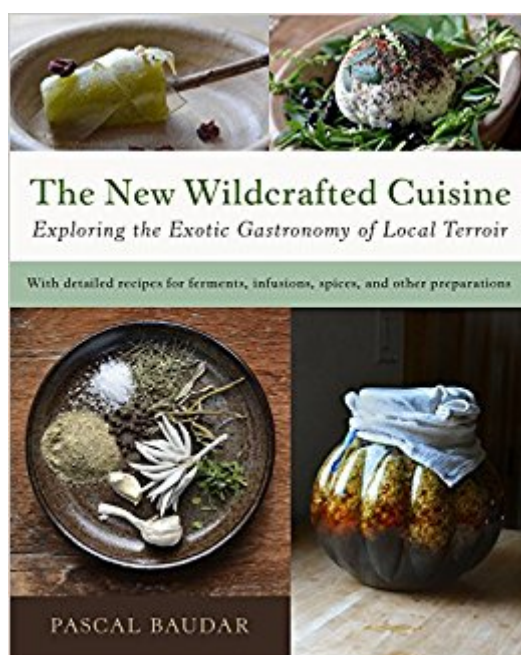


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The New Wildcrafted Cuisine: Exploring The Exotic Gastronomy Of Local Terroir



Synopsis

With detailed recipes for ferments, infusions, spices, and other preparations Wild foods are increasingly popular, as evidenced by the number of new books about identifying plants and foraging ingredients, as well as those written by chefs about culinary creations that incorporate wild ingredients (Noma, Faviken, Quay, Manreza, et al.). The New Wildcrafted Cuisine, however, goes well beyond both of these genres to deeply explore the flavors of local terroir, combining the research and knowledge of plants and landscape that chefs often lack with the fascinating and innovative techniques of a master food preserver and self-described “culinary alchemist.” Author Pascal Baudar views his home terrain of southern California (mountain, desert, chaparral, and seashore) as a culinary playground, full of wild plants and other edible and delicious foods (even insects) that once were gathered and used by native peoples but that have only recently begun to be re-explored and appreciated. For instance, he uses various barks to make smoked vinegars, and combines ants, plants, and insect sugar to brew primitive beers. Stems of aromatic plants are used to make skewers. Selected rocks become grinding stones, griddles, or plates. Even fallen leaves and other natural materials from the forest floor can be utilized to impart a truly local flavor to meats and vegetables, one that captures and expresses the essence of season and place. This beautifully photographed book offers up dozens of creative recipes and instructions for preparing a pantry full of preserved foods, including Pickled Acorns, White Sage-Lime Cider, Wild Kimchi Spice, Currant Capers, Infused Salts with Wild Herbs, Pine Needles Vinegar, and many more. And though the author’s own palette of wild foods are mostly common to southern California, readers everywhere can apply Baudar’s deep foraging wisdom and experience to explore their own bioregions and find an astonishing array of plants and other materials that can be used in their own kitchens. The New Wildcrafted Cuisine is an extraordinary book by a passionate and committed student of nature, one that will inspire both chefs and adventurous eaters to get creative with their own local landscapes.

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Customer Reviews

Publishers Weekly- "Baudar, a self-described 'professional forager' whose ingredients and preserves have been used by such chefs as Ludo Lefebvre and Top Chef winner Michael Voltaggio, shows how to transform barks into vinegars, insect sugar into beer, and rocks into plates, among other things, in this avid guide to field-and-table cooking. While most of the recipes center on fauna found in Southern California, aspiring survivalists anywhere will likely appreciate Baudar's deep commitment to the practice. Pickled acorns, anyone?" Dirt index: Swimming in the primordial ooze. "Pascal's book contains some of the most unique and innovative ideas that you'll ever find for using wild flavors. Clear instructions accompany each recipe, along with striking photos of the ingredients and finished products."--Samuel Thayer, author of The Forager's Harvest and Nature's Garden "As a Southern California native, I grew up with the terroir that I eventually would incorporate into my cuisine at Girasol. Pascal was my spark. The first day Pascal walked through our back kitchen door with a cornucopia of foraged California wild plants and Old World recipe vinegars and beers, I knew I had found my voice. Pascal's seemingly infinite knowledge and passion for what grows in the desert region we live in has truly inspired me. This book is one of a kind, a walk off the beaten trail and an exploration of true wild flavors. Chefs who truly care about finding new ways of expression and commitment to time and place's cooking will undoubtedly be captivated by it."--CJ Jacobson, executive chef, Girasol restaurant, and winner of Top Chef Duels "Visually stunning, The New Wildcrafted Cuisine is incredibly impressive, a tour de force, a masterpiece. At long last, an author has truly captured the power and sophistication that wild foods can impart to both our diets and our lives."--Stephen Harrod Buhner, author of The Lost Language of Plants and Sacred and Herbal Healing Beers "The New Wildcrafted Cuisine takes wild foraging to a gourmet level of creativity. I am delighted by Pascal's ingenuity of wild combinations and impressed by his experience demonstrating the vast potential of culinary artistry."

Pascal clearly articulates the procedures and details of transforming wild ingredients into practical recipes, thereby making the gifts of nature more accessible to us all. —Katrina Blair, author of *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* “This gorgeous book will make you salivate and dream. Pascal Baudar is exploring an important culinary terrain in his coastal California bioregion, incorporating the incredible diversity he forages into a broad array of foods and drinks in exciting, elegant, and clever ways. Beyond the particulars of what he can harvest there — some which you or I might find where we live, but much of which is very different — it is his methods, ideas, and aesthetics, all of which can be applied much more broadly, that are truly inspirational. —Sandor Ellix Katz, author of *The Art of Fermentation* and *Wild Fermentation*

Pascal Baudar is a professional forager, wild food instructor, and a self-styled “culinary alchemist” based in Los Angeles. His locally sourced wild ingredients and unique preserves have made their way into the kitchens of such star chefs as Ludo Lefebvre, Josiah Citrin, Ari Taymor, Michael Voltaggio, and Chris Jacobson. Over the years, through his weekly classes and seminars, he has introduced thousands of home cooks, local chefs, and others to the flavors offered by the wild terroir of southern California. He has served as a wild food consultant for several TV shows including *MasterChef* and *Top Chef Duels*. He has been featured in numerous TV shows and publications, including *Time* magazine, the *Los Angeles Times*, *L.A. Weekly*, and the *New York Times*. In 2014, he was named one of the 25 most influential tastemakers in L.A. by *Los Angeles* magazine.

The anti-foraging viewpoint is based on the belief that foraging can strip ecosystems of important foods for wildlife. One can extrapolate that this viewpoint is meant to protect and preserve the environment. In my review, I would like to address whether the negative reviews of others based solely on an anti-foraging viewpoint are warranted, and, as a larger point, to discuss whether this viewpoint, expressed by negatively reviewing this book solely based on its overall topic, helps or harms the environment. I have thoroughly read every page of this book, shared it with my children, and made several recipes, some many times. I believe that environmentally conscious people should support this book because:

1. The author dedicates a section to foraging responsibly. He writes about his sadness at seeing denuded plants after restaurant suppliers have unethically sourced an ingredient. He encourages readers to consider the impact before foraging.
2. Many of the negative reviews encourage people to plant gardens rather than forage. The author writes that

he plants his favorite food sources, and he encourages readers to do the same.³ Foraging leads to an increased desire to protect the environment because humans are primed to enjoy 'hunting' in changing environments and they create strong memories based on food.⁴ Once you get hooked on wild plants, you'll want to create space for them everywhere. Suddenly it's perfectly logical to want to rip out your water-hogging grass lawn and replace it with wild mint.⁵ Some ideas in this book have no impact on animal life. For example, I learned to make my own sea salt. I like the taste so much I doubt I'll ever buy salt again. No birds or insects were impacted by my salt, and one less product is being manufactured and shipped for me.⁵ Many ideas in this book are from plant material that is not scarce. I learned to make pine needle tea, and no one is going to miss the pine needles I took because there are so many. I began cooking and making fertilizer with local seaweed, which piles up and rots on our beaches. I also learned to eat every part of the nopales, which is also so plentiful here that huge patches rot unused in the fall.⁶ The author advocates eating insects as a source of protein and heme iron. You can't get more local or sustainable than that.⁷ The author advocates using rocks as plates and cooking tools - which removes even more products from the product stream, further benefitting the environment. I could continue, but I believe I've shown that the author is in fact very concerned with ethical foraging, and also that ethical foraging can result in environmental benefits.

I studied for a hot minute under Pascal back when I was spending time in Los Angeles and was always impressed by both his deep knowledge of the land around us and his incredibly accessible teaching skills. After a couple years lapping up the beautiful photographs he regularly shared online I was greatly anticipating this book. It does not disappoint. The book is big (>400 pgs) and full of hundreds of drool-worthy photos. It is divided into four main sections: Winter - The Forest Time; Spring - The Greens Time; Summer - The Berries and Fruits Time; and Fall - The Seeds Time. Each section contains multitudes of stories and anecdotes, local history, identification and foraging tips, cooking and fermentation instructions, and of course, the recipes. Ahhh, the recipes. I am convinced that Baudar and his partner-in-crime, chef-photographer Mia Wasilevich, could one day very soon give RenÃ© Redzipi a run for his money. Baudar creates dishes that capture the flavor of place like no other wild food book I've ever read. Individual mountains inspire multi-course feasts. A valley might create a singular vinegar. Examples from the book include: Beef Stone-Cooked in Forest Floor, Candy Cap Mushroom Beer, Basic Wild Kimchi, Chaparral Roasted Quail, Blueberry-Fennel-Mugwort Soda, Nasturtium and Watercress Hot Sauce, Cactus Pad and Lime Mint Paletas with Bay-Infused Tequila Film and Lerp (ants!) Sugar and Australian Bushberries, and

Stinging Nettle Beer. Baudar's enthusiasm for his work is apparent. This is no attempt to capitalize on a trend for him. It is an art and his studio is the wilderness of Southern California. I only hope that this book doesn't make his classes book so far in advance that I can never get in on another one. If you enjoy food and have a sense of wonder, look no further for the satiation of both.

What a gorgeous, eye-opening, original book about gourmet foraging and sophisticated cooking experiments. I have followed the author Pascal Bauder on Facebook with delight. Purchasing this hardbound treasury of his groundbreaking recipes is the best investment I've made all year. Beautiful photographs, precise instructions, and eye-opening discoveries. I am especially happy to discover unusual beverage options for native plants, trees, abundant greens, and "weeds" from my garden. (This is a largely plant-based book. My only wish is that the wonderful author would make a commitment to the ethical eating of veganism.)

I LOVE this book... I was introduced to it through a wild fermentation club I belong too and kept seeing his posts. I love reading it and enjoying the photos. I have found great techniques and ideas that I can adapt and apply to my new england home yet I dream of some of the amazing things available in his California area. I recommend this for a gift to a chef who enjoys the foraging aspect of the wilderness and local abundance, I have several more to get for special gifts that I know will be appreciated!

This book is beautiful It has interesting recipes and ideas even for people who do not forage for their food! The pictures are gorgeous so even if you dont make any of the delicious recipes it will make you happy just looking at it !

This is both a gorgeous and inspirational book for all foragers and cooking enthusiasts. Pascal has a wonderful way of incorporating his searches and experiments in ways that you really want to join him in his searches for new wonderful taste adventures.

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