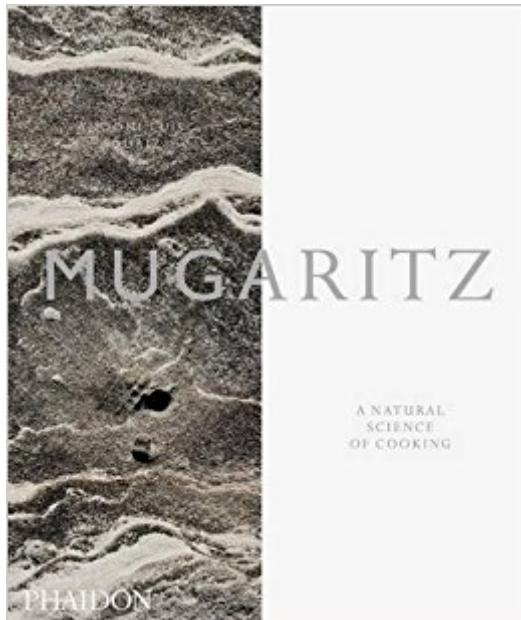


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Mugaritz: A Natural Science Of Cooking



Synopsis

Mugaritz in northern Spain, has long been considered one of Spain's most influential restaurants, and Andoni Aduriz one of its most talented and creative chefs. Mugaritz was recently voted number three in the S. Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurant Awards. Aduriz has been called a genius by 'Food and Wine Magazine', and a cult figure among Europe's young avant-garde Chefs. In 'Mugaritz', his first major cookbook, Aduriz reveals for the first time the creative process behind his dishes, while featuring 70 recipes sure to inspire chefs and food lovers around the world. Anduriz is well known for his interest and knowledge of nature, his embracing of new techniques, and his collaborations; all visible in this beautiful, richly illustrated cookbook. 'Mugaritz' is organized into thematic chapters about the history of the restaurant, its relationship with nature, the new culinary language that Aduriz has developed, the techniques behind the dishes, and the experience of the guest. Each chapter is illustrated with exclusive Mugaritz archive material, and atmospheric recipe photographs. This is a must have book for anybody interested in fine dining, avant garde cuisine, creativity and food culture. 'Mugaritz' will be one of the most talked about cookbooks of the season.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This has been one of the most anticipated cookbooks of the year, and it does an incredible job of highlighting the food and philosophy of Mugaritz. Rated one of the best restaurants in the world, this Spanish restaurant is quickly becoming the epitome of refinement and perfection. Dishes are not overdone or complex, but limited in components that have been agonized over and brought to a level beyond what most restaurant even attempt. The first third of this book is a must-read on the history, philosophy, process, and style of Mugaritz. It shows how the restaurant's dishes constantly

fluctuate based on seasonality, how ideas form and are developed, and how the restaurant itself functions. The rest of the book are recipes from the restaurant, and while there are 70-some recipes, one gets the feeling (and rightly so) that this is only a tiny sliver of a glimpse into the food of Mugaritz. The photography is beautiful and simple, with white plates always washed out into a blank white page, leaving just a small simple shot of the food itself in the middle of the page. The dishes are equally simple in presentation; few components with clear focus on the main ingredient. While this is a stunning and lovely book, I do have a couple qualms about it. This book belongs in the league of the Alinea, Fat Duck, Quay, Noma, and Eleven Madison Park cookbooks. It is lovely and really almost a book of art. However, it seems the least approachable of all of these. In the back of the book, the reader is cautioned that the recipes are best attempted by experienced cooks, but the larger challenge seems to be acquiring the ingredients. There are food science ingredients that one familiar with Alinea and the Fat Duck will be completely unfamiliar with.

Extremely well done and worth every penny. (pre ordered mine for \$25!) the first part of the book delves into the philosophy, history and perspective of Aduriz's kitchen and cooking style, and unlike most other chef/restaurant books, Aduriz keeps it short, concise and to the point, there are also short stories that relate to certain dishes and how they came about which is also helpful because it gives you an idea of how the chef's mind works and how he approaches thematic cuisine. There are also short discussion on front of the house choreography a custom made soundtrack for the restaurant, the "dining path" of the average Mugaritz diner, historical menu setups and back of the house duties that go on every night at this three michelin starred restaurant, and again it's concise but not wordy and gets to the point, found it very interesting. Quality wise it's another hit from Phaidon, technically very similar to Noma but without the annoying indexes that make you have to turn to the recipes in the back, here the recipes and photos are together like most other high end cookbooks. Photography is excellent and makes Aduriz's austere style really stand out. Paper quality and binding are excellent as the books are printed in Italy. The cover is embossed with the stone texture shown on the cover. There are two tassles sewn into the binding as bookmarks. Keep in mind, the style of Aduriz's cooking is very austere (even more than the "monk" the late Alain Chapel) there are some recipes that call for only two ingredients not including salt, pepper and olive oil, Aduriz pairs down his recipes to the most essential parts.

First up it must be said that the pictures of dishes are stunning. Each dish was photographed on a white plate and/or surface creating the impression of a small degustation portion that sits as

comfortably on the page as it would in front of you in the restaurant. Secondly, the influence of Ferran Adria is apparent throughout the text. Anduriz appears to have taken to heart both the extreme creativity and evolutionary approach of his mentor. It is apparent, however, that he has infused this with his own personality and abundant talent. Like Adria's *El Bulli* books, the first section of the book deals with his philosophy and approach to both cuisine and his diners. It also documents the evolution of new approaches over the time period 1998 to 2001. This includes which processes and techniques were added each year. For example, in 2006 they added impregnation sous vide, and rheology studies (the science behind edible bubbles). Dishes in the book that demonstrate each of these techniques are listed. Like Heston Blumenthal, Aduriz works with scientists to understand and evolve processes or sensory experiences and puts this to use in his recipes. To give an idea of the scale of the introduction, the first recipe only appears on page 94. Now onto the recipes themselves. While many can be created in a more conventional kitchen, others are unashamedly modernist requiring (at times) access to a sous vide setup or combi-oven, a thermomix, a roto-vap, etc as well as a range of kitchen chemicals (xanthan gum, calcium oxide, pectin, and so on). Rather than making these appear exotic, Anduriz follows the tradition of many contemporary chefs and incorporates the techniques and equipment into his cooking as a matter of fact.

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