

Introduction

Making flavors is fun. It is also intensely rewarding. I count myself fortunate indeed to have chanced upon a profession in which I am paid to indulge my hobby. I have never lost sight of my roots or forgotten the simple pleasure of creative achievement.

Very few books have been written on the subject of creating flavors from the viewpoint of a creative flavorist. Most books concentrate on the academic side of the subject rather than the creative side. The aim of this book is to provide a real practical handbook for flavorists and those wishing to understand the art of flavor creation.

Training new flavorists is one of the most rewarding aspects of the profession. It is highly satisfying to watch the progress of trainees and their gradual steps toward independence. It is also a great catalyst and forces the trainer to organize their thoughts. The same can be said of writing a book, only more so!

The second edition updates each subject with the key developments from the first decade of the twenty-first century. Some errors have been corrected and many gaps have been filled.

This book contains a brief history of the flavor industry, setting the current changes in the industry in a historical perspective and attempting to chart the future. The heart of the book is the chapter on flavor creation. My personal approach is set out in detail. Alternative approaches are also discussed (and hopefully not dismissed out of hand).

A common thread tying much of this book together is my approach to flavor profiling. Flavor profiles have a chapter of their own.

Important synthetic ingredients are categorized by chemical structure, to help understand the relationships within each chemical family, and are given flavor profiles.

A different approach is taken with natural flavoring materials. Plant families provide interesting relationships within a few of the major families but rapidly become so obscure that a degree in botany is required to find anything. In any case, recent genetic research has demonstrated that many of the existing botanical classifications are incorrect. For these two reasons, I have listed natural flavoring materials alphabetically for ease of reference. The most important constituents, in flavor terms, are listed and given flavor profiles.

Marie Wright's chapter on major flavors provides detailed information on the top flavor types from the individual viewpoint of a highly successful senior flavorist. They are categorized by flavor profiles and the most useful ingredients are evaluated. The emphasis in this chapter is on simplicity and elegance.

Other chapters discuss in detail the considerable demands of different end products, delivery systems, flavor matching, regional flavor preferences and regulatory systems.

Over the years I have worked within virtually every conceivable company structure. Some ideas work and some do not. My final chapter "Elysium" sets out my idea of a perfect flavor company.

Clearly, no one book could hope to cover every aspect of flavor creation. I have tried to ensure that this book is complementary to the existing literature. I hope it will prove to be a source of some creative insight and inspiration.