# 5 FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT UMAMI

Umami, the powerful fifth taste, is important for balancing the flavors in many of the foods we eat. It's the meaty, savory deliciousness that deepens flavor and the reason warm broth, seared meats and aged cheeses are so satisfying. Pasta in a juicy marinara sauce, sizzling flank steak, asparagus topped with parmesan—That's umami!

## 1. UMAMI IS MORE THAN A BUZZ WORD
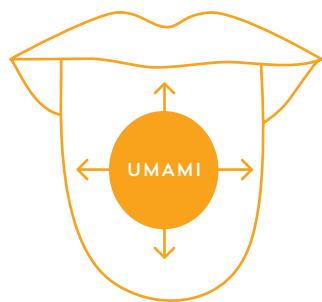
UMAMI

Umami is the core fifth taste—Scientists identified umami taste receptors on the human tongue in 2002 (alongside sweet, salty, sour and bitter taste buds). Meaning, umami is an inherent taste universally enjoyed.

2. YOU (LIKELY) EAT UMAMI FOODS EVERY DAY
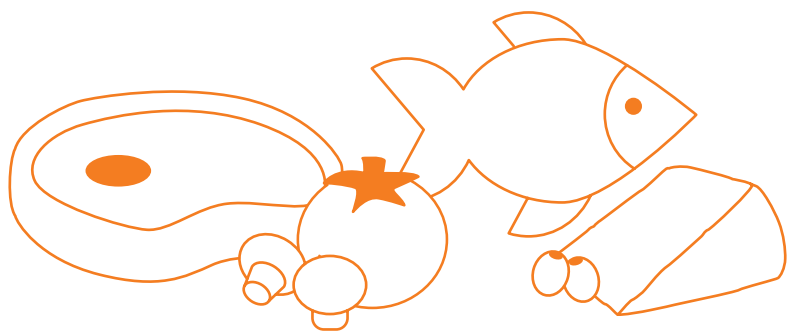
To get technical, umami is the taste of glutamate, an amino acid that is one of the building blocks of protein. Glutamate occurs naturally in the human body and in many delicious foods we eat every day, including, but certainly not limited to, aged cheeses, cured meats, tomatoes, mushrooms, salmon, steak, anchovies, green tea and the list goes on.

3. UMAMI WAS DISCOVERED 110 YEARS AGO IN JAPAN
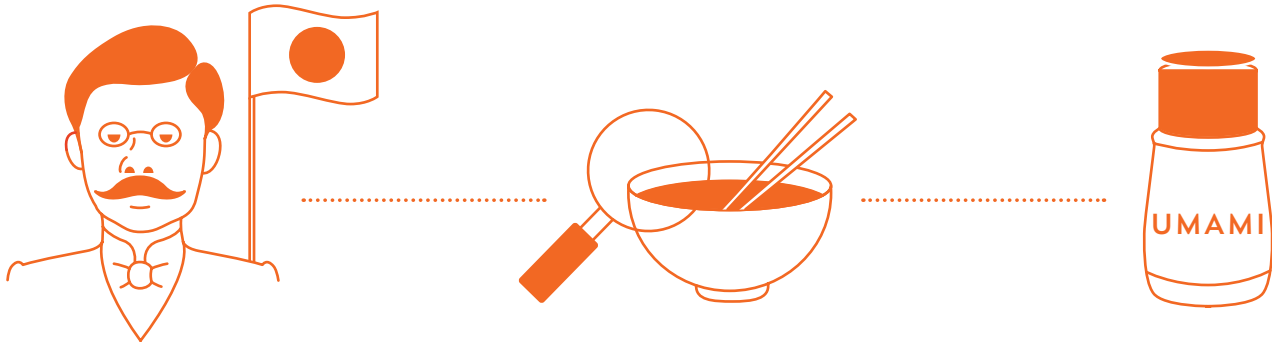
Umami was first identified by Japanese scientist Dr. Kikunae Ikeda while enjoying a bowl of seaweed broth called konbu dashi. He noticed the dashi's savory flavor was distinct from the four basic tastes of sweet, sour, bitter, and salty so he called it "umami" which literally means "essence of deliciousness" in Japanese. Dr. Ikeda found the taste of umami was attributed to glutamate.
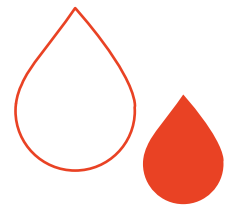
4. THERE ARE THREE DISTINCT PROPERTIES OF UMAMI
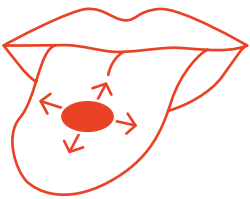
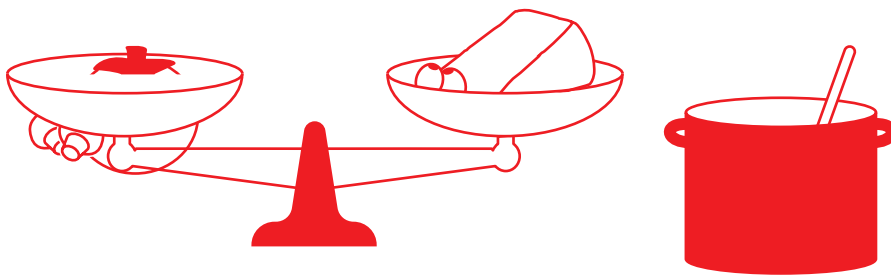A sensation that spreads across the tongue

A taste that lasts longer than other basic tastes

A taste that provides a mouth-watering sensation

5. UMAMI IS EASY TO ACHIEVE

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, we often add umami whenever it seems like something is missing in our food. Cooking with ingredients rich in glutamate will round out the flavor in your dish. Umami boosters great to stock your pantry with include, ketchup, miso, truffle oil, ranch dressing and soy sauce, to name a few. Proteins like pork, beef, fish and shellfish make strong umami foundations and vegetables like tomatoes, mushrooms, and seaweeds, are also high in glutamate (umami). And for the purest form of umami, add a dash of monosodium glutamate. Add any combination of these glutamate-rich ingredients and you've got an umami bomb!

For more information please visit **www.umamiinfo.com**

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