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Tavistock to purchase my monthly supply of various cheeses. In the last edition of the ICATS Newsletter we reviewed *The Chemical Story of Olive Oil*. Most conveniently next door to the temple of cheese is the shrine of olives: a shop that only sells olives (sumptuously marinated in various flavoured olive oils) and olive oils from around the world.

Perfumes have often been described as 'More than a nice smell'. Good food is more than fuel to go. The culture of 'fast food' and the continued growth in home delivery services does enable some small local producers to reach a wider marketplace. Sadly, more often, there is a disconnect developing with some people from the provenance and subsequent preparation, not of good food, but of great food.

This brings us to the pinnacle of this brilliant book with Chapter 9: *Dinner Makes Us Human*. The quotation at the start of the chapter is particularly appropriate:

*Food and language are not only close neighbours ...  
they occupy the same house*

Gordon Shepherd

In our busy life, the quick breakfast and away may be necessity but we should find time to come together to talk, eat and socialize. In the UK a sign you could often see during the COVID19 crisis was 'Keep social distance – 2 metres'. Before central heating and air conditioning the kitchen table and fireside conversation were a fact of daily life. It was the [only] warm part of the house in winter! Dinner makes us human and brings us together with conversation between people in good company. Great food lovingly prepared should be savoured slowly and appreciatively.

This well-written accessible book is meticulously researched. The 30 pages of copious chapter notes and 17 pages of carefully selected key references give the serious student or researcher the path to further information. At £16.85 it is a bargain. Do get your own copy and pass it onto friends and then you can discuss it over some splendid food and discuss that as well!

## MOUTHFEEL: How Texture Makes Taste

Reviewed: **Dr Tony Curtis**

I found the title of this book slightly misleading. It is so much more than just about mouthfeel. The first three chapters provide an excellent introduction to the context of the enjoyment of food. It nicely fills a gap in my bookshelf between:

*Food Science and Technology* (2nd edition) with its galaxy of eminent authors and authoritative Editor (Geoffrey Campbell-Platt, Reading Professor of Food Technology). This provides excellent academic cover of the various aspects of food technology. That is why it is a key reading text for the IFEAT / ICATS course (Flavour pathway).

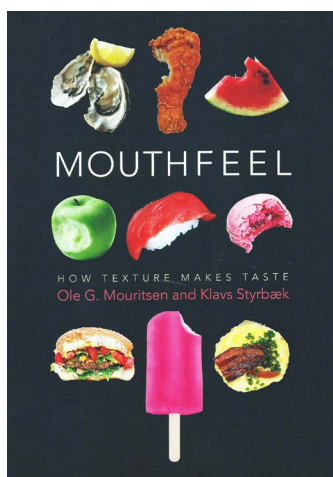
*The Food Lab; Better Home Cooking Through Science* (J. Kenji López-Alt) is a masterful cover for the serious domestic cook (and all good chefs!). I well remember reviewing it and thinking it was going to be expensive with its cover of alluring kitchen utensils (he is lyrical about Japanese kitchen knives – wonderful but expensive!).

Mouthfeel is nicely complementary. Of necessity *Food Technology* is divided into specific component aspects (e.g. food analysis). The *Food Lab* does what it says on the tin – it is kitchen orientated. Mouthfeel starts from a different perspective. Chapter One: *The Complex Universe of Taste and Flavor* explores the multidimensionality of the food experience.

I particularly liked the sections on *The Interplay Between Mouthfeel & Sensory Impressions and Neurogastronomy: Flavour is All in the Brain*. In the academic study of a subject it is often necessary to divide it into appropriate 'subjects'. Key elements are set out on page one of *Food Technology*. The introduction of this highlights that:

Students need to have undertaken courses in the basic scientific disciplines of chemistry, biology, mathematics, statistics and physics.

This is entirely correct and necessary. However, something is lost in this approach. In the UK there is a radio channel devoted to what might be called popular classical music (Classic FM). In the early morning programme favourites are played such as *A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. This specific composition attempts to illustrate the various contributions that individual instruments make to the overall sound of the orchestra. This is some ways a different experience to normal classical compositions. August is a feast of music with the BBC Promenade season with a whole variety of outstanding music played live to an audience by great artists from around the



- 1 The Complex Universe of Taste and Flavor
  - 2 What Makes Up Our Food
  - 3 The Physical Properties of Food: Form, Structure, and Texture
  - 4 Texture and Mouthfeel
  - 5 Playing Around with Mouthfeel
  - 6 Making Further Inroads into the Universe of Texture
  - 7 Why Do We Like the Food That We Do?
- Epilogue: Mouthfeel and a Taste for Life

Ole G. Mouritsen and Klavs Styrbæk (Translated Mariela Johansen)

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world. Now enters a new component of the experience. When I listen to this, I not only hear sound but experience emotion. The BBC Promenade season is available on a worldwide basis with BBC World Service and internet access. Another favourite BBC World Service programme (it would be!) for me is the *Food Programme*. One format of the programme is to get a world-renowned chef to discuss their life and traditions around five key dishes that are culturally and emotionally important to them. Here again the experience could be described in chemical – physical terms but the specific focus in this programme is on the enjoyment and emotional experience of great food and drink. Just like music the total experience is more than a linear addition of the parts. We do not experience this simply on the tongue or the nose it is the interplay of the whole experience: *Neurogastronomy: Flavor is All in the Brain*

Chapters one to three provide the context, then the authors use a zoom lens to focus on the declared topic of the book with *Texture and Mouthfeel*. This sets the scene for the nuts & bolts of what this book is all about: *Playing Around with Mouthfeel*. I was aware of the special and complex nature of chocolate (Page 151 has an illustrative vignette: *Chocolate: Why it melts in your mouth*). A whole new vision opened on my refrigerator door with this section: *The Surprising Diverse Texture of Milk*. It is said that milk is not the same as it used to be. Now I understand some of the reasons. A modern child will not really know what 'Cream on top of the milk' is with our almost universal adoption of homogenised milk. Cream comes to us in a carton, not on top of the milk now. The story does not stop there the tale goes on with *Butter and Its Very Particular Mouthfeel*. In its way butter is just as complex in its melting in the mouth as chocolate.

This chapter also illustrates another special and welcomed feature of this book. Yes there are lots of recipes but this is no simple dictionary of instructions. On page 154 we have the instructions for *Amy's Apple Pie* (sounds delicious). We are then treated to *Amy's Crisp Apple Pie: A Physicists Approach to Mouth Feel*. These recipes (lots of them!) are experiments to illustrate aspects being discussed. However, they are a lot more appetising than the titrations of my early Chemical Laboratory experiences. Not for nothing was Chemistry often described at school as 'stinks' as a result of the use of H<sub>2</sub>S used in qualitative inorganic analysis.

Module 3 of the IFEAT / ICATS Diploma Course is the largest unit. Just as artists have to know their paints and architects have to understand their bricks and mortar Creative Perfumers and Flavourists need to know their building blocks: essential oils aroma extracts and aroma chemicals. Chapter 6: *Making Further Inroads into the Universe of Texture* takes us into how individual ingredients can function in contributing to mouthfeel e.g. page 219 *Grains and Seeds with a Multitude of Texture*.

The book concludes with two very appropriate high notes: Chapter 7: *Why Do We Like the Food that We Do?* and the Epilogue: *Mouthfeel and a Taste for Life*. This is a book that is within the personal budget and should be on the shelf of all involved in food development, not only Food Technologists but also Chefs and keen home cooks. It is a good read and has lots of beautiful illustrations worthy of the best traditions of 'coffee table' cook books (admired but not much used!). It also has the academic rigour of textbooks such as *Food Science and Technology*. Do buy; it will make a much welcomed and loved addition to your library.