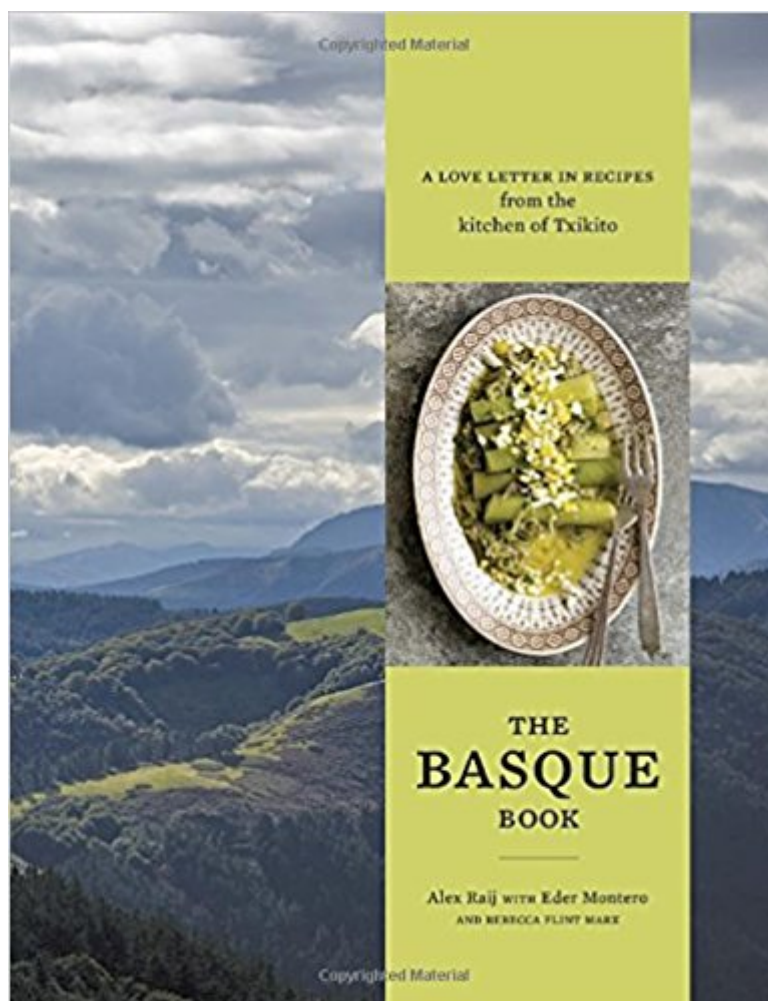


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# The Basque Book: A Love Letter In Recipes From The Kitchen Of Txikito



## Synopsis

Chefs Alexandra Rajj and Eder Montero share more than one hundred recipes from Txikito—all inspired by the home cooking traditions of the Basque Country—that will change the way you cook in this much-anticipated and deeply personal debut. Whether it's a perfectly ripe summer tomato served with just a few slivers of onion and a drizzle of olive oil, salt cod slowly poached in oil and topped with an emulsion of its own juices, or a handful of braised leeks scattered with chopped egg, Basque cooking is about celebrating humble ingredients by cooking them to exquisite perfection. Chefs Alexandra Rajj and Eder Montero are masters of this art form, and their New York City restaurant Txikito is renowned for its revelatory preparations of simple ingredients. Dishes like Salt Cod in Pil Pil sauce have fewer than five ingredients yet will astonish you with their deeply layered textures and elegant flavors. By following Rajj's careful but encouraging instructions, you can even master Squid in Its Own Ink—a rite of passage for Basque home cooks, and another dish that will amaze you with its richness and complexity. The Basque Book is a love letter: to the Basque Country, which inspired these recipes and continues to inspire top culinary minds from around the world; to ingredients high and low; and to the craft of cooking well. Read this book, make Basque food, learn to respect ingredients—and, quite simply, you will become a better cook. - Food & Wine Magazine, Editor's picks for Best of 2016

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Dining at Alex Rajj and Eder Montero's Txikito is like reading a love poem to the

Basque Country, and their cookbook reflects that seamlessly." **VICE Munchies Staff** "The Basque Book: A Love Letter in Recipes from the Kitchen of Txikito is a gorgeous deep dive into the cooking of this very special region [...] The book is jam-packed with lovely family stories, rich descriptions of the dishes—some familiar and some that will be very new to you—and excellent tips about what to look for when selecting ingredients, no matter how simple or complex a recipe may be." **Tina Ujlaki, Food & Wine Magazine** "This stellar collection offers 116 original, fresh recipes that without exception stimulate the taste buds and inspire cooks to rush into the kitchen. [...] Campfire trout, butterflied and baked with jamón ibérico and garlic, is simply wondrous, as is the paprika-marinated pork loin roast. Sweets and beverages round out this superb cookbook, an outstanding introduction to traditional Basque cuisine." **Publishers Weekly** starred review "The recipes from this stunner come from a trio of New York City restaurants—Txikito, La Vara and El Quinto Pino—but reading it feels more like taking a trip to the Spanish countryside. As much a travelogue as it is a primer, it's a perfect introduction to one of the world's most ancient and interesting culinary traditions." **PureWow** "Packed with basics (e.g., poached eggs, mayonnaise, fish stock), pinxtos (small plates), seafood dishes, and more, the book will tempt seasoned cooks and armchair travelers. Part cookbook, part travelog, this richly descriptive title is a pleasure to read and recalls evocative, landscape photography-rich works." **Library Journal** "Chef Alex Raij is magnificent, and her restaurants are among my favorites in New York. Now, with The Basque Book, she's written an essential cookbook." **Anthony Bourdain** "Alex and Eder are doing beautiful things with humble ingredients. They're cooking the food you really care about—and they're doing it well." **David Chang, chef/founder of Momofuku** "Of course, the title is all it takes to seduce me—but so does this very handsome book. The only thing more difficult to translate than the Basque language is Basque cooking, and with The Basque Book, you will be able to eat it like a Basque. What could be better than that?" **Mark Kurlansky, author of The Basque History of the World and Salt: A World History** "Alex Raij and Eder Montero have created an ode to Basque cooking that's as intimate and approachable as their own kitchen. It's just as delicious, too—each recipe rich not only in flavor, but also in feeling." **Dan Barber, chef at Blue Hill and author of The Third Plate** "The soul of a country is reflected in many of its most quotidian aspects, including its cooking. And Alex Raij and Eder Montero know this well—as well as they know how to cook. That's why this book is much

more than a brilliant recipe collection filled with good ideas, techniques, or surprising flavors from two of the most successful Basque and New York chefs. It is a journey through the customs, landscapes, and history that have shaped one of the oldest and most enigmatic cultures of Europe, that of the Basque people." — Andoni Luis Aduriz, chef and author of "Mugaritz" It is a relief for a cookbook reviewer to find a cookbook written by chefs who successfully translated professional recipes into home kitchens. Alexandra Raij and Eder Montero did an admirable job in "The Basque Book" providing a large collection of excellent Basque recipes." — San Francisco Book Review

ALEXANDRA RAIJ and EDER MONTERO are the New York City-based chefs and owners of El Quinto Pino, La Vara, and Txikito, which was named one of the best new restaurants in the United States by Travel & Leisure. Raij was voted Eater New York's 2012 Chef of the Year and has appeared on Iron Chef America, Food Curated, Foodography, and No Reservations. REBECCA FLINT MARX is a James Beard and IACP award-winning writer, and a senior editor at San Francisco magazine.

Just buy it and you will see why it's rated 5 stars

This is a gift but appears to be good book on Basque cooking.

Yes it did

Excellent!!!

Gorgeous book with simple and beautiful recipes

The Basque Book by Alexandra Raij and Eder Montero is far more than a cookbook. It's a primer on a new approach to cookery, an exploration of Basque cuisine and culture and a love story. There is more personal narrative and explanatory text than the average cookbook. The latter is important because Basque cuisine does have a few significant differences that set it apart. For example, I have never considered brining onions in cold salt water prior to cooking in order to season them more effectively. The onion sauce that is the base of many recipes is new to me, as is the heavy use of salt and olive oil. For example, using a couple tablespoons of

salt on a steak? Who would do that? Well, these chefs would before cooking and then brush most of it off so the steak is not salty, but beautifully seasoned. There is a chapter on some foundational ingredients and sauces in Basque cooking, on the whole Basque approach. I think it's something worth reading twice over because it has the potential of shifting how you cook, not just in these recipes but in your daily cooking. This cuisine has a very different foundation than what I am used to, so in that aspect, the book was a revelation. This is definitely a book for seafood lovers. There are lots of recipes with anchovies, though mostly anchovies in oil. My Swedish cooking background makes me shudder a bit because I want my anchovies in water or in salt. However, they recipes call for salting the anchovies to firm up the flesh so there's that. But there's a lot more than anchovies. There's cod, mussels, crab and every other fishy thing you can think of, it seems. There are a few, not many, recipes with other meats. She details a way of cooking steak that I am eager to try. I mean, if the pages of this book could be flavored, that page looked like the best steak on the planet. I have never cooked a steak that way, never heard of cooking a steak that way, but I can almost taste it. Unfortunately, my budget is not stretching to big rib steaks, so I will just imagine it for now. Normally I test the most tempting instead of the most questionable recipes before I write my reviews. For lunch today, I made the Potato and Romano Bean Stew. I chose that recipe to test for this review because it sounded so unlikely. Can the broth really be rich in that cooking time with just some salt? Reading it, I was not able to picture it being particularly delicious. It's so simple and unadorned. Could it really work? My thinking is that if this recipe as delicious as the introduction promises, then Raj and Montego are miracle workers. As an aside, slicing the garlic paper thin made me think of Pauly in Goodfellas. True confessions, I did not use a razor. Well, they were right. I just ate a bowl and am going to have a second. It is delicious and so simple, easy and affordable, some potatoes, beans, salt, garlic and olive oil. Of course, that is the theme of this cookbook, there are many layers of flavor in simple ingredients if they are prepared with intention. If you love to cook, this is one of the cookbooks you simply must have because it will change the way you cook in subtle ways. I am eager to try incorporating the Basque way of preparing onions into other foods, not just these recipes, but into other cuisines to see how elevating that basic ingredient will add depth and richness to those recipes. I have depended so much on mirepoix in creating new recipes and making standard dishes, but perhaps I might try sofrito instead and see where that takes me. I am excited, not just by these recipes, but to see how my own cookery evolves with these new basics. I received a copy of The Basque Book from the publisher via Blogging For Books.

A nicely laid out hardback edition featuring a collection of 114 recipes. It begins with an introduction from Alexandra about herself and her interest in Basque, how she met her husband etc. She then goes into fundamental techniques and ingredients necessary to cook in this style. I found it interesting the ways they use salt in preparing the food as I had never heard of those techniques before. Salt, onions and oil are at the heart of all Basque food - so she delves into the different ways they are used. She tells that in Basque food all dishes are equal value - meat is not necessarily the star of the show. Meals are built of textures and temperatures from a selection. While I did find this book a great introduction to Basque food, I am a bit put off by all the strange ingredients that pop up in things I would consider making. Things such as chomiero pepper paste, jamon serrano, guindilla or arbor chile, marjoram sprigs, black truffle paste, trout roe, sherry vinegar, instant dash, foie gras. This is definitely a great book if you are into seafood. I'm not so much, so my choices are more limited throughout the book. She has a whole section on cod and how to salt cure it etc. Great information for those that love it! Also seen in there are recipes with cockles, crab, shrimp, mussels, sardines, tuna, periwinkles, squid, monkfish, bream, hake,. Also blood sausages, rabbit, garden snails, Recipes standing out for me I want to try are the chicken croquettes, Ham croquettes, Spiced lamb meatballs with warm pea salad, poached leeks, classic spanish tortilla, basque style yeast buns, Breakfast yogurt cake, Spice Cookies, There are not pictures for every recipe. The writer does recommend you buy imported Basque or Spanish ingredients for the recipes in this book. She has a section at the end listing the different ingredients and her recommendations. She stated through the book the importance of fresh/ correct ingredients to get the right flavors etc. I feel a bit overwhelmed to even try anything since how can I know if I make it correctly? I think I need to just go to her restaurant, decide what I like and then go back to the recipe book. Then at least there is something to compare it to. The photos look delicious and the way things are cooked looks so flavorful. After reading other reviews on this book I thought it was more recipes I could make now but after reading the entire book through it's evident there are specialist ingredients required for most of these recipes, and most of them are probably only found online. Overall, I enjoyed reading about Basque culture and food. The photography throughout was beautiful. I probably won't make too many recipes from this book as most of them just don't appeal to me personally. Once I try any I will update my review to let you know how I found the actual recipe. Please note, Blogging for Books sent me this book in exchange for my review. This review is entirely my own.

How can I review a book like this? My kitchen had the smells of the Basque country wafting through

it. Every taste was unique! Every combination wonderful! From the Lamb Meatballs, to the stew, to the Borscht with a Spanish twist! Magnificent! BUY THIS BOOK. IT IS A MUST FOR YOUR KITCHEN! No more Pizza and Chinese food for me! I love the way Alexandra weaves her personal experiences about and with the recipes into her book. I want to run to her restaurant! But I can't afford the flight! Thank god I could afford the book! BRAVO!

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