



[Chiltern Firehouse: The Cookbook](#) by Nuno Mendes and André Balazs, copyright 2017 by Chiltern Street Hotel Ltd. Published in the United States by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC. Photographs copyright 2016 by Peden + Munk.

Our Summary:

In our modern foodie world it's safe to say there aren't many originals. Those that are, likely are the chefs at restaurants cloaked in stars, awards and accolades. They're honored because they seek perfection in their preparations; ingredients are transformed into ingredients. This is cooking at the highest level. Some might say unattainable for the home-cook. But it's not. Really, it's not. It's working through a collection of little recipes that come together to create something greater

than the parts. These are the recipes that fill the pages of the [Chiltern Firehouse](#) cookbook. Recipes most everyone can execute. The thrill is working through each component and, through the course of a day or two or three, you'll see the dish emerge. Then you simply assemble the dish, and take your place among friends and family as a culinary god(dess). [Chiltern Firehouse](#) is the road to culinary nirvana.

What you need to know:

Get it: [Chiltern Firehouse: The Cookbook](#), by Nuno Mendes and André Balazs, copyright 2017 by Chiltern Street Hotel Ltd. Published in the United States by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, April 18, 2017, Hardcover \$50.00 ([Amazon \\$33.98](#); [Kindle \\$19.99](#))

See it: 320 pages with richly colored photographs of each finished dish, and the restaurant, its workers and guests in candid, beautiful portraiture.

Make it: 22 cocktail recipes, plus the syrups and macerations and 6 aperitivi recipes; 5 snack recipes, 19 starter recipes, 19 main recipes, 9 dessert recipes, including 4 ice cream recipes, 6 brunch recipes, including 4 bloody mary recipes, and the countless component recipes, methods and techniques included in each recipe, as well as in side bars.

Our Review:

The hardest part to the [Chiltern Firehouse](#) cookbook is that it looks hard. And, yes, while this is restaurant cooking at the highest level, it's not really that hard. A lot of steps, yes. Some odd or hard to find ingredients, yes. Components to recipes that can't possibly be completed in an evening's time, yes. But that doesn't make it hard. It makes [Chiltern Firehouse](#) focused and purposeful, and definitely manageable in any kitchen. To be successful with these creative recipes, one need only plan, and even that is done for you: components are broken down into manageable recipes, and the order in which you need prepare them is the order in which they appear.

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As tempting as the recipes are – both in name and in richly colored, gorgeous photographs – most will find them elaborate, even ambitious. Recipes for the [Chiltern Firehouse](#) signature *Crab Doughnuts*, or *Baby Artichokes*, *Fresh Ricotta*, *Herbed Rye*, and *Lardo* or make *Green and White Asparagus with Brown Butter Mayonnaise* do sound like a lot of work. Still, who wouldn't want to offer family and friends a vegetable dish like *Wood-Grilled Cauliflower Heart* that starts with a spinach puree of cured spinach leaves and sauerkraut, and vadouvan – a mixture of middle-eastern spices – that season the onions? For that matter, learning how to “cook” classic cocktails with a sous vide technique is as compelling as making the nut and herb oils, fruit macerations, seasonings and sauces that are integral parts of each recipe. Elaborate? Ambitious? Do you dare try? The answer in each case is “yes!”

To say that [Chiltern Firehouse](#) will allow you grow as a cook, is fair. But that doesn't mean your skill set will be challenged. With mainstream fare like *Firehouse Caesar*, *Seared Beef Salad*, and *Roast Chicken Salad*, you'll be out of the gate before you're wondering why there are so many steps and little recipes to get to a “salad.” No doubt you'll persevere, who wouldn't want to know how to make *Chicken Fat Mayonnaise* anyway? And, you'll persevere through the shorter, but bolder components that go into *Creamed Corn*, *Sweet Potato Puree*, or *English Raspberries with Lemon and Mint Granita*. In fact, most home-cooks, including adventurous beginners, will find no problem navigating each component recipe that lends itself to the completed dish; your kitchen (in most cases) is already stocked with the equipment you need, too. Finding some odd ingredients is likely to prove more frustrating. Things like truffle paste, or sea purslane, or pine needles aren't staples of most grocery chains.

Here's the point: whether you dive into the simpler recipes in [Chiltern Firehouse](#) or tackle the more complex dishes like *Iberico Pork with Chard Miso and Zucchini*, *Monkfish Cooked over Pine*, *Puffed Barley*, and *Fennel*, or *Aged Beef Filet with Mushroom Caramel*, *Roasted Onions*, and *Kale*, these are the kinds of recipes that change the way you think of yourself as a cook. They allow you the thrill of tasting 3-, 4-, or even 5- or more, component recipes that come together as one, to elevate and change the taste experience of them all. *That* is the holy grail of cooking. *That* is [Chiltern Firehouse](#).

Recipes to cook from: [Chiltern Firehouse: The Cookbook](#)

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[Firehouse Caesar](#)

Chef Donna's Notes: Little Gems lettuce is sweet compact lettuce that resembles baby romaine stalks. Substitute the inner tender green leaves of romaine lettuce.

[Seared Beef Salad](#)

Chef Donna's Notes: White Rice flour can be found in Gluten Free sections of a well-stocked grocery store or in the ethnic section. To make your own, do an internet search for “how to

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make rice flour”. *Hon Dashi* is a dashi soup stock; it is not dashi. Most better grocers will have the small jar of granules in the ethnic section; Asian grocers will carry it. An internet search will give you a visual reference. Substitute 1 cup beef broth, reduce by half then add 1 tablespoon soy sauce; measure the 2 teaspoons from this mixture. The taste will not be the same as the hon dashi. Mirin is a sweet rice wine used in Japanese cooking and is available in most grocery stores in the ethnic section; it has a very long shelf life. Substitutions can be found online.

[Iberico Pork with Chard Miso and Zucchini](#)

Chef Donna's Notes: Miso paste (not miso soup) can sometimes be found in better grocery stores, usually in the soup aisle or in the healthy foods refrigerated section. It has a very long shelf life when refrigerated. *Iberico* Pork is raised in Portugal and Spain; the “presa” cut comes from between the shoulder and the beginning of the loin. True Iberico pork can be bought online and is impressively expensive. To substitute, ask your butcher for Pork Shoulder Steaks (Pork Shoulder *Blade* Steaks will have a bone, but can be used) or Pork Under Blade Steak.