Umami

ARTS AND TRADITIONS OF THE TABLE:
PERSPECTIVES ON CULINARY HISTORY

ARTS AND TRADITIONS OF THE TABLE: PERSPECTIVES ON CULINARY HISTORY

Albert Sonnenfeld, Series Editor

Salt: Grain of Life, Pierre Laszlo, translated by Mary Beth Mader

Culture of the Fork, Giovanni Rebora, translated by Albert Sonnenfeld

French Gastronomy: The History and Geography of a Passion, Jean-Robert Pitte, translated by Jody Gladding

Pasta: The Story of a Universal Food, Silvano Serventi and Françoise Sabban, translated by Antony Shugar

Slow Food: The Case for Taste, Carlo Petrini, translated by William McCuaig

Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History, Alberto Capatti and Massimo Montanari, translated by Áine O'Healy

British Food: An Extraordinary Thousand Years of History, Colin Spencer

A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America, James E. McWilliams

Sacred Cow, Mad Cow: A History of Food Fears, Madeleine Ferrières, translated by Jody Gladding

Molecular Gastronomy: Exploring the Science of Flavor, Hervé This, translated by M. B. DeBevoise

Food Is Culture, Massimo Montanari, translated by Albert Sonnenfeld

Kitchen Mysteries: Revealing the Science of Cooking, Hervé This, translated by Jody Gladding

Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America, Frederick Douglass Opie

Gastropolis: Food and New York City, edited by Annie Hauck-Lawson and Jonathan Deutsch

Building a Meal: From Molecular Gastronomy to Culinary Constructivism, Hervé This, translated by M. B. DeBevoise

Eating History: Thirty Turning Points in the Making of American Cuisine, Andrew F. Smith

The Science of the Oven, Hervé This, translated by Jody Gladding

Pomodoro! A History of the Tomato in Italy, David Gentilcore

Cheese, Pears, and History in a Proverb, Massimo Montanari, translated by Beth Archer Brombert

Food and Faith in Christian Culture, edited by Ken Albala and Trudy Eden

The Kitchen as Laboratory: Reflections on the Science of Food and Cooking, edited by César Vega, Job Ubbink, and Erik van der Linden

Creamy and Crunchy: An Informal History of Peanut Butter, the All-American Food, Jon Krampner

Let the Meatballs Rest: And Other Stories About Food and Culture, Massimo Montanari, translated by Beth Archer Brombert

The Secret Financial Life of Food: From Commodities Markets to Supermarkets, Kara Newman

Drinking History: Fifteen Turning Points in the Making of American Beverages, Andrew Smith

Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation, Massimo Montanari, translated by Beth Archer Brombert

Fashioning Appetite: Restaurants and the Making of Modern Identity, Joanne Finkelstein

The Land of the Five Flavors: A Cultural History of Chinese Cuisine, Thomas O. Höllmann, translated by Karen Margolis

The Insect Cookbook: Food for a Sustainable Planet, Arnold van Huis, Henk van Gurp, and Marcel Dicke, translated by Françoise Takken-Kaminker and Diane Blumenfeld-Schaap

Religion, Food, and Eating in North America, edited by Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson, and Nora L. Rubel

Ole G. Mouritsen and Klavs Styrbæk

Umami

Unlocking the
Secrets of the
Fifth Taste

Photography, layout, and design
Jonas Drotner Mouritsen

Translation and adaptation to English
Mariela Johansen

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK

Columbia University Press
Publishers Since 1893
New York Chichester, West Sussex
cup.columbia.edu
Copyright © 2014 Columbia University Press
All rights reserved

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mouritsen, Ole G.

Umami: unlocking the secrets of the fifth taste / Ole G. Mouritsen and Klavs Styrbæk
p. cm. — (Arts and traditions of the table: perspectives on culinary history)

Includes index

ISBN 978-0-231-16890-8 (cloth : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-0-231-53758-2 (e-book)

Library of Congress Holding Information can be found on the Library of Congress Online
Catalog.

2013952514

Columbia University Press books are printed on permanent and durable acid-free paper.
This book is printed on paper with recycled content.
Printed in the United States of America

c 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Cover design by Jonas Drotner Mouritsen.

www.umamibook.net

References to websites (URLs) were accurate at the time of writing. Neither the author
nor Columbia University Press is responsible for URLs that may have expired or changed
since the manuscript was prepared.