

EATING & DRINKING

IN MY KITCHEN

Gregory Gourdet

The "Top Chef" judge and newly minted cookbook author on the magic of salt, his coconut obsession and the healing power of plants

IT'S BEEN A BUSY YEAR for Portland, Ore., chef Gregory Gourdet. For five months, at the height of the pandemic, he ran Kann, a Haitian-inspired pop-up and outdoor yurt village. He also entered a pod of 180 people to film the Portland-based 18th season of "Top Chef," in which he appeared not as a contestant, as he has in seasons past, but in the role of guest judge. Just this week, he published his first cookbook, "Everyone's Table: Global Recipes for Modern Health" (Harper Wave).

The recipes reflect Mr. Gourdet's culinary CV as well as the way he eats at home. He earned his chops cooking light, bright, cosmopolitan fare in a number of star-chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's restaurants, and he draws inspiration from the assertive flavors of Haiti, where his family is from, as well as other cuisines. After overcoming addiction several years ago, Mr. Gourdet took up an intense commitment to physical fitness and a paleo diet to fuel it. The recipes in "Everyone's Table" contain no gluten, dairy, soy, refined sugar or legumes. They are ideal for the modern family that likely accommodates at least one "dietary distinction"; Mr. Gourdet refuses to think of them as restrictions. The 200 vibrant, satisfying dishes—from tamarind barbecue ribs to luxurious slow-cooked salmon—stand out for how much flavor they pack in, not what's "missing." "You wouldn't notice, and that's the point," writes Mr. Gourdet. "All you'd see is food you want to make."

The kitchen tool I can't live without is: my spice grinder. I just use a \$20 coffee grinder. And my small digital scale. And my Microplane, because I love zesting citrus with it, mincing ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon sticks. It's really handy. I tested my book with the worst blender in the world just to make sure that no matter what type of blender you have, you can make the recipes. But investing in a high-wattage blender is definitely something I encourage. It makes life so much easier.

The cookbook I turn to again and again is: "Thai Food" by David Thompson. I read that book a lot. And "Zahav" by Michael Solomonov and Steven Cook—it's very comprehensive. Another one of my favorite books is "American Seafood" by Barton Seaver. I love "The Food

Lab" by J. Kenji López-Alt because of the science behind it, and it has such perfect basic techniques. And "Jubilee" by Toni Tipton Martin, for the history and culture and stories behind the food.

My pantry is always stocked with: a vast array of chiles, from Thai chiles to chipotles, guajillo, ancho, chile flakes, chile oil. Alternative flours too: almond flour, coconut flour, tapioca starch. And alternative sweeteners: maple syrup, honey, coconut sugar, palm sugar. Fish sauce. Also olive oil, coconut oil and avocado oil.

My refrigerator is always stocked with: oh god, nothing! It's never stocked. When I was writing my book, I was recipe testing at a friend's big, beautiful kitchen until the pandemic started. Then I was



PICTURE OF HEALTH Clockwise from above: Mr. Gourdet in his Portland, Ore., apartment with a few examples from his collection of a couple hundred houseplants; essential kitchen tools; various chiles; coconut, olive and avocado oils.



F. MARTIN RAMIN/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; E. KOSMAS FLORES (SALMON)

forced to finish my book from my little bachelor pad, and I had pots and pans just everywhere, and my fridge was overflowing with food. But as soon as I started working at my pop-up, I posted a picture of my fridge and I had three turkey slices, mustard, hot sauce, kimchi, sauerkraut and pikliz [the spicy Haitian condiment of pickled carrots, cabbage and chiles]. So I am not the best at having a stocked fridge. But I do always have hot sauce in there, and ferments and pickles. Always pikliz.

The pan I reach for most is: my Finex cast iron. It's a local company. They make these gorgeous handmade cast-iron pans with a unique eight-sided shape. They're my go-to for roasting chicken and baking clafouti and quick cakes.

A drink I love is: Betera. It's a botanical sparkling beverage that's dry and refreshingly bitter. I enjoy drinking it after work when I've been tasting food all day and I'm a little bit tired and ready to unwind. It's cleansing on the palate.

The most underrated ingredient is: salt. Not only does it develop flavor, it can bring out moisture in certain foods and soften them. If you salt onions, they'll soften and lose their acidity. I use salt to cure things, like fish, or to marinate meat. It firms up the texture, creating a better mouth feel. Oftentimes when we feel a dish is lacking in flavor, we visualize how much salt we put in and think it's already well seasoned. But adding just a little more salt can make it more round. And using different types of salt. I use kosher salt and sea salt and flaky sea salt. It's fun to play with different salts for different methods.

If I'm not in my kitchen, I'm probably: watering my plants. I have about 200 houseplants and a little sunroom in my apartment. I like to sit there and look outside and spend time with my plants and just work or relax.

A food or drink I could happily have every day of my life is: coconut water. Because I am obsessed with anything coconut. I love coconut flavor. I love coconut milk. I love coconut oil. I love coconut cream. I love coconut caramel. I love coconut-scented soaps and lotions. As far as prepared dishes go, my go-to is either a strawberry jelly and sunflower-seed butter sandwich or roast chicken. I think it's a tie.

—Edited from an interview by Gabriella Gershenson

Slow-cooked Salmon With Ti Malice Sauce

This salmon owes its remarkable tenderness to a foolproof technique Mr. Gourdet learned from Jean Georges Vongerichten. The tart, spicy sauce takes its name from a character in Haitian folklore. If you can't find red pearl onions, shallots cut in ¼-inch half-moons work, too.

Total Time 1½ hours
Serves 6

For the Ti Malice sauce:
3 cups red pearl onions
1½ tablespoons kosher salt
3 limes
1 large Scotch bonnet or habanero chile, very finely chopped
6 tablespoons white



vinegar
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

For the salmon:

1 2-pound salmon fillet
2 teaspoons kosher salt
3 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1. Make the sauce: Soak onions in a small bowl of warm water for 20 minutes to loosen skins. Take a few onions at a time out of the water, trim the tips and bottom nubs, and use a small paring knife to peel off the skins. When you've peeled them all, halve them lengthwise.

2. In a medium mixing bowl, combine onions and salt, toss well, and let sit 15 minutes. Once onions have softened, pull the layers apart. Use a Microplane to finely grate zest limes into bowl, then halve 1 or 2 limes and squeeze in 3 tablespoons juice. Reserve remaining limes for another use. Stir in chile and vinegar. Let everything sit 15 minutes more.

3. Transfer mixture to a small pot, add oil and thyme, and set over medium heat. Cook gently, stirring occasionally, until onions are translucent but still have a slight crunch, 7-8 minutes. Sauce will keep in an airtight container in the fridge up to 2 weeks. Before serving, gently reheat in a small

pan to just a little warmer than room temperature.

4. Make the salmon: Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Season salmon all over with salt. Pour 1 tablespoon oil in a baking dish and rub to coat. Lay salmon in dish skin-side down (if your salmon has skin). Drizzle on remaining oil to cover fish. Bake just until salmon goes from bright pink to light orange, with tiny white beads on the surface at the thickest part, or until internal temperature registers 120 degrees on a thermometer, 20-25 minutes. Transfer to a platter and spoon sauce over.

—Adapted from "Everyone's Table" by Gregory Gourdet and JJ Goode (Harper Wave)

SLOW FOOD FAST / SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES



The Chef
Rashida Holmes

Her Pop-Up Business

Bridgetown Roti, Los Angeles

What She's Known For

Applying chops acquired at top L.A. restaurants to the Caribbean dishes of her childhood. Building significant pop-up buzz, even in a pandemic.

WSJ+ Members:

Sign up for a seafood cooking class with Rashida Holmes at [wsjplus.com/slow-foodfast](https://www.wsjplus.com/slow-foodfast).

Fried Red Snapper With Mango Chimichurri

"TRADITION IS GREAT, but I don't think you should be beholden to it," said chef Rashida Holmes. "It's fun to play." In her final Slow Food Fast recipe, spiced and fried whole red snapper, a dish with Caribbean roots, is sauced with a mango chimichurri of the chef's invention. "I love the way the mango's acidity works with the spices," she said.

Before cooking the fish, Ms. Holmes rubs on an aromatic paste of garlic, ginger, turmeric and other spices. After a quick fry in a shallow pool of oil, the snapper is crisp on

the outside, succulent and flaky within; frying it whole guards against overcooking.

Ms. Holmes recommends using a heavy pan for frying and leaving the fish alone until its crust sets. If some seasoning falls off as you flip it, no worries. A good dollop of mango chimichurri will cover up any inconsistencies. Forgiving, visually impressive and full of vibrant flavor, this will make a stunning dish for the return of dinner parties. But it's also quick and low-pressure enough for any weeknight. —Kitty Greenwald

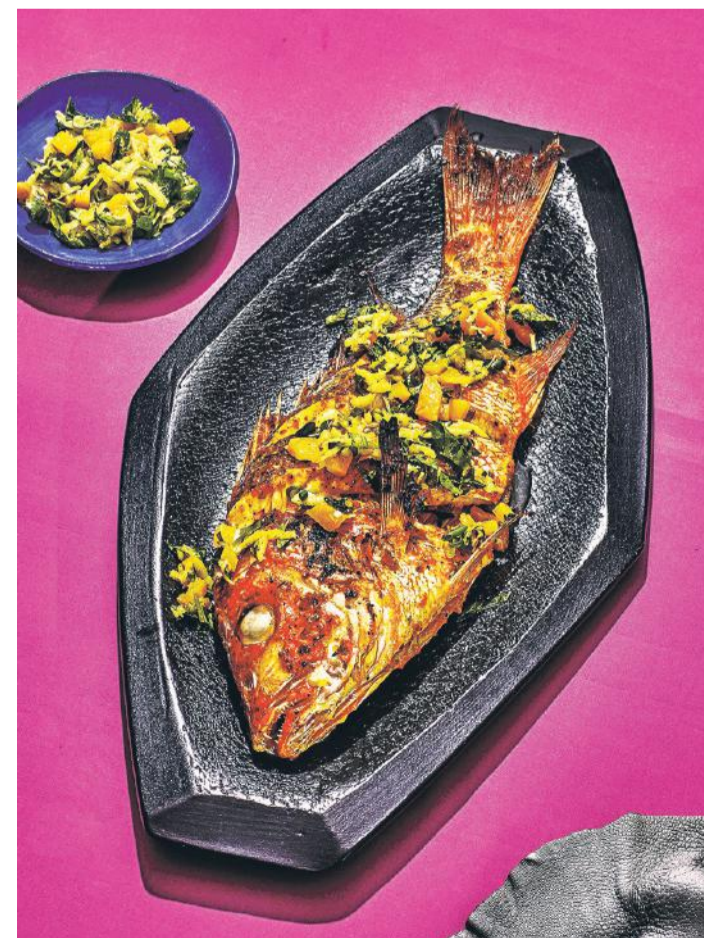
Total Time 35 minutes
Serves 4

1 whole red snapper (about 2 pounds), scaled and cleaned
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 cloves garlic, finely grated
2 teaspoons finely grated fresh turmeric
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
4 thinly sliced scallions, white and green parts separated
½ teaspoon Aleppo pepper (optional)
½ teaspoon ground fenugreek (optional)
1 teaspoon dried oregano, preferably Mexican
½ cup palm or canola oil

½ green mango, peeled and coarsely grated or minced
1½ tablespoons minced chives
1½ tablespoons minced mint
2½ tablespoons minced cilantro
Juice and finely grated zest of 2 lemons
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
3 tablespoons olive oil

1. Dry fish well and cut 3 diagonal slits into thickest parts of fillets on both sides. Season with salt and set aside.
2. With a mortar and pestle or food processor, smash garlic, turmeric, ginger, scallion whites, Aleppo pepper, fenugreek, oregano and 1½ tablespoons palm oil. Add a pinch

of salt and pepper and blend to form a uniform, spreadable paste. Rub paste all over fish and set aside to marinate.
3. Squeeze any excess water from grated mango. In a small bowl, mix mango with chives, mint, cilantro, lemon zest, 2 tablespoons scallion greens and red pepper flakes. Stir in olive oil and season with salt to taste. Set sauce aside.
4. Pour remaining palm oil into a large cast-iron pan over medium heat. Once oil is hot and shimmering, lay in fish and fry until exterior crisps and flesh easily flakes, 5-8 minutes per side.
5. Remove fried fish from pan and drizzle with lemon juice. Serve with sauce on the side or spooned overtop.



HELLO SUNSHINE In this recipe, green mango brings bright flavor and color to punchy, herbaceous chimichurri sauce.

CHIESE CRAIG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; FOOD STYLING BY PEARL JONES; PROP STYLING BY SOPHIE STRANGIO; MICHAEL HOEWELER (PORTRAIT)