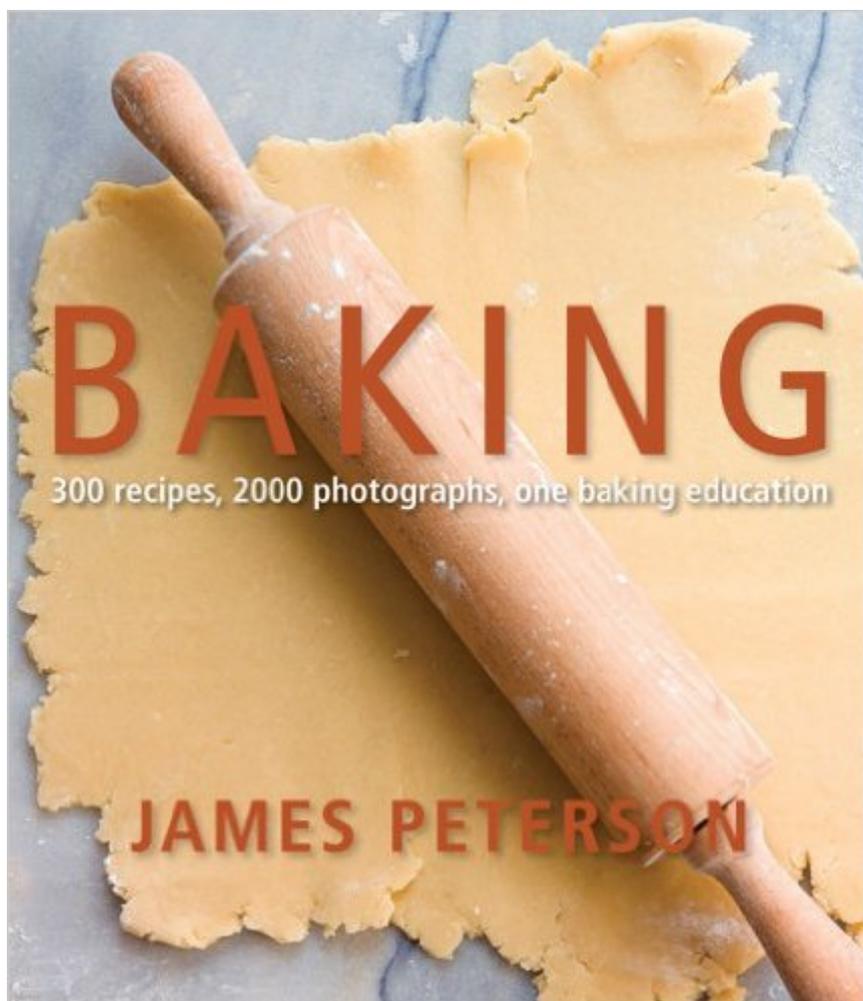


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# Baking



## Synopsis

The learn-to-bake master class in a book. The craft of baking is based on good technique. Learn the fundamentals well, and you can bake perfect cakes, cookies, tarts, breads, and pastries each and every time. That's the premise of *Baking*, revered cooking teacher James Peterson's master course in baking fundamentals. In more than 350 recipes and auxiliary techniques--most accompanied by illuminating step-by-step photographs--Peterson lays the foundation for lifelong baking success. This book teaches you how to build finished baked goods from their essential components, providing both maximum guidance for less experienced bakers and great creative freedom for more confident bakers. The Cakes chapter, for example, presents basic cake recipes (Moist Sponge Cake, Devil's Food Cake) followed by frostings, fillings, and glazes (Professional-Style Buttercream, White Chocolate Ganache), allowing you to mix and match endlessly. Or, if you're looking for knockout assembled cakes, go to the end of the chapter and discover complete illustrated instructions for, say, a decadent Chocolate Hazelnut Cake with Chocolate Filling and Hazelnut Buttercream, or an elegant Peach Crème Mousseline Cake. Baking is packed with the basic, must-have recipes for every baker's repertoire (as well as more ambitious classics), such as: Pound Cake • Crème Anglaise • Chiffon Cake • Cheesecake • Classic Puff Pastry • Cherry Pie • Lemon Meringue Pie • Miniature Raw Fruit Tarts • Linzertorte • Cream Puffs • Chocolate Croissants • Cheese Danish • Basic Butter Cookies • Lemon Bars • Biscotti • Challah • Rye Bread • Focaccia • Blueberry Muffins • Scones • Flourless Chocolate Cake • Cheese Souffles • Miniature Cake Petits Fours • Apple Strudel • Napoleons • Rolled Fondant • Bûche de Noël • Macarons • Mushroom Jalousie. Copious photographs inspire and help bakers visualize the crucial moments of hundreds of recipes and techniques, including: Troubleshooting Tarts and Pies • Baking "Blind" • Making Liquid Fondant • Coating a Cake with Hot Icing • Assembling a Layer Cake without Using a Cake Stand • Decorating a Cake with a Caramel Cage • Coloring Marzipan • Making a Rolled Cake • Decorating Cookies with Colored Sugar • Filling and Using a Pastry Bag • Kneading Wet Dough in a Food Processor • Scoring Dough • Shaping a Fougasse • Repairing Chocolate Mixtures that Have Seized • Cooking Sugar Syrup to the Soft Ball Stage. Thorough, approachable, and authoritative, *Baking* shows why James Peterson is a trusted source for home cooks of every level. Work your way through this book, and you will gain the skills you'll need for impressive results every time.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I got this book and was very eager to jump right in - this would be 5 stars based on the photos, tips, and several of the recipes (the Devil's food cake is the BEST I've made, it was simply perfect). BUT I've found several typos, 1st one is professional buttercream on page 45 - 1 1/2 cups of butter is not 1 1/4 pounds of butter. So the 1st time I made this I grabbed 3 sticks of butter and was confused on why my buttercream was gooey and did not set up, and I thought the mistake was in my soft-ball sugar which is the hard part, when it turns out I just didn't have enough butter. There are also a few instances of incorrect page numbers when referencing side bars. I have only made a few things so far but but if you use this book just be forewarned of the poor editing and lack of recipe testing prior to mass release. Lastly, the only way to really make sure your measurements are correct is to weigh your dry ingredients, especially flour, so I am actually disappointed that there aren't more weights vs. volume and that I had to spend time doing math. I hate math. UPDATE: I just downgraded this review, baking times are super wrong (I made the cinnamon rolls - after spending almost 6 hours making the dough, it said to bake them for 40 minutes. They were inedible... so dry and hard from cooking that long I wanted to cry and throw this book away.) I've given a few other recipes a try but for the most part this book is sadly full of fail due to not running anything through a test kitchen prior to print. James Peterson might be talented, but his editors are not.

This is by far the most disappointing recipe book I own. So far I have tried 12 recipes, some of them I've tried twice or more. Generally, I've encountered extremely inaccurate baking times, grossly underestimated proofing and rising times, bizarre textures and consistences of intermediate stages of recipes, and unusual looking final products. As others have stated, the lack of weight

measurements, and sudden and intermitten use of them, is frustrating and confusing. Below I've highlighted specific instances where this book has failed in the kitchen: Both Madeline recipes burned to a crisp far before the 20 min baking time stated in the book. I checked my oven temperature with two thermometers because I thought it had to be me. It wasn't the oven, it's the recipe. I looked through several of my other baking books and all of them stated an 8-10 maximum baking time, less than half the time stated in this book. When I went "off the book" the Madelines were not burnt but they did lack flavor (Orange zest instead of lemon zest, really?) The Bread Stick recipe should be relabeled "how to throw away ingredients." The dough was stiff and took extreme effort to work. My kitchen aid even struggled to work this dough. And, it took more than double the stated time to rise (total of 12hrs!). I bake bread 3-4 times a week. My yeast was not the problem. Worse still, the Bread Stick recipe lists the ingredients by volume measurement; that is until you reach the "4 ounces of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, finely grated." I suppose one could buy 4 ounces and grate it, but what if you already have a large amount of grated cheese at home? Fortunately, I have a scale so I wasn't bothered. But, that brings me to a whole other question: Wouldn't it make more sense to list the weight measurements for all of the ingredients? If weight measurements are the standard in baking, why does "Baking" revert to volume measurements? Many baking books offer both weight and volume measurements. (Consider, (The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion: The All-Purpose Baking Cookbook A James Beard Award Winner (King Arthur Flour Cookbooks)) The Pastry Cream recipe was tasty, but it's a very basic recipe that can be found in many other baking book. The pie/tart dough recipes tasted great, but most doughs were unmanageable to work. Particularly bad is the Sweet Crisp Tart/Pie Dough, which tended to shrink down the sides of the tart pan while I blind baked it (Yes, I used weights and even tried docking it). I had to go off book and disregard the pictures in the book to make a tart crust that held up. The Puff Pastry Dough ingredients and methods were a surprise. "All-purpose flour" as the only flour for pastry dough? No pastry flour or a blend of flours? Most puff pastry recipes I've encountered do not rely solely on all-purpose flour. And, most other books teach a very different method for folding in the butter. The method in this book almost guarantees unrecoverable mistakes. I've made several puff pastry doughs and none (not even my first pasty dough) came out as blah as this recipe. The Puff Pastry Case directions were ok, if you had read the entire chapter on puff pastry. The Alsatian Apple Tart tasted like the rotten bottom of an apple bin. The filling was awkwardly thin and the apples were disgusting. I made this tart 2 times hoping to get it right, then I realized that apples cooked to a "deep brown" taste like they look. (Yes, I used the recipe's suggested Golden Delicious). The Bottom Line: I've made enough of these recipes to know that I cannot trust this book

as my primary baking reference. The pictures are helpful, but only if they teach a good method (see my Puff Pastry Dough and Sweet Tart Dough comments). I am extremely dissatisfied with this recipe book. I suggest *Professional Baking* or an older edition (*Professional Baking, Trade, 3rd Edition*) before I'd suggest this book. For good recipes without many pictures consider: *The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion: The All-Purpose Baking Cookbook A James Beard Award Winner* (King Arthur Flour Cookbooks), *The King Arthur Flour Cookie Companion: The Essential Cookie Cookbook* (King Arthur Flour Cookbooks), *King Arthur Flour Whole Grain Baking: Delicious Recipes Using Nutritious Whole Grains* (King Arthur Flour Cookbooks), *Bob's Red Mill Baking Book*, or *The joy of baking*.

I purchased James Peterson's brand new humongous tome on BAKING a few days ago. It is wonderfully illustrated and clear in its instructions. It's got me thinking I can do far more baking-wise than I've ever attempted before because the processes are so clearly broken down in steps. (Which reminds me of something often attributed to Julia Child: There are no such things as difficult recipes. Some just have more steps.) The one complaint I have about the book - and to me it's a substantial one - none of the measurements for the recipes are by weight. I believe this is a big mistake when so many recent baking books (including this one) talk about the precision of baking. There can be a meaningful lack of accuracy when doing measurements solely by volume. To finish on the positive, I am eager to start working my way through all Peterson's recipes and increasing my baking vocabulary and technique. There's a huge amount to learn here and it all looks delicious!

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