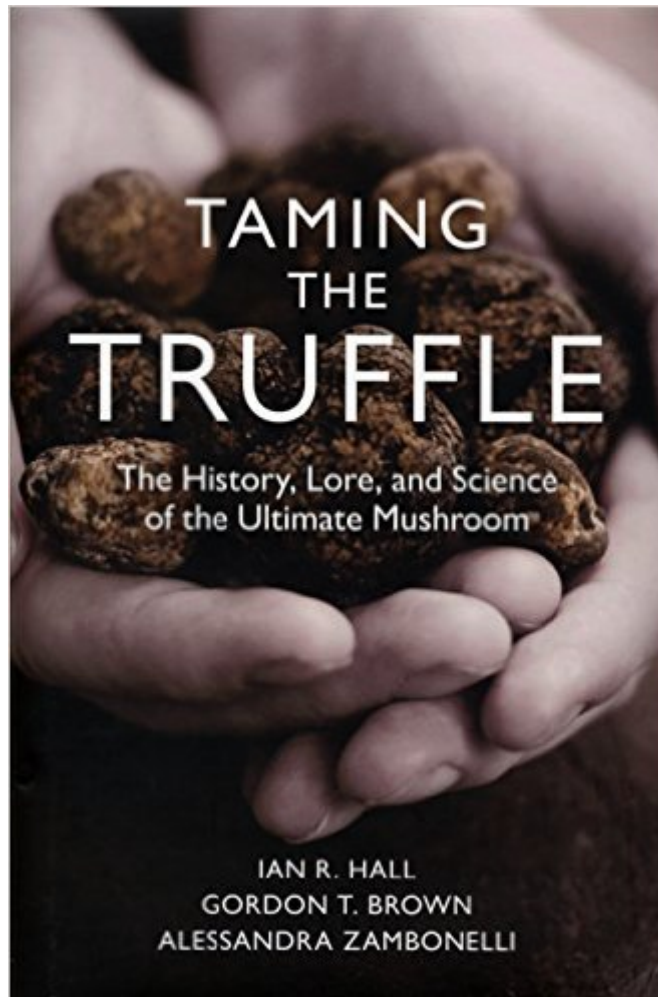


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Taming The Truffle: The History, Lore, And Science Of The Ultimate Mushroom



Synopsis

Whether the world's best truffles come from Piedmont or Périgord inspires impassioned debate, but the effects of dwindling supply and insatiable demand for the elusive mushroom are unquestionable: prices through the roof, intrigue and deception, and ever more intensive efforts to cultivate. As international mycologist Ian Hall and his colleagues have written, "Attempts at taming the truffle, of ordering its growth and harvest, now span the globe, and there has been some success in unlocking the secrets of what French researchers have aptly referred to as *la grande mystique*." The secrets of when, how, and where to collect truffles have been passed from generation to generation since ancient times, but artificial cultivation remains the holy grail. Here, in the most comprehensive practical treatment of the gastronomic treasure to date, the art and science of the high-stakes pursuit come together. This extensively illustrated volume brings the latest research and decades of experience to enthusiasts and professionals alike, with coverage of the leading truffle areas including France, Italy, Spain, and Asia, and the newcomers: Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. The authors leaven their enthusiasm and expertise with wry humor, exploring the history and newest techniques. They describe in detail the commercial species and their host plants, natural habitats, cultivation, and maintenance, pests and diseases, and harvesting with pigs, dogs, truffle flies, and even the electronic nose. Production in truffle plantations can begin after only three years, but often the rewards may take more than a decade. So there is plenty of time to read and prepare, and no better resource than this one.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a superlative book: well written, nicely printed and bound, and with a reasonable price for the value. More particularly, it is THE definitive work, so far, as regards the black Perigord truffle (or tuber melanosporum) and the white Italian truffle (or tuber magnatum), not to mention the many world regional variants such as African desert truffles or Oregon native truffles. As the black truffle currently runs about \$1,000.00 per pound, and the Italian white runs about \$3,000.00 per pound, this book would obviously be of interest to anyone wanting a legal high cash crop. "Taming the Truffle" is, in addition, filled with fascinating information, not limited to such tidbits as the name of the French chef who first paired the Perigord truffle with foie gras, or the unsettling fact that in the 1970s, French scientists did such an inadequate job of isolating t. melanosporum spores that they mistakenly inoculated thousands of hectares of tree seedlings with the less valuable and more virulent t. brumale spore system, thus ruining France's attempts at restoring her indigenous truffieres. Most valuable, at least for the prospective grower, is that this book gives the clearest information that I have seen as to the terroir and growing conditions of t. melanosporum and t. magnatum, together with an exhaustive bibliography of just about everything written (popular or scientific) on the subject of truffles. This is not to say, however, that with this book, thousands of dollars worth of inoculated seedlings, and a few tons of calcium carbonate strewn on the ground, one will start digging up truffles in five to ten years.

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