

Cooking up a new mindset



Future Food Today at SPACE10

Our Food, Design & Science correspondent Katinka Versendaal spoke to SPACE10's editor and copywriter Polina Bachlokova about their new book 'Future Food Today', future-proof foods and how we can secure healthy and delicious food for 10 billion people.

For decades now, we eat more and more outside of the home, which opens up a world of flavor possibilities and cuisines. And even at home we have been increasingly eating processed foods, bought in our supermarkets, produced by big corporations all around the world, resulting in a significant carbon food print. These facts combined result in us cooking less at home, possibly losing valuable skills and knowledge about ingredients and cooking methods, while damaging our planet in the process.

Now SPACE10, IKEA's Research and Design Lab, recently published their cookbook. The book Future Food Today is a collection of delicious, sustainable and future-proof recipes that help us eat better, both for the planet and ourselves. And at the heart of each recipe in the book is a set of beliefs. A belief in eating what the seasons put on your plate, a belief that technology can reduce the impact of food production on our planet, a belief that thinking and acting in a holistic way can eliminate food waste, and a belief that all this is achievable starting with you, trickling back into the system of restaurant kitchens and the food industry.

Some of the recipes call for ingredients you might not have seen before, like micro-algae, microgreens or insects, others are good old kitchen classics. Alongside the recipes, the book includes guides to producing locally and sustainably, and explains in their 'Build and Grow' sections how to use alternative ingredients and technology – such as aquaponic farming – to do so yourself. Who knew that you could grow your own algae, or you could make salad dressing out of them? And that this salad dressing doesn't have to be liquid but instead can add a crunch to your leafy greens? That fermenting at home or growing your own mushrooms is as easy as baking a pie? Their recipes look familiar, something that could come straight from Instagram, but are finely tweaked to conform to their standard of future-proof foods.



I was able to talk to SSPACE10's editor and copywriter Polina Bachlokova. She is the editor of Future Food Today and worked closely with the designers during the creation of this book, safeguarding the communication on the design philosophy of SPACE10.

What was the intention of SPACE10 when writing this book?

Polina: "It started out as an answer to our audience's requests. Within SPACE10 we have been exploring how we both can secure healthy and delicious food for 10 billion people, while rebalancing our relationship with the planet. That's why in our test kitchen we have been working with novel ingredients, technological innovation and in-depth culinary research — which led people to request the recipes we were putting out, like the Dogless Hotdog. We decided to compile all our recipes and our vision around food in one place. Our first goal was to explore what the ideal menu for better eating could look like, both for ourselves and the planet. We also wanted people to become more familiar with the unfamiliar and feeling inspired to become more experimental in the kitchen, thereby taking action through their food choices. Finally, we wanted to rekindle the joy of making food. Depending on who you are and where you live you might or might not have a lot of confidence cooking food at home; you might, for example, live in a city with a big take out food culture. We would like people to feel happy and confident and want to explore cooking sustainably in the kitchen. As a final note, everything we do here at SPACE10 is aimed at getting our ideas out into the world, and to receive feedback which enables us to create a dialogue with our audience."



Photo by
SPACE10

"(...) whether we like it or not, our food system is broken and the responsibility for fixing it shouldn't be put on individual people."

This book is clearly written for consumers, for people at home or local chefs. I am wondering, is SPACE10 aiming to inspire other players in the foodchain too?

"Yes, for sure. It is important that we influence the big players in the food industry. SPACE10 is funded by IKEA and they, for example, are focusing on a much more plant-based offer, eliminating food waste and introducing vertical farms in stores. These types of initiatives are what the world needs for corporations, because whether we like it or not, our food system is broken and the responsibility for fixing it shouldn't be put on individual people. Indeed, our relationship to IKEA is a really good example of how corporations can take on initiatives that are sustainable but are also good for business. Realizing this further pushed us to make this book."



We see you using unfamiliar ingredients (to the western world), like seaweed, microgreens and insects, that are known to be used for their sustainable traits. This has been a great and refreshing attitude, since outside of the gastronomy we don't really see these ingredients being used or introduced. What moved you to use these new ingredients and even to promote growing them at home?

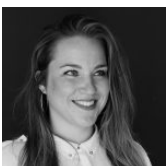
"We have always fundamentally been curious about new, sustainable ingredients. We asked ourselves, what if we blend algae into bread and salad dressing, or what if we dried some insects and put them into chips? The cool thing about these ingredients, the ones that people don't use or are even a bit afraid of, is that there turns out to be so many unexplored possibilities to use them and discover new delicious things. I personally would love for this book to be a kind of springboard for inspiration for people to copy this attitude and start experimenting and creating their own recipes."

"And on growing sustainable food yourself; Simon Perez, our in-house chef and food designer, has always been curious about working with sustainable ingredients. Especially since we have in-house equipment to grow them, as well as a test kitchen. Our work with the ingredients in house led us to try to find a way for people to work with these ingredients at home, too. That goal resulted in, for example, our tabletop spirulina bioreactor making it into the cookbook. Spirulina is an algae and a great product that grows super fast and easily, and has amazing nutritional values and health benefits. So, Simon has spent a long time experimenting with introducing algae into more and more recipes. This process started out, as much within SPACE10, with an attitude of 'oh, this is fun!' and then snowballed into seeing how could we develop this further into something people can use themselves. What we ended up with was the recipes and DIY-grow tips in this cookbook."

In the book, we also see that you introduce a new way of dealing with food waste as an integrated part of cooking. An example of this is the use of your coffee waste to make shortbread or use it to grow mushrooms. What can you tell us about that?

"This is my personal favorite topic out of the book: a holistic and local way of looking at food. I think that the way we look at food waste in this book is the most exciting route that we can take to feed ourselves in the future because fundamentally everybody can take that idea and adjust it to their own cultural norm or foods that they have. The idea is very simple; when you have food waste, why not use it to make new stuff or grow new food? If we were to use the amount of food we waste every year, we could actually feed 3 billion people! So, we really wanted to communicate the importance of reducing food waste, getting your hands dirty and growing food, and knowing what it means to prepare and care for food and connect with what's on your plate. Hopefully this results in an overall improved relationship towards our food."

So if you are keen to try something new – mealworms, anyone? – and aren't afraid of a challenge here and there, this book aims to rekindle your basic human need to cook and feed yourself. It urges you to get your hands dirty, grow your own food, and enjoy the pleasure of cooking recipes that are good for you and for the planet. In the meantime, we hope that the food industry is paying attention to this new mindset and takes a lesson or two from it.



This article was written by Katinka Versendaal, see [her work on The Eatelier](#), and find the book *Future Food Today* by Space10 [here](#).