

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:  
Redmond Natural  
Mineral Rock Salt,  
Baline Fleur de Sel  
de Camargue,  
Sel Gris de  
Guérande aux  
Herbes, Hawaiian  
'Alaea Sea Salt,  
M. Gilles Hervy Sel  
Marin "Grey Salt"

↑  
THE SALT CAVES IN REDMOND UTAH, about 150 miles from the Great Salt Lake, smell sweet and fresh. And deep down in the dynamite-blasted labyrinths, the cool, dry air washes over your skin like gentle tonic. The caves are so clean you can lick the walls; so quiet, it's eerie. Turn out the lights and it's like being at the bottom of an ancient seabed, which is what these caves are. Though it is mined from a five-hundred-foot-thick underground vein, as opposed to being



# SEA SALT SAVVY

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raked by *paludiers* (salt workers), such as those who toil on the coast of Brittany, Redmond salt, marketed under the name RealSalt® has joined the pantheon of sea salts praised by chefs the world over. Like all good sea salts, it is a revelation in taste. Pure and unadulterated, it evokes the sea, as concentrated by the sun and wind.

Sea salts from all over the world

have an almost magical effect on foods, from sliced garden tomatoes or baked sweet potatoes to foie gras. The brightly flavored grains gently coax flavor from already savory items, and the delicacy of the crunch as soft crystals slowly dissolve on the tongue adds another level of bliss to such simple combinations.

Unless you've been in another

kind of cave as far as trendy food items go, you know that over the past decade, sea salt has risen from its longstanding and revered status among professional chefs to become the darling of American foodies. The finest French *fleur de sel*, a rare white "bloom" of salt that appears atop the more gray salts, sells for around \$15

*continued on page 155*

