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# CONVERSATIONS BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOOR

50 American Chefs Chart Today's Food Culture

By Emmanuel Laroche

Foreword by Elizabeth Falkner

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*“Conversations Behind the Kitchen Door* is the result of fifty-plus dialogues with awarded culinary leaders from various backgrounds and cultures who have kindly shared their personal stories. They are humble human beings who have offered insights into their strengths and shortcomings, revealing their passion, worries, and concerns in a simple, honest, and transparent manner.

It takes skills and repetition for somebody to bring something new into the world. It requires time to taste, to learn, to harness the memory, and takes art to bridge the gap between what someone has in mind for the rest of the world to see and taste.”

--From the Introduction

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Born and raised in France, followed by a career in food in the U.S., Emmanuel Laroche has had access to some of the world's best food, wine, and cocktails, and to the incredible people who created it all. A passionate gourmet, Emmanuel has moderated panels with award-winning culinary leaders such as Pierre Hermé, David Burke, Jose Garces, Willy Dufresne, Jonathan Benno, Elizabeth Falkner, Naomi Pomeroy. Emmanuel went on to create his *flavors unknown* podcast, where for the last four years he has interviewed some of the most acclaimed chefs, pastry chefs, and mixologists, and new culinary leaders in the U.S., about how they got their start, where their inspiration comes from, what their greatest challenges are, their leadership style, and much more.

**CONVERSATIONS BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOOR (Morgan James Publishing; \$21.95; November 8, 2022, trade paperback original)** distills these many diverse interviews into a compelling and insightful look at how today's food culture is defined, along with the creative process that informs the future of food in our country while bringing also his own experiences in the food industry and own personal culinary adventures.

Geared to benefit everyone from the food entrepreneur and professional chef to the culinary student, to the home cook, this series of timely conversations provides valuable insight into a chef's mind and creative process, their valued approach to business and growth, the

challenges of both failure and success, and the varying elements of inspiration behind an accomplished dish or drink.

Readers will walk away with advice and inspiration from esteemed chefs, restaurant owners, bartenders, and notable industry leaders, all of whom have shared their stories here, in their own words. Subjects include where they got their start, what they learned from mentors, how they mastered proper techniques, and trends to expand their culinary horizons.

And while these culinary professionals come from a distinct and wide-ranging background, Emmanuel shows us that they also have a lot in common. Most choose the history of the region where they are established, the local culture, and the flavors they encounter as their initial inspiration, eventually experimenting with new flavors and ingredients. They also all are in constant pursuit of quality ingredients, upon which, they are able to apply their creativity.

Included in the book are insights and interviews with chefs such as:

Chef/Owner Gabriel Kreuther from two-Michelin star Gabriel Kreuther restaurant in New York City

Chef/Owner Brian Ahern of Boeufhaus in Chicago

Chef/Owner Ehren Ryan from Common Lot in Millburn, New Jersey

Iron Chef, author, entrepreneur, and food innovator Jose Garces from Philadelphia

Chef, author, and restaurateur Chris Cosentino in San Francisco

Chef/Owner Kim Alter of Nightbird and Linden Room in San Francisco

Chef/Owner Dan Kluger from Loring Place in Manhattan and Penny Ridge in Long Island City

Chef Johnny Spero from Reverie in Washington, D.C.

Chef/Owner Michael Gulotta of MoPho and MayPop in New Orleans

Chef and restaurateur Jaime Bissonnette from Toro, Copa, and Little Donkey in Boston

Executive chef Drake Leonards at Eunice in Houston

Mixologist Bob Peters in Charlotte, North Carolina

Pastry Chef Philip Speer from Comedor in Austin, Texas

Chef Andrew McLeod from Avenue M in Asheville

Chef Carlo Lamagna from Magna Kusina in Portland, Oregon

Chef Erik Ramirez from Llama Inn and Llama San in New York City

Chef Masako Morishita from MaxwellPark in Washington, D.C.

Chef Jeremy Umansky from Larder Delicatessen and Bakery in Ohio City, Ohio

Pastry Chef and Entrepreneur Sam Mason behind ice cream creations at Odd Fellows

Pastry Chef, Consultant, Recipe & Product Development Specialist Erin Kanegy-Loux from Brooklyn, New York

Chef Richard Landau from Vedge in Philadelphia

**CONVERSATIONS BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOOR** offers a deep and detailed understanding of the minds and creative practices of those who are at the top of their field. The result of which, will provide readers with the tools and encouragement to experiment with their own taste and flavor combinations at home.

Also included in the book is bonus content, including a list of corresponding *flavors unknown* podcast episodes with QR codes and access to a free digital recipe companion book to many of the dishes discussed in **CONVERSATIONS BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOOR**.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Born and raised in France, **EMMANUEL LAROCHE** is VP of Marketing with Symrise North America a global manufacturer of flavors for the food and beverage industry. In 2015,

Emmanuel developed an exclusive partnership with StarChefs for Symrise and began moderating panel discussions with successful culinary professionals. In 2018, he launched the popular podcast, *flavors unknown*, featuring a series of conversations with acclaimed and award-winning chefs, pastry chefs, and mixologists from around the United States. Emmanuel lives in New Jersey and travels around the country conducting tastings and giving lectures and presentations on food and consumer trends.

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**50 American Chefs Chart Today's Food Culture**  
**By Emmanuel Laroche**  
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**QUESTIONS FOR EMMANUEL**

**About the book:**

Why did you write this book? What inspired you to start writing *Conversations Behind the Kitchen Door*?

Why is it important for someone to read this book?

What makes this book unique and differentiates it from all the others on the shelf?

What are the three things to take away from this book?

Tell us how today's food culture is defined in our country?

Explain some of the book's insights into the featured chefs' strengths and shortcomings?

Finding sources of inspiration is a big part of your book. Did you glean anything unexpected about where or how food professionals get their inspiration?

How do you find that this book will be helpful to more amateur cooks?

How do you find that this book will be helpful to those interesting in cooking as a career?

What do you think makes your book relatable to such a wide range of audiences, from the professional to the amateur foodie?

While the featured culinary professionals come from a distinct and wide-ranging background, do you find they also have a lot in common?

**About your writing process:**

What part of the book did you have the hardest time writing?

What part of the book was the most fun to write?

Did you experience writer's block? What process did you use when you needed to find inspiration for your writing?

**About the podcast:**

What made you start your *flavors unknown* podcast?

Are there any specific stories that come to mind that intrigued you along your journey of writing this book or interviewing these people on your podcast?

Do you have any quick tips/advice that you learned after interviewing all these chefs/mixologists?

Your podcast is called flavors unknown. Is there a story behind its name?

What advice have you learned from your flavors unknown podcast, where you have interviewed some of the most acclaimed chefs, pastry chefs, and mixologists, and new culinary leaders in the U.S?

Can you pinpoint one or two significant things you learned about the world of chefs in the course of your interactions with them?

What's different about the book compared to the podcast?

**About your day job:**

Your website describes that you have been working for more than 20 years in the food industry. Can you give us an idea of what you do?

How did you get into the world of flavors?

How have your own experiences in the food industry and your own personal culinary adventures helped you write this book?

**About your passion for food:**

When did your passion for cooking and the world of chefs begin?

What's your favorite thing to cook?

What are some of your favorite cookbooks?

Do you like cooking? Did talking to all these chefs have inspired you to try out some new recipes/flavors?

You are originally from France. Are the French still skeptical about American cuisine?