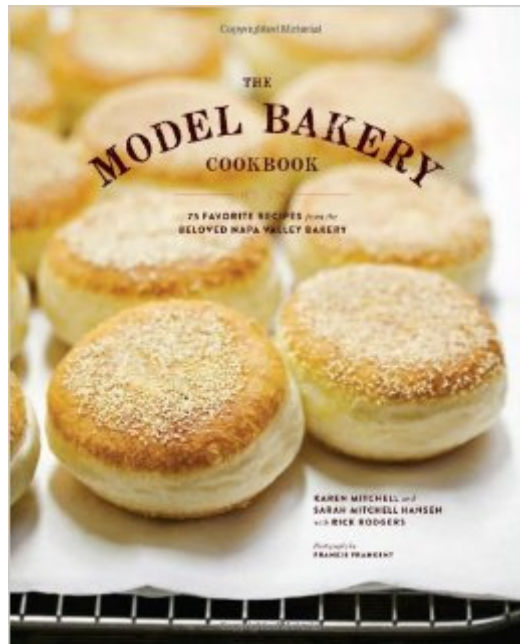


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The Model Bakery Cookbook: 75 Favorite Recipes From The Beloved Napa Valley Bakery



Synopsis

This definitive baking guide is the much-anticipated cookbook from the Model Bakery, a mother-daughter "run baking destination with a huge local following that's been wowing the Wine Country for years. And this book of sensational artisan baked goods makes clear why there are lines out the door! Featuring 75 recipes and 60 photos, it's as luscious to look at as their most-requested breads, classic desserts, and fresh pastries "all arrayed here" are to eat. Pain au Levain, Sticky Buns, Peach Streusel Pie, Ginger Molasses Cookies, and many more glorious recipes make this a mouthwatering read and a reference gem for lovers of bread and pastry, cakes and cookies, and, of course, the Model Bakery!

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Customer Reviews

We visited the Model Bakery on our trip to Napa 3 years ago. Since that time, we have longed for anything close to their phenomenal cinnamon rolls and sticky buns. NYC bakeries not even close. Food Network recipes falling short one after the other. Then we got word about their new cookbook. We preordered, and in our first weekend, made and devoured our first batch of cinnamon rolls. They were fantastic and as good as we remember having at the bakery. This Connecticut family is very happy and cannot wait to move on to those sticky buns.

As a former employee and local I oftentimes miss The Model Bakery and this brought a little bit of home back. I was so happy to buy this! I am the most novice of cooks but I attempted to make the famous English Muffins and they were so great! Who knew these simple ingredients made such

great food!?! I can't wait to make more of the wonderful things I've missed!

I haven't had the pleasure of visiting the Model Bakery (I briefly visited California for the first time last year), but I learned about their eponymous cookbook on Rick Rodgers' Facebook page (Rick is one of the book's authors; his amazing *Kaffeehaus: Exquisite Desserts from the Classic Cafés of Vienna, Budapest, and Prague* is one of my favorite pastry books out of the dozens I own). I was instantly drawn in by the many classic recipes for breads, yeasted sweets (croissants, pain au chocolat, bear claws, cinnamon rolls), cakes, cookies, pies and tarts. These are simple, traditional, dependable recipes (no fancy flavorings, rare ingredients, or unusual baking equipment required!) that will be sure to delight. With a straightforward table of contents that conveniently fits on one page, it's easy to quickly locate recipes. Each chapter ends with a helpful "how-to" section that addresses certain aspects of food science (fermentation, enzymes, wet vs. dry doughs) and practical tips and tricks that will be especially helpful to new bakers (baking one sheet of cookies at a time for best results, parchment paper instead of silicone mats for crisper cookies). A compact look at ingredients (Karen and Sarah recommend Guittard French Vanilla as their chocolate of choice, whole-fat dairy instead of reduced fat, and European-style butter with a high butterfat content) and basic equipment will start bakers off on the right foot. For instance, they point out that "the thin and shiny cookie sheets that many home bakers have encourage burned cookie bottoms." Instead, they recommend using half- and quarter-sheet pans. As a serious home baker with an arsenal of professional pans, I strongly recommend the USA Pan 6-Piece Bakeware Set from USA Pans; the pans bake evenly and include a nonstick silicone coating that allows your baked goods to slide right off. Ingredients are given in volume and metric. I have worked with many yeast doughs for pastry over the years, but am fairly new to yeast breads. Even though I have a stand mixer, I prefer to work my doughs by hand, so I appreciate that every bread recipe also includes instructions on how to mix and knead by hand. I recently purchased an Emile Henry Flame Bread Baking Set - Black, and am looking forward to trying out some of the Model Bakery's artisan breads like the country olive pain au levain with rosemary. Their baking method involves heating an inverted ovenproof pot to 500; I think I'll take my chances with the cloche! I also loved the wild yeast grape starter; it is unlike any other starter I've seen in my many baking books. It's a bit harder to track down organic wine grapes in my neck of the woods, but it is worth the effort to do so. The sections on yeasted sweets, breakfast favorites, cakes and cookies were familiar territory for me; I own close to 40 baking books alone, so I am always excited to find new versions of classics. I LOVED the soda bread; moist and fruity (I added the optional currants and caraway seeds), this

was addictive and so easy to make. Their take on bear claws was also a bit different than other versions I've made (this one has coconut and cake crumbs in the filling in addition to the almond paste). I was also thrilled to see schnecken dough featured. From the cake section, I tried the lemon pound cake (baked in my Nordic Ware Lemon Loaf pans for a pretty presentation) and the pumpkin gingerbread cake (baked in Nordic Ware Platinum Collection Pumpkin Patch Pan). I also had to try making the chocolate rads after hearing so much about them; the first batch I made as large as directed (and they are HUGE, easily a good six or seven inches across, see photo), then made the rest of the dough in "normal" sized cookies for easier storage and freezing. There's a pound of melted chocolate in the dough and 2 cups of chocolate chips for only 12 cookies, so any diehard chocoholics in your life may have finally met their match! I found that even after chilling the dough for longer than recommended, it was still messy to work with as far as slicing; I might try placing it in the freezer next time to firm it up a bit more. The lack of diagrams and step-by-step photos (particularly for laminated doughs) may make this a little challenging for novice home bakers, but the many tips and hints offer practical insights that I haven't seen in my many other baking books. I loved some of the old-fashioned touches like the berries and cream cake (you have the option of using white or buttermilk cake), coconut cake, and their unique take on lemon squares: instead of making a separate lemon curd, you make a filling that is poured directly into the prebaked crust and baked until set, making it much quicker than other recipes I've tried. I also discovered some new European favorites like the gateau Basque, a double-crust almond tart filled with cherries and pastry cream. Verdict: "The Model Bakery" is a wonderful reference for classic artisan breads, yeasted sweets and cookies, brownies and cakes (including a homemade two-tiered wedding cake for the truly ambitious) that is accessible by bakers of all skill levels. The many stories add a personal feel, and this is comfort baking at its finest. (Review copy courtesy of the Model Bakery - thank you Karen and Sarah!)

Great book. I have made the english muffins and they were so easy and very delicious. Also made the red velvet cupcakes. Very moist and delicious too. I am going to try the macaroon cookies with almond paste next week for some house guests. The recipes are very easy to follow and I couldn't have been happier with the results. Buy this book, you won't be disappointed.

I'm working my way through this fabulous cook book so far every recipe is perfect. But I might add, there are a lot of rising times for most of these baked bread recipes and you will need to be home to do this, this is not something that you can do on a weeknight.

Kindle Edition: I prefer cookbooks, especially electronic ones with no extra overhead for photos, to have pictures for each recipe. It's just a help to know what I'm shooting for, especially with intricate or unfamiliar dishes. There are lots of extraneous photos in the Kindle edition, especially at the front of the book -- pretty, artsy, rustic but what about the finished products? This is really inexplicable when you consider this cookbook is from a bakery that must have product photos of everything they make. And when there is a product photo provided, it's on a different page than the recipe. I was especially annoyed to see NO PHOTO for the Gateau Basque, even after it was described as, "Not the most common dessert on these shores..." which is an understatement. How are we supposed to know if we've aced the recipe or put together some kind of Frankencake, with no picture to guide us???

Organization: sucks. I don't know if this is an artifact of the Kindleization process ;) or if the print book is as poorly organized, but, really. There is a page of what I'd have to call "notes" that pertains to each section of the book, little tips and hints and necessary knowledge. Unfortunately, it's at the end of the section rather than the beginning. So, after you've maybe screwed up or failed to take advantage of some good advice, THEN they tell you their secrets. Poo!

Also, they have a collection of basic recipes, like crusts or frostings. No surprise there, but they sometimes appear in a recipe using them, other times you are referred to another location in the book. Considering there is a fairly extensive introductory section on pans and ingredients and techniques, it seems like it would follow that there would be a section of "master recipes" as well. I've just been looking at a cookbook from Eliza Leslie, whom I think you could call the doyenne of American cookbook writing, and she decries cookbooks where "...the reader, before finishing the article, is desired to search out pages and numbers in remote parts of the volume..." Probably why Eliza's cookbooks are still read a couple hundred years later. Oh, if only...

The recipes: I haven't baked any of them yet, but they look reasonable, are fully explained and cover a group of classic baked goods retooled for the home kitchen. The Model Bakery uses a lot of their own methods for things, which is what makes their baked goods unique, but they also make culinary sense, so it's good to see these newer takes on processes and ingredients. I'd love to get my hands on the print edition to see if these flaws are there as well, or if we red-headed stepchildren, er, Kindle readers, just got short shrift. All together, even with its flaws, this is a good book for the home baker who wants to broaden their horizons and produce baked goods they can be proud of. Even if it requires a little extra effort for the Kindle reader.

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