



A CHEF'S LIBRARY THAT ANSWERS BACK

Auguste

211 cookbooks and a chef's own recipes, in one place you can ask. Every answer shows the book and the page.

CULINARY · MINOR HOTELS THAILAND · OCTOBER 2026



THE PROBLEM

The knowledge is on the shelf. Finding it is the hard part.

1

A serious cookbook shelf holds more than any chef can remember.

2

Search by title finds a book. It does not find an idea.

3

The best ideas sit between books: a technique from one cuisine, a pairing from another.

Auguste turns the shelf into something you can ask.

WHAT IT IS

Ask in plain words. Get an answer with its sources.

How do I stop a whole fish sticking to the grill?

Ah, the oldest enemy of the grill master — the fish that leaves half its skin on the bars.

The Vietnamese way, on a cast-iron griddle set on the coals 1 ... Lay the fish down and do not move it for about 6 minutes, until the skin is deep golden.

The direct-grill way, on an oiled hinged rack 2 ... Broil turning once, exactly 10 minutes per 2.5 cm of thickness at the thickest part.

The one critical point: dry skin plus a hot, oiled surface. Wet skin steams, sticks, and tears. Dry it, then dry it again.

1 Vietnamese Home Cooking (Charles Phan) · p. 351

2 James Beard’s American Cookery · p. 147

A real answer from Auguste, shortened (...). The cards it used are named under it.

Search

Recipes, menus and books, by name, ingredient, technique or course.

Ask

A chat that answers from the library and names the page.

Do in

WHAT IS INSIDE TODAY

A library you can ask.

211

cookbooks, read into the library

60,379

recipe cards, one dish on each

602

menus, the chef's own and others'

84,526

pages read

4,501

ingredients on the pairing map

1,095

of the chef's own recipes, filed like the rest

All of it can be searched by name, by ingredient, by technique, or by meaning.

HOW IT WAS BUILT

Eight steps from shelf to answer.

NO. 01

READ

Every book becomes text. Poor scans are re-read from page photos.

25.3 MILLION WORDS

NO. 03

LABEL

An AI gives each card a dish name, course, cuisine, technique and allergen estimate.

14 ALLERGENS

NO. 05

MAP

Recipes are placed by meaning. Ingredients are linked when books use them together.

93,725 PAIRS FOUND

NO. 07

VOICE

NO. 02

CUT

The text is cut into recipe cards: one dish, one card. Quantities are converted by code.

60,379 CARDS

NO. 04

CHECK

A second AI re-reads a sample. Cards that fail are fixed or rebuilt.

834 OF 2,721 FAILED
4,380 REBUILT

NO. 06

ANSWER

A question fetches the best cards. The AI writes the answer from those cards only.

ABOUT \$0.003 A QUESTION

NO. 08

KEEP

THE RULE THAT MAKES IT TRUSTWORTHY

The library knows. The AI only reads and explains.



Question

Asked in plain words, the way you would ask a colleague.



Look up

The best cards are found by words and by meaning. Search typically takes under 48 milliseconds.



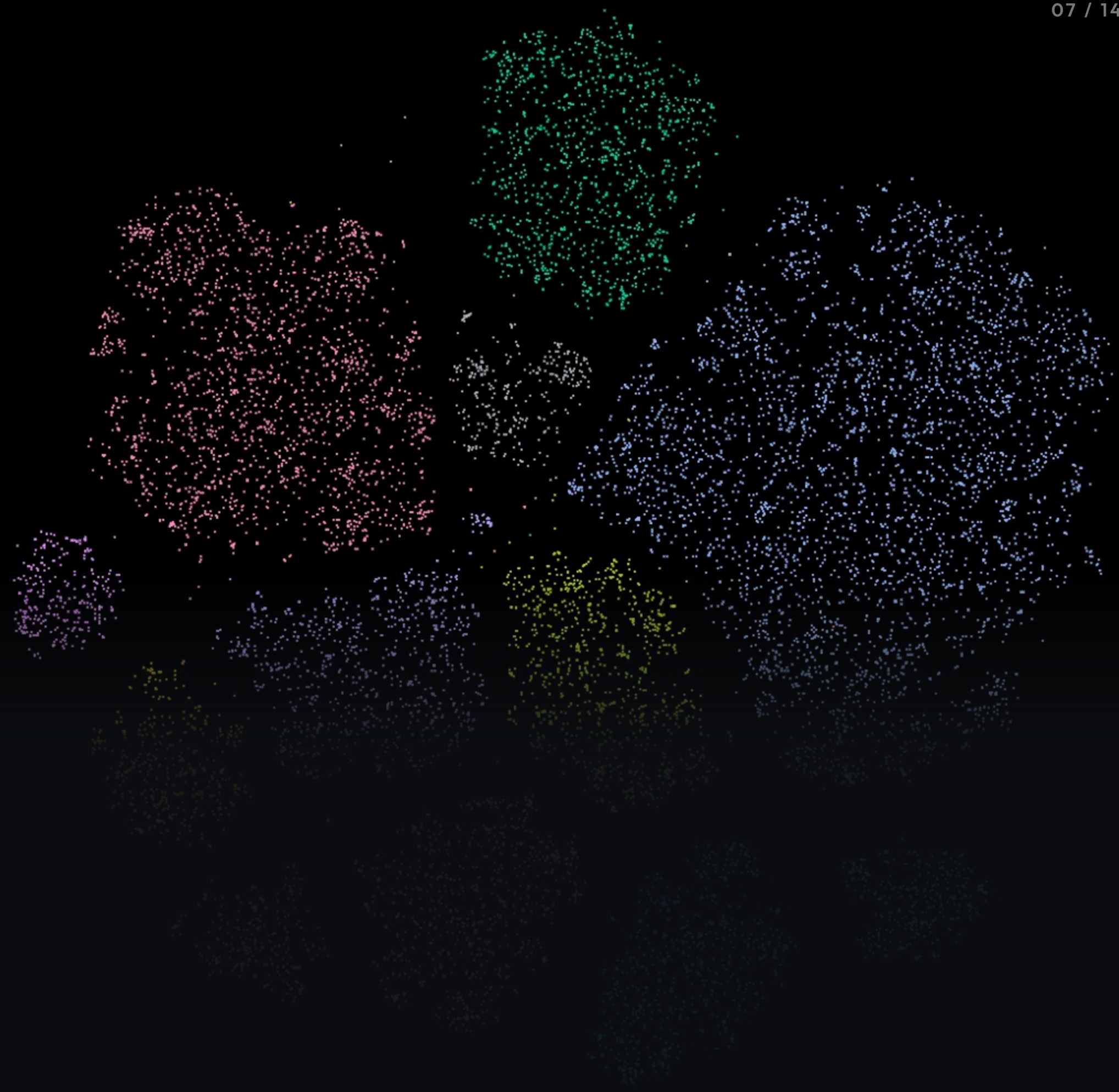
Read

The AI is given only those cards, plus strict rules. It does not answer from memory.



Answer

A short answer. Each claim is marked with the card it came from.



THE MAP

61,474 recipes on one map.

Each dot is a recipe. Recipes with a similar meaning sit close together. Colour shows the course.

- basics & prep
- bread
- breakfast
- desserts
- drinks
- mains
- other
- pastry

THE ADVISER

A senior adviser, with a character.

- 1

AN OPENING LINE

Ah, the oldest enemy of the grill master — the fish that leaves half its skin on the bars.
- 2

A CLEAN ANSWER

Method and quantities, from named books and pages.
- 3

A CLOSING GIFT

A trick from the old days: before service, run a cut onion or a folded cloth dipped in oil over the bars... If it hisses and skates, you are ready.

HE SPEAKS AND LISTENS

Bonsoir, Chef.



A calm old-Frenchman voice, picked from 17 candidates. Press the phone icon and talk while your hands are busy. The first sentence comes back in about 2.6 seconds.

HOW LONG IT TOOK

20 days from the first book to a live service.



22 SEP · DAY 1

Books are read into text.



23 SEP · DAY 2

Recipe cards cut. An AI labels every card.



24 SEP · DAY 3

Search, chat and site built. Live behind a PIN by mid-afternoon.



25 SEP · DAY 4

The own-model experiment. Ingredient pairing opens. A voice is chosen.



26 SEP · DAY 5

The chat engine is chosen. Ingredient pictures are drawn.



27 SEP · DAY 6

A private cloud copy and nightly backups.



WHO DID WHAT

One chef, an AI team and one rule: the chef approves.

The chef

Decides what it is for. Reads the results. Approves or rejects.

About 1 in 5 ingredient pictures was rejected by eye.

The builders

Claude Code writes the software, one small change at a time. Tests must pass before a change goes live.

241 commits and 50 test files since 25 Sep.

The workers

MiMo reads, labels and answers. Gemini read the books. Models on the Mac Studio draw pictures, speak and listen.

Free models run on the Mac itself.

\$368

of AI usage for the first version, 22 to 26 Sep. \$160 of it is an estimate of coding time

WHAT WENT WRONG

Four things that broke, and what they taught.

Old scans garbled the quantities.

A quarter cup was read as “%4”.

NOW 48 worst books re-read from page photos. Quantities are converted by code, not by the AI.

A model trained on the chef’s writing lost.

In 86 blind comparisons it was never chosen. The longer, better-sourced answer won every time.

NOW The knowledge lives in the library, not in the model.

Credit ran out in the middle of a job.

After 171 of 206 books, and again with another AI.

NOW Every paid run starts with a small pilot and a spending cap.

“Everything is broken”, while the tests passed.

A layout saved on a 3,392-pixel screen was applied to a 1,666-pixel window.

NOW Tests run in the real browser with the real saved settings.

Still open: a second training round is paused. It needs more memory than this Mac has.

FOR OUR KITCHENS

What it can do for us.

Works today

Menu development. Search 602 menus and 60,379 recipes by ingredient, technique or cuisine.

A research desk. Notes for current projects sit beside the books and are cited like a book.

Technique questions answered with the page. Useful for training.

Pairing ideas for new dishes, from the ingredient map.

Could come next, if we decide

Our own recipes and standards, so every outlet cooks from the same page.

Allergen sheets that follow the recipes.

Thai-language questions and answers.

Access for sous chefs on their phones.

None of this is built or promised. It needs a decision, and our own data.

What would you ask it first?

PRIVATE BY DESIGN

Private, backed up, and honest about its limits.

 **Private**
Behind a PIN. Not published, not indexed, not shared.

 **Runs on one Mac Studio**
In Thailand, with a private cloud copy as a safety net.

 **Not connected to Minor systems**
It has no link to any hotel system.

 **Backed up every night**
Copies in more than one place.

 **Questions leave the Mac**
To write an answer, the question and the matching cards or notes go to the AI provider.

 **Allergens are estimates**
Marked as estimated. Check before use. Always.



TRY IT

Ask it something.

“What goes well with grilled prawns?”

“How do I stop a whole fish sticking to the grill?”

“Which sauces suit a charcoal-grilled sea bass?”



auguste.mikarina.org

Ask Mickael for the PIN.

APPENDIX 1

How one answer is made.

1 • QUESTION

You type or say it in plain words. Recent turns of the chat go with it, so follow-up questions work.

2 • TWO SEARCHES AT ONCE

One by words (SQLite full-text search), one by meaning (BGE-M3 vectors). The best cards from both are merged. Notes you add to the library are searched too.

3 • STRICT RULES

The model gets the cards and a rulebook: facts only from the cards, cite each as [n], say “not in the library” when it is not, mark opinions, estimate allergens.

4 • THE MODEL WRITES

MiMo V2.6 Pro, a cloud model, receives the question and the cards and writes the answer in the adviser’s voice. If it fails, a local model on the Mac answers instead.

5 • THE PAGE SHOWS IT

The answer appears with the cards it used. Open a card to see the page it came from.

6 • IT IS SAVED

The chat is kept in Past chats, on the Mac.

APPENDIX 2

What it is made with.

Builders

Claude Code writes and tests the software.

Claude in Chrome checks the pages in a real browser.

GitHub keeps every change; the Mac updates itself from it.

Paid AI

MiMo V2.6 (Xiaomi) tags, audits and answers.

Gemini Flash (Google) read the books.

Claude API did card batches and audits.

Free, on the Mac

Qwen3.6-35B for tests and training.

BGE-M3 for search by meaning.

Qwen-Image 2.1 drew the ingredient pictures.

Kokoro speaks, **Whisper** listens.

Serving

APPENDIX 3

Where every number comes from.

FIGURE	WHAT IT IS	HOW WE KNOW
211	Cookbooks in the library	Counted from the library folder, 11 Oct 2026.
84,526	Pages read from the cookbooks	Counted with a PDF reader, 11 Oct 2026.
25.3	Words of text read (millions)	Counted from the extracted book text, 11 Oct 2026.
60,379	Recipe cards from the books	Counted in the library database, 11 Oct 2026.
1,095	The chef’s own recipes	Counted in the library database, 11 Oct 2026.
602	Menus, the chef’s own and others’	Counted in the library database, 11 Oct 2026.
4,501	Ingredients on the pairing map	Counted from the pairing data, 11 Oct 2026.
61,474	Recipes on the map	Counted from the map data (cookbook cards plus the chef’s own), 11 Oct 2026.
11,996	Dots drawn on these slides	A sample of the map, evenly spaced within each course.
14	Allergens estimated on each card	The fixed list the cards use.
93,725	Ingredient pairs found in the books	Noted in the build log, 25 Sep 2026.
2,721	Cards re-read in the quality check	Noted in the build log, 24 Sep 2026.
834	Of those, cards that failed	Noted in the build log, 24 Sep 2026.
4,380	Damaged cards rebuilt	Noted in the build log, 24 Sep 2026.
48	Worst scanned books re-read from page photos	Noted in the build log, 26 Sep 2026.
119,247	Files protected by the nightly backup	Noted in the handover, 28 Sep 2026.
0.003	Cost of one question (US dollars)	Measured on the chat engine’s spending log, 11 Oct 2026.
2.6	Seconds to the first spoken sentence	Timed in a voice call, 25 Sep 2026.

FIGURE	WHAT IT IS	HOW WE KNOW
17	Voices compared before one was chosen	Noted in the build log, 25 Sep 2026.
368	AI usage for the first version (US dollars)	Stated total for 22 to 26 Sep 2026. Part of it is an estimate.
140	Of that, reading sessions (estimate)	The chef’s own estimate. Not measured.