



The Secrets of Baking: Simple Techniques for Sophisticated Desserts

Sherry Yard, Jacques Pépin (Foreword by)

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The Secrets of Baking is a comprehensive primer that guides the cook through the world of baked goods and other desserts, from time-honored classics of the French patisserie to the inspired and fanciful creations that made Spago the famous restaurant it is today. At the same time, it advances a radically new understanding of these recipes, one that will give the baker greater flexibility and confidence in the kitchen.

Instead of grouping desserts into traditional categories (pies, cakes, cookies), Sherry Yard arranges them around crucial master recipes. Starting with these recipes -- simple, basic guidelines for making caramel, chocolate sauce, lemon curd, pound cake, and brioche, to name just a few -- Yard shows the cook how to create dozens of variations. Knowing how ingredients interact opens the door to a multitude of baking possibilities. For example, cream puff dough forms the foundation for éclairs, profiteroles, and the caramel-coated tower the French call croquembouche, but understanding how and why it behaves the way it does allows the cook to create deep-fried beignets, mascarpone-filled cannolis, or simmering-hot dumplings. This authoritative, friendly bake-shop bible contains fascinating mini-lessons on food science, illuminating bits of baking history, and time-saving tips. Newcomers to the world of baking will feel at ease with such simple, homey desserts as Banana Bread and Mississippi Mud Pie, and elaborate show-stoppers like Chocolate Brioche Sandwich with Espresso Gelato and Blackberry-Lime-Filled Doughnuts with Blackberry Sorbet and Berries will transform amateur bakers into expert pastry chefs.

The Secrets of Baking: Simple Techniques for Sophisticated Desserts Details

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Alicia says

Classic pastry chef info, creatively laid out.

The author lists the recipes and families clearly showing how they are related to each other.

Sarah says

I've had this book for a long time, but have to admit that most of the recipes looked more complicated than I was willing to tackle. Over the past year I've gotten more into cooking and gave one of the recipes a try. I made the lemon ginger roll cookies and they were phenomenal. I've actually made them twice, which is rare for me. I love how easy they are and the lemon and ginger flavors go really well together.

Davek says

Great For Beginners, Inspiring Flavours, Awesome Master Combinations

Graham says

Great taste profiles! Yard is responsible for my favorite financier recipe.

Rachel says

I was recommended this book from my favorite food blog, Culinary Concoctions by Peabody, as an intro baking book. Since I'm always on the lookout for these types of books, I decided to give it a try. It uses a very interesting approach. The author, a master baker/pastry expert, takes a simple Master recipe and uses it to make many different variations of that recipe by adding ingredients or using different cooking methods. For example, from Master Ganache (basically cream and chocolate), you get a recipe for awesome Hot Chocolate, Chocolate Truffles (which you can improve further by adding other ingredients such as Earl Grey tea, lavender etc), frosting, candy bars (Gianduja - insert drooling here), and more. It makes what would otherwise be intimidating recipes much easier, provided you have the ingredients and time to make the Master recipes. The end of the book has a very thorough appendix on baking tools, ingredients and terms. I am very interested in owning this book! Highly recommended, 5 stars.

Missy says

I like how this cookbook is organized. Useful and helpful.

Becky says

Read it. Right now. If you like to bake - read this book. I have often longed for a book that explained the chemistry behind baking. Yard does so in a way that makes perfect sense and that I can apply to my everyday baking and not just the recipes in her book. I applied two (just two!) 'tricks' I learned from this book and people swooned that my cookies were the best ever. Read this book.

Jennifer says

I want to own this book.

I checked it out from the library, and not only does it have many delicious recipes - it teaches you the different techniques you need to know to make desserts. It gives you the knowledge on the HOW to make desserts, so that you can adapt the ingredients to suit your needs and still have the dessert turn out correctly.

I have to admit, I haven't tried any of the recipes. We've just moved, and I haven't really had much time to settle in and cook anything. But I definitely wish I had this cookbook in my own personal collection, so I'm putting it on my cookbook wish-list. Someday, it will be mine.

Catherine Woodman says

My baking goddess friend Ivy gave me this book, and we made financiers out of this that came out beautifully in a miniature cake that was well flavored and very moist. She advises having this batter in your fridge so that you can whip these up in the blink of an eye. That seemed a little over the top to me, BUT she does do ALOT of educating about baking in this book, and she is very good at being simple in her explanations

Kimberly Ann says

★ ★ (for the variety of recipes)

First, I am not a baker. Not from a box, not from Pillsbury pop-ups, not from scratch. On occasion I'll make something savory, but otherwise I'll bring a main dish! So in terms of this book, this makes the recipes difficult. The recipes include basic ingredients, some not so basic ingredients.... They take patience, time and caring... Not my strong suit. But if you are an accomplished baker, this might be the book for you as the recipes are many and of a great variety.

The physical being of the book: This Is Large and Heavy... There is only one recipe per page (sometimes two pages)... The paper is plain and the font is easy to read. Each recipe has a an informational blurb; Yield, Special tools, & Variations in the left frame of the page along with the list of ingredients on a light yellow background. There are many lovely photographs BUT they are not together with the corresponding recipes, in other words, there is a section of lovely photographs and then a section of corresponding recipes (this knocked off 1 star).

In addition there is no clear division between chapters, which confused me as I went from Deep Dark Chocolate Tart in the Ganache section to Caramel on the next page.... What also confused me was why Baked Whiskey Torts, Campton Place Hot Chocolate, Chocolate Mousse trio, and Deep dark Chocolate Tort were mixed in with the Ganache recipes. After the first six (6) pages of the Caramel chapter there was a section of sixteen (16) color photographs of recipes other than Ganache & Caramel. Needless to say, the confusing and unclear progression and additions throughout the layout of the book knocked off another entire star.

Contents include: Acknowledgements; Foreword by Jacques Pepin; Introduction; and My Bakeshop Rules. This is followed by the recipe sections which in turn is followed by; Baking terms, Basic tools, Ingredients, Suppliers, Bibliography, and Index.

Recipe sections & their recipes include:

Ganache: Master ganache; Truffles; Milk chocolate; Raspberry; Banana; Baked whiskey tortes; Chocolate whipped cream; and Chocolate mousse trio.

Caramel: Stages; 16 pages of photographs (neither of Ganache or Caramel); Master caramel; Golden spun sugar; Caramel sticks; Croquante (german brittle); Caramel semifreddo; and Oven-roasted caramel Anjou pears.

Curd: Master (She sure likes this term) lemon curd; Blackberry lime curd; lemon souffle; Lemon bars; Lime fondue; and Passion fruit bavarois.

Vanilla Sauce: Master (there she goes again) vanilla sauce; vanilla ice cream; Strawberry semifreddo (but I thought we were on vanilla?); pastry cream; Cappuccino souffle; Creme caramel (?); and Creme brulee.

Pate a Choux: Master (as opposed to slave?) pate a choux (which is pastry dough... one of the "easiest to make" don't you know); Chocolate cream puffs; Profiteroles; Eclairs; Plum & ginger Carolines; Apricot & mascarpone cannoli; and Blackberry merlot dumplings.

Pound Cake & Genoise: Here we go again: MASTER pound cake; MASTER Genoise..... Ok: What-Ever (said in a "Val" voice) I am finished.....

Financier:

Cookies:

Pie & Tart Dough:

Brioche:

Laminated Dough:

Fruit:

Master Combinations:

\$35.95 for this? Someone will get quite the deal in the book sale!

Tony says

Probably 5 stars for any dessert-lover, I'm still not convinced that you should have room for anything after your entree, but if you do, this book is full of great ideas and does a good job of separating the recipes into categories organized by the basic set of ingredients used to make different classes of dessert.

Courtney says

Not as good as Bakewise, but still good information. Breaks the baking down by groups - Ganache, Caramel, etc vs. how to.

Lonnieandmelanie Wibberding says

So the title is a little misleading because it's all about desserts. That being said, they are really good desserts. And it explains why you do it, rather than just recipes.

Flea says

not my go-to fave
