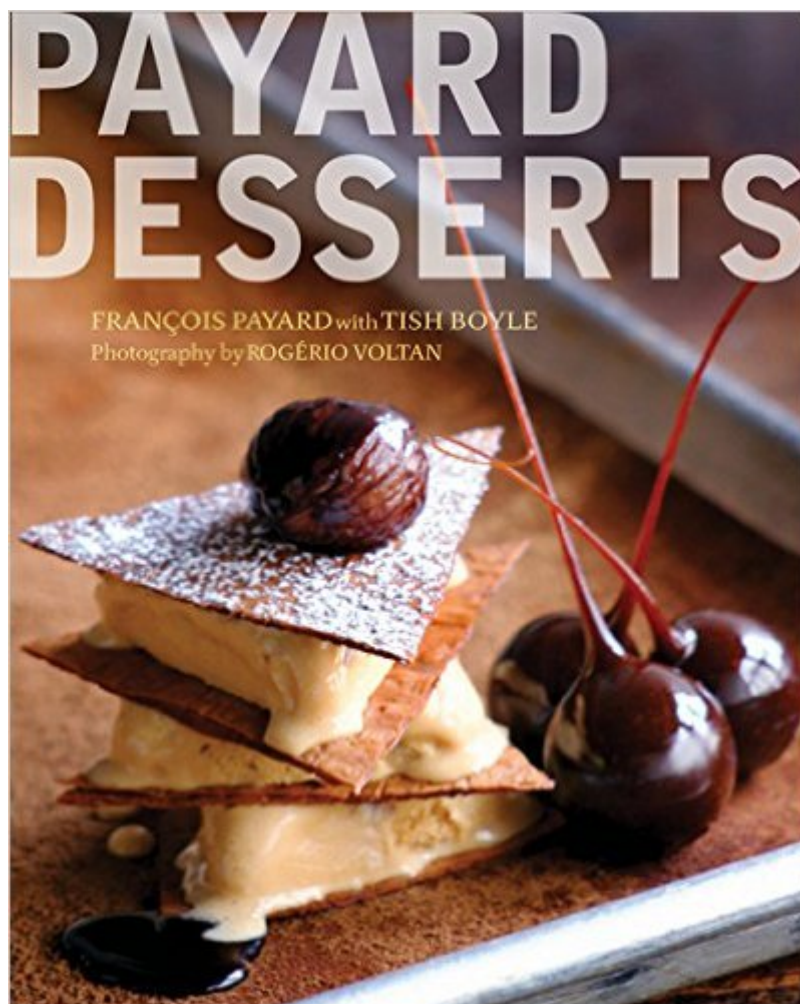


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Payard Desserts



Synopsis

In this visually stunning new book from legendary pastry chef François Payard, professional pastry chefs and serious home bakers will learn how to prepare pastry and other plated desserts that rival the best in the world. These recipes have been developed and perfected by Payard over twenty years, from his early days as a pastry chef in France to his current position as an American culinary icon. Each recipe is a singular work of art, combining thrilling and often surprising flavors with innovative, modern techniques to create unforgettable masterpieces like Blueberry Pavlova with Warm Blueberry Coulis, Olive Oil Macaron with Olive Oil Sorbet, Dark Chocolate Soufflé with Pistachio Ice Cream, and Caramelized Pineapple-Pecan Tart with Brown Butter Ice Cream. Throughout the book, Payard includes priceless advice on choosing ingredients and equipment and composing perfectly plated desserts, as well as personal anecdotes from his long career working in many of the world's finest pastry kitchens. Combining Payard's baking and pastry techniques with the engaging, straightforward writing style of Tish Boyle, this book is a must-have for professional bakers yet accessible enough for serious home baking enthusiasts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I used to be a former Pastry Chef so I of course grabbed the PAYARD Desserts book when I was given the opportunity to get an Advanced Copy. I must admit I was sorely disappointed when I realized this meant it was "a black-and-white proof". I would think a big reason people will buy this book will be for the stunning color pictures. Having said that, I decided to get over my initial disappointment (it IS an advanced copy after all) and focus on the recipes themselves. I, personally, find the cookbook to be very exciting as I love plated desserts with all of their various components.

Specifically, I was in French dessert heaven with his Chocolate Beignets with Orange Blossom Creme Anglaise recipe. I gave it 4-stars as I think it's targeted audience will really enjoy making world-class MODERN French desserts at home. Think along the lines of Beet (!) Creme Brulee and Rice Pudding with Szechuan Peppercorn. This is not meant to be a "beginner's" cookbook and has some hard to find ingredients like chestnut creme. I think most people will find it too cumbersome to make the recipes at home as on average, each recipe features 3-5 different components. Finally, I liked the way it was organized by TYPE of desserts: Frozen, Fruit, Pastries, Custards (and Mousses), Tarts, and Cold Desserts.

This is the type of cookbook for home chefs who already have dipped into *Modernist Cuisine: The Art and Science of Cooking*, anything by or about Ferran Adria, Grant Achatz, Thomas Keller, well, you get my drift. This is not a cookbook for the faint of heart, short of time, or anyone looking for something easy to whip together. Francois Payard is a brilliant pastry chef, and his desserts are works of art. Now, you too, can create amazing structures built of 3 to 5 separate parts that blend together for an unforgettable finish to your meal. Each component is not terribly difficult, but the dish will be incomplete without all parts. So you are not just making a dessert, but a commitment. Often, Payard's desserts use innovative pairings and ingredients (Szechuan Pepper Ice Cream anyone). For example, the Shot of Buttermilk Panna Cotta with Tarragon-Scented Mango is composed of Crystallized Tarragon Leaves, Orange Chips, Buttermilk Panna Cotta (of course) and Sauteed Mango with Tarragon. Layered in a shot glass, and garnished with the orange chips, and tarragon leaves, this is a relatively easy one. But the Pumpkin Creme Brulee with Vanilla Chantilly, Crispy Meringue and Chestnut Puree, which requires silicone dome molds and a potato ricer, is for the pastry artist as well as the pastry chef. If you are still not daunted, then you will love this book. The pictures allow will produces gallons of drool. At the beginning of each recipe, Payard and Tish Boyle (his co-author), list the components and any specialized equipment you need. The instructions for each component are clear and well written. This cookbook covers a wide range, and you can see this from the section titles: Frozen Desserts; Fruit Desserts; Pastries, Meringues, & Other Baked Desserts; Custards, Mousses, & Other Creamy Desserts; Tarts; Cold Dessert Soups, Crepes, Souffles & Other Desserts (this chapter seems like the catch all for whatever doesn't fit in any of the other chapters); and The Cheese Course: Savory Desserts. The final chapter is on Basic Recipes for frequently used components. If you have the time, the drive and the curiosity, this cookbook will spur your imagination, and elevate your desserts to a whole new level.

François Payard is a third-generation pastry chef (his grandfather owned an acclaimed shop on the Riviera, Au Nid des Friandises) with a string of eponymous bistros as well as a chocolate bar. His gorgeous plated desserts capture the essence of seasonal ingredients in complementary pairings. His philosophy is in using only as many ingredients as are necessary and no more; a great dessert should reflect "the subtle interplay of flavor, texture and temperature, along with a streamlined presentation that conceals its complexity." This gorgeous volume is clearly aimed at professional chefs (the serving yield is frequently 6-8 servings, and many of the desserts can't be held after assembling) as well as very ambitious home bakers (I would put myself in the latter category). Many of the recipes have multiple components that will need to be prepared / assembled in advance, and like any professional pastry book, a large number of special supplies are required (acetate sheets, chocolate sprayer, whipped cream canister with N20 chargers for creating molecular gastronomy foams, etc.). Similarly, many recipes call for specialty ingredients such as licorice powder, passion fruit puree, pistachio paste, hyssop, silver grade gelatin, etc. The desserts, divided into frozen desserts, fruit desserts, pastries, custards, tarts, and crepes, soufflés and other desserts, are a combination of classical French pastry (vacherin, charlotte, napoleon, apple tatin, tuiles) married to Asian and tropical flavors (star anise, tempura, lemongrass, pineapple). Fresh, seasonal fruit is truly the star, as many recipes call for poached pears, quinces, roasted summer apricots, poached winter fruits, etc. (it would have been helpful to also have a quick index of recipes by season, as there is such an emphasis on seasonal produce for maximum effect). The basic recipes for various base sauces, creams, tuiles, garnishes etc. are straightforward; I liked his take on the chocolate tart dough, which uses a combination of all-purpose and almond flour to add a touch of flaky crispness. Some of the techniques could have benefitted from additional photos, such as the patterned tuile loops on page 27; I had a hard time picturing the steps and had to refer back to the plated photo before I finally "got" it (I had to rely on my standby *The Professional Pastry Chef: Fundamentals of Baking and Pastry, 4th Edition* and *The Advanced Professional Pastry Chef* a couple of times for a refresher on technique and plated desserts). Overall, there are plenty of beautiful, delicious pairings to inspire budding pastry chefs; I particularly enjoyed the chocolate shell filled with coconut sorbet and star anise sabayon and the many creative interpretations of cheesecakes and cheese tarts paired with marmalades and roasted fruits, as well as Payard's ideas for the cheese course, including black olive macarons with Gorgonzola ice cream, apple tatin with aged white cheddar cheese, and feta cheesecake with red wine-poached dates. Even if you never make a single dessert, it is a feast for the eyes (and imagination), and the base recipes such as the caramel balsamic sauce, basil oil, and spiced fig pulp, will surely find their way into my kitchen in

one form or another!

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