

Miso, Tempeh, Natto & Other Tasty Ferments: A Step-by-Step Guide to Fermenting Grains and Beans

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In their book *Miso, Tempeh, Natto & Other Tasty Ferments*, Kirsten and Christopher Shockey argue that fermented foods are not only good for us, but also—because they are sustainable and nutrient-rich—good for the planet.

Fermenting—for thousands of years a means of preserving foods—is a fun way to introduce new elements into the way we eat. This book covers learning about, making, and eating fermented legumes and beans, which it calls the workhorses of the plant world—nutritious, tasty, and the backbone of many cuisines.

Each sections' components and techniques are remarkably detailed, with step-by-step instructions accompanied by corresponding photographs that impart complete understanding of how to perform the techniques at hand. Useful sidebars offer pro tips and other valuable information, while “Meet the Maker” features introduce expert artisans in the field.

Chapters—such as that on making koji (a Japanese fungus used to ferment soybeans that's used in everything from soy sauce to sake)—introduce all relevant vocabulary before discussing how the ferments work, setting the audience up with the information that's essential to producing successful batches.

The book's main focus is not on recipes, but on learning. Still, the last portion of the book comprises interesting ways to use fermented foods in cooking, including a creative recipe for Koji-cultured Pork; Miso-cured Egg Yolks; smoky, bacon-ish tempeh; and Natto Eggs Benedict. An extensive bibliography is provided for those who want to further pursue fermenting, along with a source guide to help with tracking down the components needed for fermenting.

Miso, Tempeh, Natto & Other Tasty Ferments is a detailed and informational book on the art of fermentation—recommended for professional chefs and passionate home cooks alike.

ERIC PATTERSON (July/August 2019)

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