

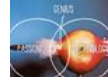
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Ideas in Food: The Endlessly Creative Kitchen

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That's the beauty of the food world. People's opinions may clash but there's room for whatever you want to do in your own kitchen.

- Alex and Aki, *Ideas in Food*

Just how delicious can food get? That's a question Alex Talbot and Aki Kamoza, husband-and-wife chefs, set out to answer every day with their site, [Ideas in Food](#) – a site that brings avant-garde restaurant techniques to the home kitchen and documents the results. One day it might be [stuffed pigs trotter](#), the next, [smoked fried chicken](#) (yum).

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Aki and Alex are also the authors of the [Great Recipes for Publishers](#) and [They Work](#) – a handbook for getting very creative in the kitchen. If you've ever wanted to bring some of the creativity of chefs like Grant Achatz of [Alinea](#), Ferran Adrià of [elBulli](#), Heston Blumenthal of [The Fat Duck](#), or Mark Lieberman of [AQ](#) into your own kitchen, consider Ideas in Food (the book and the blog) required reading.

[Amanda Hesser of Food52](#) also named Ideas in Food as one of her top picks for the [SAY 100 food channel](#).

We checked in with Aki and Alex about what experiments they're trying now, what cool gadgets they're using in their test kitchen – and what food trends they're watching in 2012.

Kneading or no kneading, salting pasta water or not ... what have you found are the biggest food controversies? We like to salt our pasta water and make no-knead bread. In our world it's all about developing flavor. Most of the food controversies out there are short lived because people quickly figure out what's best for them. That's the beauty of the food world. People's opinions may clash but there's room for whatever you want to do in your own kitchen.

Your kitchen is famously equipped like a science lab. What experiments are you working on right now? Any mysteries you're trying to solve? We are playing around a lot with naturally fermented products from sourdough to kefir. Another recent (and still unsolved) challenge is the perfect roast duck. We are constantly experimenting with recipes and techniques to figure out the best and most efficient way to cook something. Our motto is that the results must always be better than the original to make any changes worthwhile.

You're also inventors – what are some of the coolest things you've invented? The coolest things we have done change depending on the day, as we write this, no-knead brioche comes to mind as does [shrimp chorizo](#). Figuring out a "fruit glue" by using low methoxyl pectin was huge, as was using agar to clarify liquids without freezing. Even creating our own "perfect" roast chicken by butterflying it and roasting it over a bed of broccoli rabe was a great invention that particular day. Any breakthrough is going to be cool for us because it usually results in a great meal.

You like to use technology in the kitchen – what gadgets or food technology are you most interested in right now? We are huge fans of the [Irinix blast chiller](#), the [Arcobaleno AEX18 pasta extruder](#), and the [CVap](#) as more "techy" equipment that has become available to professional kitchens and dedicated home cooks. Thinking of our daily *batterie de cuisine*, our All Clad pots and steamer are indispensable, as are the electric griddle, the food processor, blender, Kitchen Aid mixer, pressure cooker and dehydrator. These are things we have used on a daily basis forever and cannot imagine living without.

You've been blogging since 2004. What have been your all-time most popular posts or recipes? Our all time most popular post was on hydrating cookie dough to make the [36-hour aged cookie dough](#) in about a minute. We actually developed that piece into an essay that was included in [The Kitchen as Laboratory: Reflections on the Science of Food and Cooking](#), which is being released on January 31, 2012.

What would your readers be surprised to learn about you when it comes to food? We've always dreamed of owning our own hot dog joint. Someplace casual with delicious food where people can come with their families for a quick meal on a regular basis and as their kids grow up they can come in with their friends and eventually with families of their own. The kind of place that makes memories for generations.

What other food blogs do you read for inspiration? Who else is doing some interesting stuff in this area of food ideas? There are so many. These days you have to ask yourself what exactly is a blog because there are so many collaborative sites that are almost like magazines in blog form. We read [Michael Ruhlman](#), [Khymos](#), [Michael Laiskonis](#), [Orangette](#), [Ulterior Epicure](#), [Docsconz](#), [David Lebovitz](#), [Eater](#), [Serious Eats](#), and those are just the tip of the iceberg. There are so many great food blogs out that it's almost impossible to keep up with all of them and on



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the flip side, sometimes it seems that as soon as we find a great blog they stop writing. We hate when that happens.

What are your favorite food trends of 2012 shaping up to be? What do you find interesting? Steaming, it's a great technique with a variety of applications that has largely fallen by the wayside. This is the year it comes back with a vengeance because it's so useful. Cheese making and fermenting dairy at home are also vintage techniques that are making a comeback because you can make cheese and yogurt at home less expensively than you can buy it and the product is better because it is so fresh and made to your own taste. Extruded pasta, made at home and in restaurants, are taking off. People are experimenting with different shapes and [flavored doughs](#). It's proving to be a wonderful outlet for creativity and delicious food.

Any food guilty pleasures? Cookies and cake for breakfast with [Counter Culture](#) coffee.

Follow Aki on Twitter [@akikamozawa](#) and Alex [@ideasinfood](#)

[Photo: Ideas in Food, [Venison Tartare](#)]

Friday is Venn-day. *Get it every week.*

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