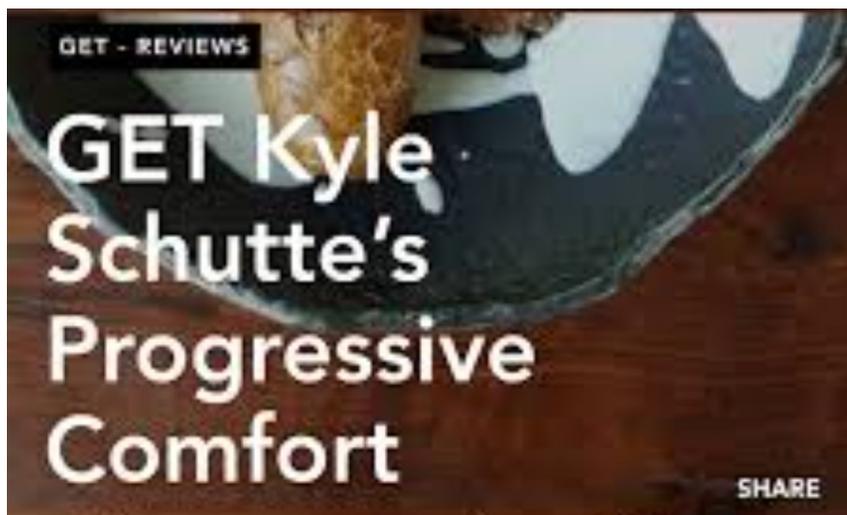


PRØHBTØ



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GET Kyle Schutte's Progressive Comfort

Progressive Comfort is not a cookbook; it's a chefbook.

WTF does that mean?

Like the cooking style of Kyle Schutte himself, this book puts a new spin on a familiar format, in this case using storytelling to teach the culinary arts. Rather than offer an exhaustive list of recipes, it only contains few, but each recipe is fully brought to life in terms of inspiration, purpose and technique. If a cookbook is about following existing recipes, Progressive Comfort is about leading readers to create their own.

PRØHBTØ first covered Schutte four years ago for his sold out Ice Cream for Dinner pop-up that featured flavors like sushi rice (topped with sea urchin), roasted peach (inside a salad) and lemongrass (paired with pork belly). Fittingly, ice cream is where he starts the conversation in his first book. For the first recipe, fresh mint ice cream, Schutte describes making ice cream an experience that "draw[s] on the past in order to enrich the present." By definition, comfort food should be comforting, and connecting to a familiar frame of reference helps diners feel more comfortable taking on more daring culinary adventures.

For another recipe, the chef describes how a fellow cook came from the farmer's market and challenged him to make a dish in less than 20 minutes from the ingredients in his shopping bag. After initially resisting, Schutte accepted the challenge and made tempura mushrooms topped with fondue cheese and grilled chestnuts, which he named Wild Mushroom Nachos. Rather than just provide the recipe (which he does), the chef explains his thought process, what he learned from the experience and how to apply it elsewhere. He provides what might be described as a 360-degree view of the dish.

Other recipes include a caramelized baguette with emulsified marrow and cola salt as well as a potato waffle topped with leek butter and a potato & leek broth, among others.

The narrative style should have appeal to almost everyone, not just chefs, but Progressive Comfort seems particularly relevant for young cooks trying to define who they are and how they want to distinguish themselves. Schutte describes his own journey down vastly different forks in the road, from watching chef Richard Blais turn shrimps into noodles to a master's class in old-school pickling, braising, brining, smoking and curing under Tom Harvey. He stresses the importance of learning why you do something, not just how, and recommends specific cookbooks, documentaries and food shows. He even describes the culture change that occurred in the wake of The Food Network and celebrity chefs.

At one point, the chef unleashes a series of rapid-fire recommendations: "Start reading. Start buying, tasting and cooking new and unfamiliar ingredients. Start pairing things. Some pairings will work, keep those. Some pairings will fail, discard those. Keep notes. Go out to eat, not necessarily at expensive places, but certainly unfamiliar ones. Read menus. Write menus. Keep them. Not because it will be fun to look back and see how far you have come, but for the possibility of unearthing a good idea you once had and making it great with the experience you have since gained. Most importantly, hold nothing back."

Across 163 pages, Schutte explains how he developed the principles behind his culinary brand, which he admits is controversially progressive. "My respect for traditional technique while rejecting traditional dishes [is what] ultimately defined me as a chef." Nevertheless, he defines his guiding principles as the need for food to be fun yet sophisticated, innovative yet familiar, and humane yet accessible.

On the latter point, Schutte —who dedicated the book to his late, great dog Duke — discusses how he tries to balance his intense love for animals with seemingly cruel cooking techniques inherent in cleaning crabs, boiling lobsters and other common practices. He challenges all chefs to support local, humane and sustainable food practices.

Finally, for those who love food porn, the book finishes with a visual history of "progressive comfort" dishes that Schutte created over the years. This includes a restructured caprese salad, kumamoto oysters with compressed cantaloupe and Sprite ice, sweet tea-poached lamb lollipops, and a lobster ceviche with popcorn Jello and Fritos. If you want to see what bruléed burrata cheese with brown butter sorbet looks like, these pages are for you.

Chef Schutte put a lot of passion into this book, and it's not just evidenced in the words: Progressive Comfort debuts today as a free download available [here](#).