



# The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining

By Charles Spence, Betina Piqueras-Fiszman

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The authors of *The Perfect Meal* examine all of the elements that contribute to the diner's experience of a meal (primarily at a restaurant) and investigate how each of the diner's senses contributes to their overall multisensory experience. The principal focus of the book is not on flavor perception, but on all of the non-food and beverage factors that have been shown to influence the diner's overall experience.

Examples are:

- the colour of the plate (visual)
- the shape of the glass (visual/tactile)
- the names used to describe the dishes (cognitive)
- the background music playing inside the restaurant (aural)

Novel approaches to understanding the diner's experience in the restaurant setting are explored from the perspectives of decision neuroscience, marketing, design, and psychology.

2015 Popular Science Prose Award Winner.

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**The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining** By Charles Spence, Betina Piqueras-Fiszman **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Review featured in The Times - 19 December 2014

"This book is in a class by itself. If you thought taste was located on your tongue, then this unique book will disabuse you of that notion and reveal how both eating and cooking are extraordinarily rich multisensory experiences." (*New York Journal of Books*, 1 November 2014)

"Their exhaustive analyses of everything from plate size to flavour incongruities are laced with details such as cutlery's evolution from Victorian marrow scoops and chocolate muddlers to today's textured spoons and "aromatic forks." (*Nature*, 30 October 2014)

"*The Perfect Meal* can't fail to entertain, inform and ultimately to dazzle." — Heston Blumenthal, chef and owner of The Fat Duck.

"Not many people are as ready to realise the importance of the senses, not only in cooking but in eating, as Charles Spence and Betina Piqueras-Fiszman ... This book demonstrates beyond doubt that gastronomy is the most complex creative discipline that exists." — Ferran Adrià, elBullifoundation

"Focussing on the brain's interpretation of our eating experience, pioneers Spence and Piqueras-Fiszman acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of gastronomy, rendering a complex area of study both digestible and applicable." — Ben Reade, Gastronome and Head of Culinary Research and Development at Nordic Food Lab

"*The Perfect Meal* goes beyond the exotic ingredients and creative insights of the chef and into the realm of the diner's psychology. Using an accessible writing style that neither talks down to the reader nor dumbs down the science, the authors take us into the relatively unexplored world of the dining context: the *gastrophysics* of the visual, acoustic, tactile – not to mention taste and smell – influences that we are exposed to in every dining experience. This is a new approach to thinking about dining that will appeal to and inform anyone who has ever been convinced to buy a cookbook by its illustrations or who persists, despite failure, to try to get a booking at *The Fat Duck*." — John Prescott, Ph.D, author of *Taste Matters: Why We Eat the Foods We Do*.

"Nowadays a great many chefs are realising that science also has a place at the table; that a dining experience is made up of far more than just good food. By understanding how we use our senses to interact with and appreciate food we may be able to further enhance our guests' dining experiences. This book looks at many topics which will become increasingly relevant to both chefs and our food culture as a whole in the coming years." — Jozef Youseff, chef and author of *Molecular Gastronomy at Home* ([www.kitchen-theory.com](http://www.kitchen-theory.com))

"...packed with insights that are fascinating to anyone in possession of an appetite." — Amy Fleming, *The Guardian*

"One thing is for sure, after reading this book eating out will never be the same again...." — The Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food

## From the Back Cover

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## About the Author

**Charles Spence** is Professor of Experimental Psychology and Head of the Crossmodal Research Laboratory in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University.

**Betina Piqueras-Fiszman** was Consumer and Sensory Researcher at the Crossmodal Research Laboratory in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University and is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour at Wageningen UR.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Samantha Bond:**

The feeling that you get from *The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining* could be the more deep you looking the information that hide into the words the more you get enthusiastic about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining* giving you thrill feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having that *The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining* instantly.

#### **James Rutledge:**

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information presently can get by anyone at everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even an issue. What people must be consider when those information which is in the former life are difficult to be find than now's taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you find the unstable resource then you have it as your main information you will see huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not

happen with you if you take *The Perfect Meal: The Multisensory Science of Food and Dining* as your daily resource information.

**Judy Newberry:**

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