

Building Flavour

Kitchen

The five tastes, and how to fix a dish that tastes flat.

The five basic tastes, and what each contributes.

Taste	From	Adds
Salt	Salt, soy, anchovy, cheese	Amplifies everything else
Sweet	Sugar, honey, carrot, onion	Balances acid and bitterness
Sour	Lemon, vinegar, tamarind	Lifts and brightens
Bitter	Coffee, greens, char	Depth, complexity
Umami	Tomato, mushroom, soy, parmesan	Savoury depth, body

Layering umami sources multiplies the effect. Tomato plus parmesan plus anchovy is more savoury than any of them alone.