

Week 1 – The Elements Of Heat Transfer

Matching the TYPE of heat in cooking to the food item is an essential skill in cooking. “The definition of cooking is the transfer of heat to food”, you’ll hear the Chef say, “HOW you control that heat is the key to all of cooking.” Chef Todd will also give you “the keys to the kingdom” in the very first week, the science behind what happens to food when you cook it at 4 very important temperature indicators that all cooks should be aware of. In this week’s lesson you’ll discover the different ways to impart heat to food and how to control that heat for the best results.

Week 2 – Basic Sauté Method

The quickest and easiest way to immediately improve your cooking is by following the 9 steps in the sauté method. Once you can duplicate the method, it will empower YOU to choose the ingredients you desire. This week’s lesson will answer the questions about stovetop cooking including; when to turn the item over, when to add aromatic vegetables to the pan, how to tell when an item is done, and how to make instant pan sauces.

Week 3 – Advanced Sauté Method

Adding to your newly acquired knowledge of Heat Transfer and Basic Sauté, the Chef will demonstrate combination methods to use on top of your stove to retain color and moisture in sautéed dishes. If you’ve ever made fish that was too dry or arrived at a colorless and bland piece of chicken, advanced sauté will solve those issues.

Week 4 – Grilling

Grilling is one of the most difficult cooking methods to master yet most people believe there’s nothing to it. Whether you cook on charcoal or gas, your grill puts out the most intense heat of any other device in your home, making it even more difficult to control. Should you close the lid or leave it open? How do you tell when a steak is done? How do you keep fish from sticking to the grill? If you have any of these questions, the methods behind grilling will answer them for you.

Week 5 – Boil, Simmer and Poach

Moist cooking methods are ignored by many home cooks and professionals alike. Just because something is cooked in water, it shouldn’t have to be subjected to violent movement and high temperatures. When you can recognize the difference between a full boil, a simmer, and correct poaching, you’ll be able to add flavors to delicate items cooked in liquids.

Week 6 – Steaming Methods

As one skill continues to build upon the previous, this week’s lesson continues with moist cooking methods and their use in retaining the color, texture and nutrition of foods. You’ll also discover the best method for cooking delicate “composed” foods like stuffed fish and seafood.

Week 7 – Poaching And Braising

You’ll have fantastic breakfasts when you discover the RIGHT way to poach an egg, controlling moist heat and being absolutely sure of the correct temperatures needed to arrive at great results. The second part of this week’s lesson will combine the Basic Sauté Method from Week 2 with the moist cooking skills of Week 5 to guide you through the best cooking method for tenderizing tough cuts of meat over a “low and slow” cooking process with the basic procedure behind braising.

Week 8 – Kitchen Knives – The Chef’s Knife

Now armed with the ability to control both dry and moist heat, it’s time to make sure all your food items cook at the same rate. “Consistency of cut is consistency of cook”, is one of Chef Todd’s favorite sayings. He’ll share the only 4 knives you need in your kitchen, how to sharpen knives, what the sharpening steel is for, the correct way to hold a chef’s knife, and the safest way to use it effectively. You’ll discover the best way to dice an onion and be on your way to seeking out fresh foods to use your new knife skills upon.



Week 9 – Kitchen Knives – Slicing, Paring, Boning Knives

Applying the correct tool to the right job is paramount in preparation of ingredients. It can make kitchen tasks very easy or frustratingly hard. The correct grip, stroke and use of the three remaining knives will be demonstrated for the safest and most effective habits.

Week 10 – Tomato Concasse and Fire Roasted Red Peppers

Now that you've adopted great kitchen knife habits, it's time to return to the transfer of heat to food. In this week's lesson you'll learn the pro-level secrets behind removing the skin and seeds from tomatoes and red bell peppers for use in soups, sauces or side dishes.

Week 11 – Creating Stocks and Flavorful Liquids

One of the secrets chefs know is that flavorful liquids can create depth of taste in any dish. This week's lesson will give the science and biology behind creating stocks and broths from usually discarded kitchen scraps. The correct procedures for white stock and brown stock will be reviewed to give you the most savory soups and sauces using the flavorful liquids you create.

Week 12 – Basic Sauces and Thickening Agents

A flavorful stock is the foundation to all sauces, but if a sauce doesn't stick to the food and winds up in a puddle on the plate, it's useless. Chef Todd will discuss the 3 basic elements in all sauces and demonstrate how to thicken a liquid to create sauces that can make or break the meal.

Week 13 – Advanced Sauces and Tomato Sauce

You may want to review Week 10 for this lesson because it calls upon your ability to peel and seed a tomato without cooking it all the way through. You'll discover the best techniques for making a great tomato sauce, and using the science of thickening agents, Chef Todd will clarify the confusion behind making Alfredo sauce for pasta.

Week 14 – Barbeque Sauces

There are as many barbeque sauces as there are barbeque sauce makers, but there is still only one scientific principle behind all of them. This week's lesson gives you insight into the 3 basic ingredients that EVERY barbeque sauce should have while Chef Todd creates three distinctly different sauces using the same technique to inspire you to create YOUR own signature sauce.

Week 15 – The Perfect Hamburger

You WILL be a grill master when you arrive at Week 15 because you'll take the knowledge you gained in Week 4, combine it with Week 1's Elements of Heat Transfer, and now change the cooking method on your outdoor grill. When the chef demonstrates his procedure for grilling the perfect burger, you'll be able to replicate the method and arrive at patties that are nicely grill marked, moist and juicy, without a heavy black char on the outside.

Week 16 – Smoking

Smoked foods can be the most fragrant and flavorful but the cooking method of smoking is widely misunderstood. Calling upon much of the science and biology behind cooking that you've already learned, you'll know how to control dry smoke to cook chicken, burgers, even vegetables perfectly.

Congratulations! You've completed the Basic Cooking Methods Module.



Advanced Cooking Methods Curriculum

Week 17 – Advanced Knife Skills

The ability to buy larger cuts of meat or whole chickens and separate them into parts will save you money and give you creativity to think up new meals. Chef Todd will work with the boning knife and demonstrate the correct procedures for portioning a whole beef tenderloin and breaking chicken into 8 pieces.

Week 18 – Eggs

Eggs are Nature's perfect food. They're also indispensable in the kitchen. The science behind the 8 ways in which eggs work in cooking are discussed along with demonstrations on how to make the best omelets, poached eggs, and even a unique Japanese omelet that will have you creating eye and mouth pleasing breakfasts from now on.

Week 19 – Basic Pasta Dough and Fettuccini

Homemade pasta dough is one of the weeks that many students get very excited about. Now that you know the stiffening and binding power of eggs, basic pasta dough will be very easy to create. Chef Todd will demonstrate how to make multi-colored pasta, and show two ways to make your own spaghetti and fettuccini.

Week 20 – Ravioli

With basic yellow dough, red pepper dough, and green pesto dough, it's time to make some fillings and create our own pasta pillows. The chef will demonstrate how to make "racing stripe" ravioli by combining the colors as well as review three ways to create fillings that surprise and please everybody at the dinner table. Luckily, you'll remember the Tomato and Alfredo from Week 13, so it will be a great meal!

Week 21 – Compound Butters

The ability to combine complimentary flavors is the mark of a skilled cook. Using this concept, Chef Todd will demonstrate 3 ways to create compound fats to be used in later cooking. Imagine a pantry of garlic butters, red pepper butters, and herbed olive oils. You'll be incorporating the profound affect of compound fats and flavors into your meals immediately when you witness a simple Shrimp Scampi dish that uses this technique.

Week 22 – Rice and Grains

There are 1500 varieties of rice all with different qualities and characteristics. Some rice is sticky, some is fluffy. Cooking the right type of rice in the correct method will help you avoid rice disasters. You'll know the science behind cooking rice of any kind after this week's lesson, and with the chef's simple formula, you'll never need a recipe either.

Week 23 – Exotic Grains

Your dinner variety and repertoire will increase exponentially when you start to venture beyond Uncle Ben and seek out different grains of the world. This week's lesson will introduce you to black rice, long grain rice, and Chef Todd's all-time favorite, Arborio rice that is used to make Risotto. Once you perfect your own personal Risotto procedure, you may never go back to basic white rice again.

Week 24 – One Dish Dinners

While Chef Todd can be serious about cooking, he's also very passionate. Sometimes his passion and desire to teach a lesson can make him a bit silly also. This week's tongue-in-cheek lesson has the chef acting a TV pitch man trying to sell you a special pan. However, you'll discover it's not the pan that makes great meals but the METHOD that makes great meals when you know what ingredients to combine in ONE pan to make the quickest and easiest meals when time is short.



Week 25 – Herbs and Spices

Using herbs and spices in cooking is the artist's final signature on their dish; it can communicate balanced flavors or confuse the palate if not used correctly. You'll learn how to create "spice teams" to bring together complimentary flavors or an ethnic profile you desire in your cooking. You'll know when to use dried seasonings and when to use fresh herbs in the cooking process, and even be familiar with different kinds of salt in a bonus video this week.

Week 26 – Salads

There are three basic types of salads, each with their own procedures. Once you know the categories of salads and their methods, you'll be creating new and unique salads that go far beyond the basic tossed greens. You'll learn the secrets behind bound salads and creating the proper base flavorings for the most interesting and tasty lunch items.

Week 27 – Salad Dressings

Now that you can make a great salad and correctly balance the flavors within, let's not drown it with a heavy or bland dressing. In this week's lesson, you'll discover the science behind emulsification in making Caesar dressings as well as vinaigrettes and cold sauces that help bind and flavor the freshest ingredients in your salads.

Week 28 – Crab Cakes and Aioli

Calling upon the Week 18 knowledge we have about eggs and their power to bind, you'll learn the secret behind making a great "goop" for fish and crab cakes this week along with the secrets behind cold sauces like remoulade and aioli.

Week 29 – Hollandaise and Beurre Blanc Sauces

Two of the most delicate and potentially difficult sauces to make will be easy for you after this week's lesson because you already know the science behind the thickening process in these two advanced sauces. Once you perfect these two sauces, you'll find yourself using them on fish, meat and vegetables almost every day.

Week 30 - Intro To Baking

Well rounded kitchen skills don't stop at savory dishes; the principles behind baking are invaluable for any professional or home cook. Chef Todd will discuss the science behind leavening agents and the process of making cakes and breads rise. You'll know the 5 basic mixing methods for all baked goods and the resulting differences between them.

Week 31 – Cookies

With a solid foundation in the effects of leavening agents on baked goods from last week's lesson, you'll dive right into the three types of mixing methods for cookies. The chef will demonstrate how the same 5 ingredients can result in 5 totally different baked goods depending on HOW they are combined.

Week 32 – Pies

Do you suffer from soggy bottom pies? Perhaps you've been using the wrong TYPE of pie crust for your filling. There are two types of pie crust, and the mixing method dictates which one you arrive. Chef Todd will show you the methods for fresh fruit pies and canned fruit pies so you can make a delicious dessert any time of the year.

Congratulations! You've Completed The Advanced Cooking Methods Module.



Pro Cooking Methods Curriculum

Week 33 – Yeast Breads 1

The ability to bake breads is a skill that impresses most people, yet it's quite simple when you know the 10 Step Yeast Dough Process. In this week's lesson, you'll witness the demonstration that creates crispy but soft French bread loaves and be inspired to quickly create your own.

Week 34 – Yeast Breads 2

With the knowledge and respect for yeast that you gained last week, you'll be making more interesting baked goods in this lesson. The secrets behind soft dinner rolls, chewy soft pretzels and sweet pecan buns will be revealed so that you can recreate any of these items in your own home immediately.

Week 35 – Marinate Versus Macerate

There are additional ways to bring flavors INTO foods and tenderize them for cooking, but there are also methods to bring flavors OUT of foods and create liquids that enhance your cooking. The difference between marinate and macerate, combined with the Stocks and Flavorful Liquids lesson from Week 11 will have you creating dishes with multiple levels of flavor.

Week 36 – Clams and Shrimp

There are three basic ways to clean shrimp, but using the correct way for your cooking method is important to avoid under cooking or over cooking. Chef Todd will show you how to use your paring knife to clean shrimp for poaching, skewering, frying, or stuffing. Then, you'll see the method for opening fresh clams that the chef has been practicing since childhood. After this lesson, you'll have a meal that was plucked straight from the ocean.

Week 37 – The Seafood Market and Gravalax

How do you choose the freshest fish from the seafood market? Chef Todd will tell you the 3 primary tell-tale signs of fresh fish while touring a seafood market at the beach. Then, you'll discover the very cheap and simple way to turn five dollar salmon into thirty dollar cured salmon gravalax for a great brunch item or attractive appetizer.

Week 38 – Clear Soups

Perhaps no other area of the kitchen can a cook express themselves better than through the making of soups. This week's lesson will share the 3 categories of soup and the step by step procedure behind each of them so that you can create the most flavorful soups using ingredients already on hand, or to fulfill an inspiration you've had to create a new broth based soup.

Week 39 – Thickened Soups

Not all soups are made from clear broths. There's an entire world of thickened soups that you can create when you know the two basic processes for thickening soups. You'll be referring to Weeks 12 and 13 for the rules behind thickening agents, but also incorporating the new skills needed for making great soups out of the best ingredients, or even leftovers.

Week 40 – Potatoes

There are two basic classifications of potatoes. One is easy to mash and falls apart, the other holds its shape well. One is high in sugar the other is high in starch. Which potato you use in a preparation can mean the difference between success and disaster. Chef Todd will review the different types of potatoes and the cooking methods associated with them for the best results.



Week 41 – Fancy Potato Dishes

It's time to get our French on! Now that you can anticipate how a potato will react to heat, Chef Todd will share the secrets behind fancy French potato dishes like Cocotte, Duchesse, and Anna potatoes that will class-up any side dish instantly.

Week 42 – Chocolate

The correct handling of chocolate in the kitchen is a skill that many chefs study for years. They know, as you will, that you can't just melt chocolate, it must be correctly "tempered". You'll have the basic proportions for creating your own chocolate that can be molded into shapes or piped into designs for attractive desserts. You'll also discover the easy one-step method for making the creamiest chocolate frosting and fillings behind the use of ganache.

Week 43 – Desserts –

It ALL comes together in this lesson as we apply all the knowledge previously gained to create unique and interesting desserts using Pate Choux paste and puff pastry dough to make elegant desserts that are easy when you know the secrets. Then, the chef will improvise dessert trifles, showing how you can combine many common ingredients into a fun and decorative sweet treat.

Week 44 – Egg Custards

It's a good thing we've reviewed the culinary power of eggs in three different lessons to create pasta, baked goods, and crab cakes, because the principles behind egg proteins will again come in handy when making sweetened egg custards. This lesson will give you the secrets behind great quiche, zabaglione, and a savory onion tart.

Week 45 – Cake Mixing Methods

Chef Todd insists that it's not the baking that causes cake problems; it's the mixing method that dooms your cake before it goes into the oven. Referring to the Week 31 lesson on cookies and the Week 30 lesson on leavening agents, you'll discover the difference between cake mixing methods to alter your results to your desires.

Week 46 – Advanced Cake Mixing Methods

Some cakes are light and fluffy, other cakes are rich and dense. After this week's lesson, you'll know how to create bakery style cakes using the methods that most home cooks have never been exposed to. You'll have a wide repertoire of cakes you can make with the two-stage method, sponge method, angel food method, and chiffon methods in this class.

Week 47 – Icings and Frostings

What's a great cake without a great frosting? Naked. We can't have naked cakes, so this week you'll walk through the procedures with the chef on making great fudge icings and buttercreams.

Week 48 – The Chefs Biggest Secret

Chef Todd is ready to reveal his best kept secret when it comes to baking. His Sideways Zebra Layer Cake confounds most people. How does he get the layers to stand sideways? He's never told anyone the secret until now. You'll use the fudge icing and a sponge cake mixing method, along with the techniques for using a pastry bag to duplicate the chefs best kept secret.

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