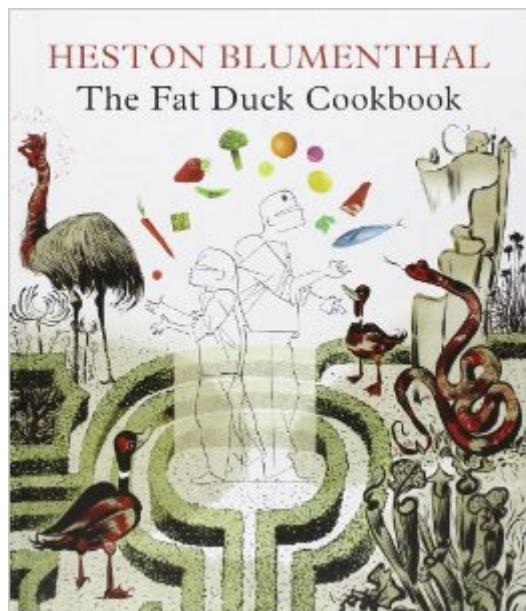


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# The Fat Duck Cookbook



## Synopsis

The cookbook hailed by the Los Angeles Times as a "showstopper" and by Jeffrey Steingarten of Vogue as "the most glorious spectacle of the season...like no other book I have seen in the past twenty years" is now available in a reduced-price edition. With a reduced trim size but an identical interior, this lavishly illustrated, stunningly designed, and gorgeously photographed masterpiece takes you inside the head of maverick restaurateur Heston Blumenthal. Separated into three sections (History; Recipes; Science), the book chronicles Blumenthal's improbable rise to fame and, for the first time, offers a mouth-watering and eye-popping selection of recipes from his award-winning restaurant. He also explains the science behind his culinary masterpieces, the technology and implements that make his alchemical dishes come to life. Designed by acclaimed artist Dave McKean-and filled with photographs by Dominic Davies-this artfully rendered celebration of one of the world's most innovative and renowned chefs is a foodie's dream.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (67 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Heston has an (scientific) obsession for making the best tasting and best looking food possible. This obsession is likely to make him legendary. This is a cookbook for a small minority of customers. You must have an interest in molecular gastronomy methods. You must have a budget that allows you to eat at expensive restaurants. You must like odd people that don't conform to all the norms of society. Other reviewers have pointed out the recipes are extremely complicated. A lot of details are given, but you should be prepared to shell out a couple of thousands of dollars on (used) equipment before you can get started. The book has some pictures of the dishes, but could do with more

descriptive pictures. However, this is just not a glossy book to boost the ego of its author. I find the discussion around taste, chemistry and visuals relating to each recipe very interesting. You really get a look into Heston's thought process. I don't think Heston has used a ghost writer. I would imagine this can inspire both professional chefs as well as amateur cooks, if so inclined. One place to start experimenting might be with the whisky gums, which don't require any expensive equipment. Heston's general approach is to perfect a dish. You can set out to do something similar given your budget constraint. If you don't have a professional vacuum sealer maybe try with cheap 100 dollar device, and see what happens. Or you might use a vacuum cleaner to suck out the air of the bag. The only thing you need is time! There is one other audience for this book and that is people interested in the creative process in general. The long biographical essay describes an obsessive person setting out to do something creative. It is written in a fascinating manner, if and only if you are interested in the creative process. Actually this section could serve as inspiration for some young people to follow their intuition rather than go for a very safe career. For this type of reader, I can also recommend Adria's "A day at Elbulli". I would recommend this edition of the book. It is a normal hardcover edition. There is also a superexpensive big edition. I would not recommend that unless you want to have a thick tome to impress. The cheaper edition is hardcover too, so more than enough for most people. UPDATE: Now when *Modernist Cuisine: The Art and Science of Cooking* is published, that should be your first serious book on the subject.

I don't really like to review books online, as so much of the review is subjective. I'll make an exception for the Fat Duck Cookbook. It's that good. First off, the recipes are amazing... as they should be, since they are the exact recipes used in Blumethal's world-renowned restaurant. They are also elaborate. If you decide to make one, think of it as a quest rather than as a traditional recipe to be made in an afternoon - most of these will involve a good deal of searching for ingredients, a large amount prep time, and sometimes specific equipment ranging from just hard-to-find to hard-to-find AND really expensive. Even if you don't make the recipes... even if this book didn't HAVE any recipes, it would still be great. The photos and art are nearly worth the asking price on their own. Huge, glossy, detailed pictures of some of the most intricate and intricately plated dishes I've ever seen. Enough beautiful abstract art to justify it as a coffee table book in this respect alone. Furthermore, each recipe is accompanied by an essay on the development of that recipe and thoughts on exactly what makes that recipe work, or why previous iterations of it did not work as well. You don't have to make the recipes to find this type of commentary useful. Then there are the other two thirds of the book. One is somewhere between an autobiography and a treatise on

the author's culinary formation and thought process. Sound dull? It isn't. In part because of how well it is written - relatable, brisk, to the point. Even more so because of Blumenthal's enormous insight into both the art and science of cooking. He explains his process in creating and perfecting his food using specific examples. He alludes to the science he uses whenever applicable - his explanations are neither dumbed down nor are they a single bit more complicated or hard to understand than need be. I found myself using a highlighter while reading it to mark things I wanted to look up later. And as though Blumenthal somehow knew about my highlighter, he included as the last third of the book an index of terms, descriptions of equipment and ingredients, and essays on the scientific aspects of cooking and eating. Essay topics range from emulsions to how taste and pleasure are related via the brain. Most of these essays are not by Blumenthal - they are written by scientists who have influenced Blumenthal and added to his understanding. I should point out, I guess, that this book is probably not for most culinary novices. The pictures might go over well, but the rest will be like showing calculus to someone who's still learning to add. But for pros and dedicated amateurs, I don't think a cookbook gets much better. It's inspiring, beautiful, and informative. As much as it can teach about the science of cooking, it has just as much insight into the art of cooking - what associations, effects, textures, contexts, and flavors make a dish great. In this way, it is just as invaluable to the classical cook as the cutting edge one. It prompts you to look at a dish and wonder 'In a perfect world, what could make this even better?' And suggests that whatever the answer is, it may well be possible.

My goodness what a wonderful cookbook. Ok, so few will be making the recipes in here, but the Fat Duck isn't rated 2nd in the world because you can make the food at home. You will learn so many interesting things. Nitro green tea and lime mousse will make perfect sense after you read his thought process. It's great to be able to look into the mind of a genius for only \$35. I love the Alinea cookbook but this is much better. I almost wish I would have splurged and bought the big version.

I really like Heston Blumenthal's concepts, imagery and far out cooking ideas covered in this book. The issue I have is with the quality of this book. In the process of making it cheaper, than its more expensive original print, they managed to produce a book that doesn't appear to hold together well, the binding in my book is pulled back and the pages are on the edge of falling out and I only opened the book twice. Needless to say this book is headed back to . I may consider a second copy of this book, but based on the other 2 copies I have seen in the wild this seems to be an issue with how this book is made. Be warned if you are purchasing this version that you will probably be getting a

book with a weak spine that could split at any moment. I debated on whether this warranted a 1 star rating but the content is worth 5 stars if you're lucky enough to get a good quality book.

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