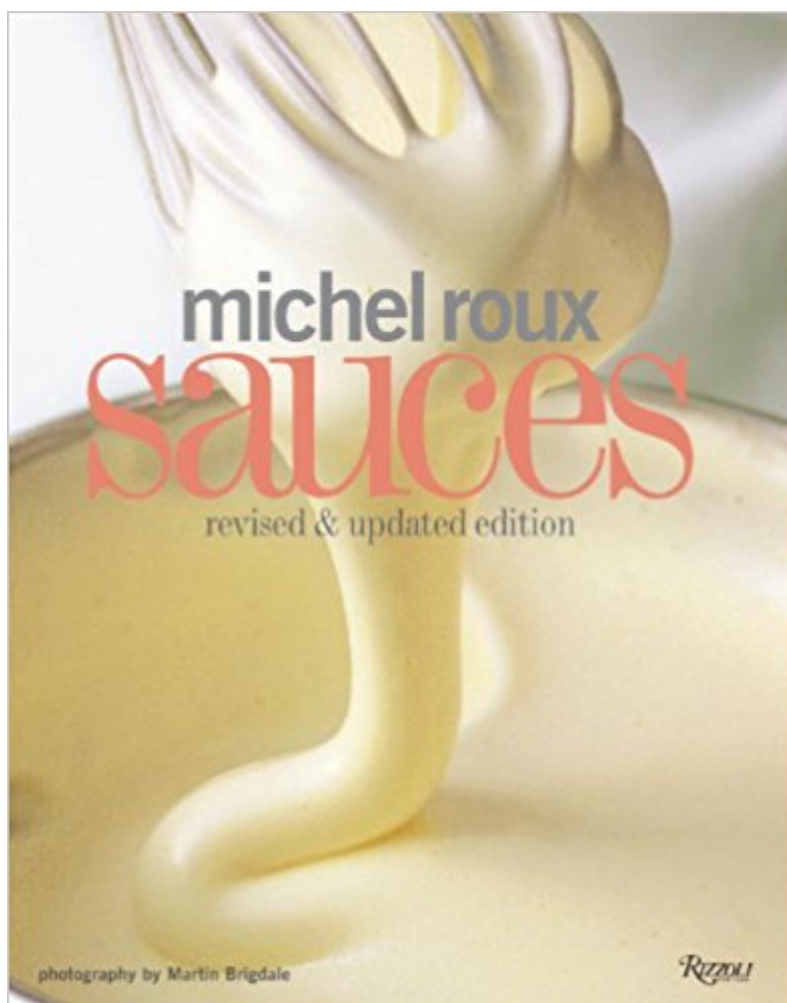


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Michel Roux Sauces: Revised And Updated Edition



Synopsis

In this age of back-to-home-and-hearth, acclaimed three-star chef Michel Roux reveals professional secrets of French sauce-making. Michel Roux presents over two hundred classic and contemporary sauces that transform the humblest dish into a masterpiece. Included are recipes for his latest innovations and centuries-old classics, such as hollandaise and béchamel, making this small-format compendium indispensable. Beginning with the "mother sauces" that provide the foundation for dozens of others, Roux shows how sauces provide the endless variations and continuing appeal of French cooking. Packed with tips (such as "always add cold water to stock"), this updated edition features over one hundred new photographs and twenty-five new recipes with completely revised and updated text.

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Customer Reviews

The recent publication of Anthony Bourdain's excellent Les Halles Cookbook, with its repeated insistence on using true demi-glace, turned me back to Raymond Sokolov's *Saucier's Apprentice*, which I hadn't used in years. As my food interests have swung ever southward in recent years, I have increasingly eschewed the rich, voluptuous sauces of haute cuisine in favor of the clearer, livelier flavors of Provence and Northern Italy. But, as he is so gifted at doing, Bourdain reawoke my interest in good, workmanlike bistro cooking. And it's a cold winter in Salt Lake city, so I've been eating a lot of meat. Returning to Sokolov had mixed rewards: the sauces are classic and delicious, but they just feel too overwhelming. They tend to coat food and take center stage, even when perfectly matched in a well-composed menu. I found myself drinking [even] more wine to

counterbalance the rich, often buttery sauces. So I went looking for something that I thought would be a compromise: updated sauces of classic character, but more transparent to the palette and more amenable to a composed, coursed menu. It turns out that I didn't need to compromise at all. I found Michel Roux's *Sauces*, somewhat skeptical that such a pretty book could be good, and discovered that the classic sauces needn't overwhelm the food on which they're served. I have cooked his Sauce Cumberland [which I served on a pheasant terrine] and received actual applause from the assorted restaurant owners and cooks over for supper that night. It was clear, brightly-flavored, balanced, and silky; a hyper-refined version of a classic I had never much cared for. Then I made the Sauce Grand Veneur, which can be a monstrous undertaking [see my review of Sokolov]. With some fond de veau on hand [thank God] Roux's instructions were quite easy and quick. I can't say that my sauce equalled the one I had in Burgundy several years ago, but it was the best sauce I've ever made: rich, silky, meaty, but, again, not overwhelming or overly fatty. I served it on venison, again to apparently sincere expressions of gratitude and ecstasy. Since then I have made Roux's versions of Sauce Poivrade [again on venison], Red Butter Hollandaise [on tuna], and a couple of the salad dressings. All were improvements on recipes I've tried from other books. Consistently, these sauces are fine, elegant, well-balanced, and, most importantly, good with food. I find that having Sokolov [for his system, his opinions, and his old hotel-food orthodoxies] alongside Roux [with his refined, classic but modern recipes and outstanding visual presentation and food recommendations] is about all the sauce library I need. Certainly it will take years to get through the more appealing sauces in these two books, and to learn to do them well. Short of enrolling in cooking school, there may be no better saucier's apprenticeship than cooking from these books.

'Sauces, Sweet and Savory, Classic and New' by leading French / English chef, Michel Roux is a great addition to good books about basic cooking techniques for amateur cooks and foodies throughout the English speaking world. One thing I want to be clear is that the blurb from 'Homes and Gardens' stating that 'If there's a sauce worth making - classic or modern - its in this book' is clearly wrong. Not only does the book not contain every useful sauce; many of the recipes for some sauces in the book are not necessarily the best. The first case is made by the fact that the book does not contain a recipe for the Caesar Salad dressing, even though there are many 'salad dressing' recipes in the book. The second case is proven by the fact that the recipe for the great spaghetti sauce Bolognese is NOT the same as you will find in any reliable book on Italian regional cooking, as the best recipes usually contain two or three different kinds of meat, not just one. But

that doesn't mean this is not an excellent reference on sauce making for the average amateur cook who has reached the point where they can mix and match ideas from different sources and is not bound to following recipes word for word. This book is NOT a definitive treatise on sauces; however, such volumes already exist, so why do that task over again. The best comprehensive references are 'Sauces' by James Peterson (be sure to get the 2nd Edition) and 'The Sauce Bible' by David Paul Larousse. Of the two, Peterson's book goes into more depth about individual sauces while Larousse contains recipes for more named sauces. An amateur friendly alternative to Michel Roux' book is 'Get Saucy' by Grace Parisi, which is no match for the professional texts, but may appeal to you more than the presentation from the other side of the pond. Since I also own Peterson and Larousse, my preference for everyday use is definitely Roux' work. For starters, the pictures are drop dead gorgeous, as witnessed by the book's earning a Glenfiddich cookbook award for visuals. So the book is a real joy to walk through as a first pass. But this is not a good reason for buying a cookbook if the recipes are poor, and these recipes are certainly not poor, although they are sometimes just a bit on the brief side, with explanations and nuances left out. More on this later. The very best aspect of the book is its organization and the fact that it covers several common preparations we may not automatically consider as sauces. The chapters of recipes are: Stocks, Liaisons & Instant Sauces, Vinaigrettes, Flavored Oils & Vinegars, Flavored Butters & Vegetable Coulis, Sauces & Chutneys for Terrines, Pates & Game, Sauces for Fish and Shellfish, Emulsion Sauces, White Sauces, Brown Sauces, Dessert Sauces. One thing that immediately surprised me was the fact that Monsieur Roux did not call for long cooking times for his stocks. In fact, he confirmed a suspicion I've had for some time that long cooking tends to spoil some of the finer properties of stocks. The only type of stock requiring more than three hours is a veal stock, where your primary interest is in extracting all the gelatin from the young bones. To compensate for short cooking times, he calls for the aromatic vegetables to be diced fairly finely, instead of simply throwing whole carrots, onions, and celery into the pot. This should be enough right there to convince you that this is a worthy reference for sauces, as you can now discard all the advice for 8 to 12 hour stock cooking times. A second thing that I really liked is the number of common sauces and methods that were covered in the book. Here we have everything we need to make meat gravies, mayonnaise (including a low calorie version), pesto (pistou), vinaigrettes, chocolate sauce, flavored butters, Mornay sauce (the stuff on Mac and cheese!), chocolate sauces, caramel sauce, beurre blanc (3 variations), aioli, and the very grand Americaine Sauce. It may seem pedantic, but I consider the presence of the French names for all these sauces to be essential. The main reason for this is that whomever writes about these sauces will also refer to them by their commonly

accepted French names, regardless of what English translation they may inflict on us. The aspect of the book which will most appeal to the most people is the advice the author gives on how to use the sauces. This is all encapsulated in a dandy little index that correlates sauces and ingredients. For crab, for example, one can consider a bagnarotte sauce, mayonnaise, sea-urchin sauce, or thermidor sauce. This list is certainly not complete, as it doesn't include remoulade or that American variety of remoulade, the tartar sauce. But this is a great guide for what to do when you've got a big head of cauliflower on sale (there are six suggested sauces for cauliflower). This book is not perfect (but then virtually no books are). What it gains in conciseness and ease of use, it gives up to explaining the tricks and pitfalls behind a lot of sauce making, and this doesn't just apply to the difficult emulsion sauces. There is nothing on how to recover a broken mayonnaise or hollandaise and there is nothing on fine tuning buerre blanc, two subjects which the 'professional' books cover. The picture section on sauce tools is pretty, but not totally illuminating, as they show four tools in one picture and don't clearly state which is which. One thing I must say is that for an English book, there are practically no obscure Anglicisms. The only 'continental' tendency foreign to an American is that the author assumes your shrimp will come to you with heads on! Still, this is an excellent guide to striking out on your own with sauces. Buy It Now!

I find his way of describing the different kind of sauces absolutely correct. They work, are easy to reproduce and taste marvellous. His guidances are easy to follow, be it for a beginner or an advanced "student". It is a lot of fun to follow his recipees and I find it very useful to see his recommandations towards the full menu. In short, a book well worth it's price!

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