



What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained

By Robert L. Wolke

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"Wolke is Martha Stewart with a PhD." ?*American Scientist*

"Wolke, longtime professor of chemistry and author of the *Washington Post* column Food 101, turns his hand to a Cecil Adams style compendium of questions and answers on food chemistry. Is there really a difference between supermarket and sea salt? How is sugar made? Should cooks avoid aluminum pans? Interspersed throughout Wolke's accessible and humorous answers to these and other mysteries are recipes demonstrating scientific principles. There is gravy that avoids lumps and grease; Portuguese Poached Meringue that demonstrates cream of tartar at work; and juicy Salt-Seared Burgers.... With its zest for the truth, this book will help cooks learn how to make more intelligent choices." ?*Publishers Weekly*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Why do recipes call for unsalted butter--and salt? What is a microwave, actually? Are smoked foods raw or cooked? Robert L. Wolke's enlightening and entertaining *What Einstein Told His Cook* offers answers to these and 127 other questions about everyday kitchen phenomena. Using humor (dubious puns included), Wolke, a bona fide chemistry professor and syndicated *Washington Post* columnist, has found a way to make his explanations clear and accessible to all: in short, fun. For example, to a query about why cookbooks advise against inserting meat thermometers so that they touch a bone, Wolke says, "I hate warnings without explanations, don't you? Whenever I see an 'open other end' warning on a box, I open the wrong end just to see what will happen. I'm still alive." But he always finally gets down to brass tacks: as most heat transfer in meat is due to its water content, areas around bone remain relatively cool and thus unreliable for gauging overall meat temperature.

Organized into basic categories like "Sweet Talk" (questions involving sugar), "Fire and Ice" (we learn why water boils and freezers burn, among other things), and "Tools and Technology" (the best kind of frying pan, for example), the book also provides illustrative recipes like Black Raspberry Coffee Cake (to demonstrate how metrics work in recipes) and Bob's Mahogany Game Hens (showing what brining can do). With technical illustrations, tips, and more, the book offers abundant evidence that learning the whys and hows of cooking can help us enjoy the culinary process almost as much as its results. --*Arthur Boehm*

From Publishers Weekly

Wolke, longtime professor of chemistry and author of the *Washington Post* column Food 101, turns his hand to a Cecil Adams style compendium of questions and answers on food chemistry. Is there really a difference between supermarket and sea salt? How is sugar made? Should cooks avoid aluminum pans? Interspersed throughout Wolke's accessible and humorous answers to these and other mysteries are recipes demonstrating scientific principles. There is gravy that avoids lumps and grease; Portuguese Poached Meringue that demonstrates cream of tartar at work; and juicy Salt-Seared Burgers. Wolke is good at demystifying advertisers' half-truths, showing, for example, that sea salt is not necessarily better than regular salt for those watching sodium intake. While the book isn't encyclopedic, Wolke's topics run the gamut: one chapter tackles Those Mysterious Microwaves; elsewhere readers learn about the burning of alcohol and are privy to a rant on the U.S. measuring system. Sometimes the tone is hokey (The green color [in potatoes] is Mother Nature's Mr. Yuk sticker, warning us of poison) and parenthetical Techspeak explanations may seem condescending to those who remember high school science. However, Wolke tells it like it is. What does clarifying butter do, chemically? Answer: gets rid of everything but that delicious, artery-clogging, highly saturated butterfat. With its zest for the truth, this book will help cooks learn how to make more intelligent choices.

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From [Booklist](#)

Those who follow Wolke's "Food 101" newspaper column know him for his thorough scientific answers to questions about everyday food science. *What Einstein Told His Cook* is a compilation of these popular columns. Wolke covers such basic questions as how cookware conducts heat, how water filters do their job, and how coffee is decaffeinated. He sets up controlled experiments to test how to extract maximum juice from citrus fruits. He addresses controversies such as the irradiation of foods. Recipes supplement and illustrate the scientific principles. Wolke writes about these serious topics with a good sense of humor that

doesn't belittle the seriousness of his purpose. *Mark Knoblauch*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dick McAlister:

Do you among people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This *What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained* book is readable simply by you who hate those straight word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable reading experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to supply to you. The writer connected with *What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained* content conveys the thought easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the written content but it just different available as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking *What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained* is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Christopher Thompson:

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