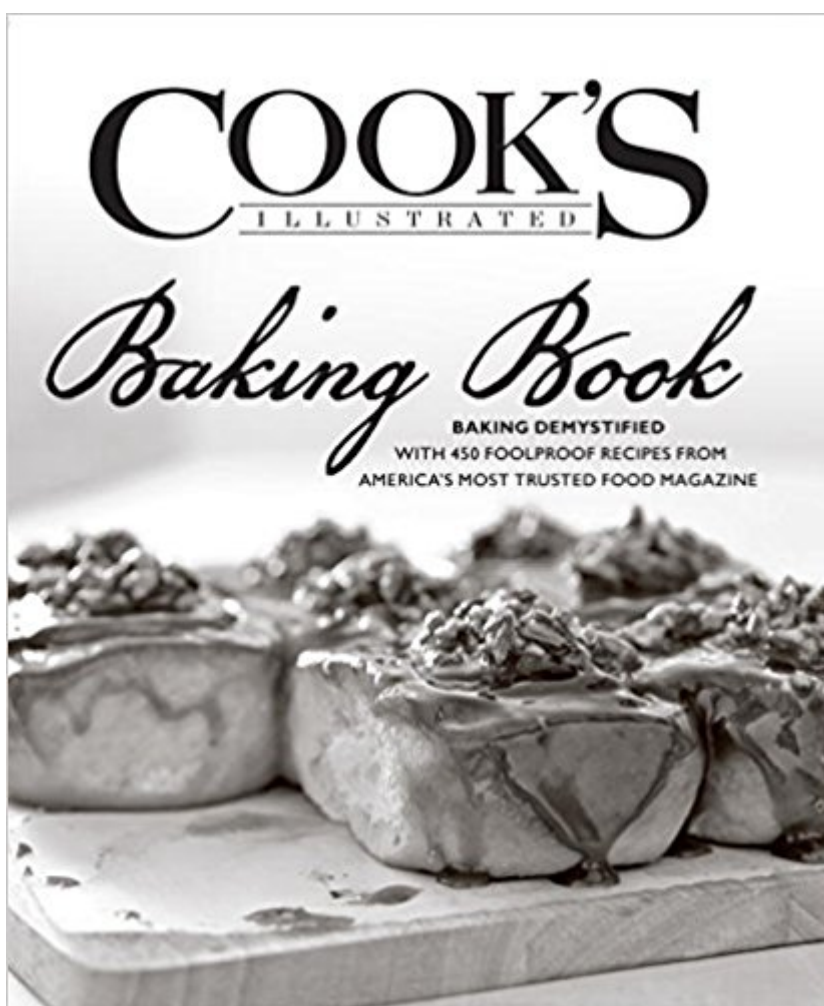


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# Cook's Illustrated Baking Book: Baking Demystified With 450 Foolproof Recipes From America's Most Trusted Food Magazine



## Synopsis

Baking demystified with 450 foolproof recipes from Cook's Illustrated, America's most trusted food magazine. The Cook's Illustrated Baking Book has it all—definitive recipes for all your favorite cookies, cakes, pies, tarts, breads, pizza, and more, along with kitchen-tested techniques that will transform your baking. Recipes range from easy (drop cookies and no-knead bread) to more ambitious (authentic croissants and dacquoise) and the trademark test kitchen expertise shines through each one. Discover why spreading the dough and then sprinkling the berries leads to better Blueberry Scones, why cubed versus shredded extra-sharp cheddar cheese makes all the difference in our irresistible Cheese Bread, how we found three ways to squeeze more lemon flavor into our Lemon Bundt Cake, and how to keep the best Buttermilk Waffles your family will ever taste warm and crispy. An illustrated Baking Basics chapter at the front of the book provides information on key ingredients and equipment and lays the groundwork for a lifetime of baking success. A shopping guide at the back recommends our favorite brands. The recipes in this book represent all the wisdom of the bakers that came before us as well as all we've learned through literally thousands of trial-and-error sessions in our kitchens.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Cook's Illustrated is a widely renowned America's Test Kitchen brand that is the work of over 60 passionate chefs based in Boston, Massachusetts, who put ingredients, cookware, equipment, and recipes through objective, rigorous testing to identify the very best. America's Test Kitchen brands are well-known for top-rated television shows with more than 4 million weekly public

television viewers, bestselling cookbooks, magazines, websites, and a cooking school. Discover, learn, and expand your cooking repertoire with Julia Collin Davison, Bridget Lancaster, Jack Bishop, Dan Souza, Lisa McManus, Tucker Shaw, Bryan Roof, and our fabulous team of test cooks!

The Cook's Illustrated Baking Book is a 518 page tome that compiles 450 recipes of delicious baked goods that most cooks can pull off in a home kitchen. It is divided as follows: baking basics; quick breads, muffins, and scones; sweet rolls, doughnuts, and coffee cakes; griddle cakes, waffles, and granola; yeasted rolls and loaves; pizza and focaccia; cookies; brownies and bars; snack cakes and fruit cakes; chiffon cakes, angel food cakes, pound cakes, and bundt cakes; layer cakes; fruit desserts and crepes; pies and tarts; savory tarts and quiches; pastry; baked custards, puddings, and soufflés; shopping guide; conversion notes; and index. As you can see, the editors at Cook's Illustrated were serious about giving the reader an encyclopedic array of baked goods to choose from and just in time for the fall and holiday baking frenzy. The book is well bound. It is obviously heavy--you'll be using both hands and probably your lap if you carry this to bed for a little late night studying. It also stays open well on its own if you cook without a cookbook stand. The recipes are written in the well-known Cook's Illustrated style which includes a handy few paragraphs preceding each recipe on what makes the recipe work so well for the home cook whether that be using room temperature butter or whipping egg whites in a copper bowl. It's the basic science of the recipe that is covered in these introductions without getting too technical if that turns off the home cook. Many of the recipes also have some cooking techniques illustrated in the simple but easy to understand black and white line drawings that many readers are accustomed to seeing in the magazine. The index seems to be well cross-referenced and easy to use. Some may find the font in this book on the small side although I had no problems with it. I enjoyed the beginning chapter on Baking Basics. It educates beginning cooks or simply curious cooks on the virtues of ingredients and cookware using one and two page spreads. A total of four pages just on the particulars of the types of butter and chocolate and the most useful home techniques associated with using them better in your kitchen? Sure, count me in. I must sing the praises of this book's recipe for No-Knead Brioche. It was a breeze to prepare although I tend to be a little ham-handed when making breads. My husband can eat a loaf per day when I make it, and I tell people that it's "almost a croissant in loaf form". I also particularly enjoy the Marbled Blueberry Bundt Cake. The lemon and blueberry compote that I made to swirl through the cake batter was well-balanced and rich and almost ingenious in its use of pectin. Every single time I've ever made it, I've had friends looking at me with doe eyes begging for the recipe. The Chewy Brownies recipe has officially ended my search for a home recipe that tastes

as moist and fudgy as a boxed brownie. My spouse says that he doesn't care if I ever make another kind of brownie again. The Cinnamon Babka dough was a bit more fragile than I would have liked it to be when I twisted it, but even with my overzealous handling, it turned out to be quite good. We also are now eschewing other cinnamon bun recipes in favor of this book's Quick Cinnamon Bun recipe. It was amazing how soon we were able to enjoy cinnamon buns without laboring for half a day in the kitchen. The buttermilk icing was slightly too tart so we will likely use whole milk for our next try. The most frequent complaint I hear about Cook's Illustrated books is that they recycle recipes from one book to the next. This is definitely true of this book. While I do not own the 2004 Baking Illustrated by them, I do have a copy of their 2011 Cook's Illustrated Cookbook. In checking the index of both under "bananas", I see overlap for Ultimate Banana Bread, Banana-Caramel Coconut Cream Pie, Banana Walnut Muffins, Banana and Nutella Crepes, as well as German Chocolate Cake with Banana, Macademia, and Coconut filling. A quick comparison of "Bar" Desserts in the two books yields similar results and then again with a cross-comparison of "Blueberries". If you already own books by Cook's Illustrated, you may not want this book. I would also like to point out that there are no color photographs in the book. I do not normally care about complaints or reviews regarding photographs in cookbooks, but in a book this large and well made (and knowing how beautiful my recipe results have been at home), I will concede that it is a shame to use big black and white photographs of the recipes. If you are curious if there are photos for each recipe, no there aren't. I think dessert is all about excess, and in a book like this, stark and dreary black and whites just seem like a cop out, a cost saving measure. My bottom line? It's a good, dependable dessert book. Be on the side of caution if you already own Cook's Illustrated books. If full color and decadent photographs are important to you, pass on this book. Otherwise, enjoy some remarkably great food at home because these recipes really do deliver.

This is possibly the best baking book available today. I have tried about 1/3 of the recipes already and every one has been the best version of that item that I have tasted. I have been sharing breads, muffins, cakes, pies, and other baked goods with friends and family and continuously get rave reviews. The best part of the book are the tidbits tucked in about why the recipes work and what they tried that didn't work as well. I am learning so much about how to bake, not just how to make specific recipes. I have recommended this book to several people and even have purchased a couple of extra copies to give away. I honestly think you cannot go wrong getting this book.

Wow, this is a thorough baking cookbook, very impressed. While there are photos throughout be

aware they are all in black & white. Detailed instructions on how to bake many things, some with "short cuts" but always followed by the classic recipe. Very happy with this purchase!

I wish I did not love these books! First recipe I made was homemade pizza. We've been making it for years, using recipes from other books. I thought nothing of this recipe, but the reactions from other family members was pretty amazing. They did not know that I had changed recipes for the dough, but kept commenting that the dough was so much better than usual. I am pretty new to the Cooks Illustrated cookbooks, but since discovering them, I have gained a new appreciation for cooking and a new awareness of food.

Have other Cook's Recipe Books, this seems to combine the best, and most useful recipes that I use. Only negative the photos are in black n white - no color - disappointing! Love that recipes I use are organized in one place!

I was pleasantly surprised and delighted when offered a kindle matchbook of the hardcover copy I bought at a very low price of less than \$5.00! It was truly a great offer given the quality of the book. I'm a novice and idiot baker and this book has proven to be very helpful. It is not for advanced bakers though as they may find many of the lessons too basic. From the introductory pages, the book has proven to be really loaded with information and helpful tips. The most useful ones being those related on how to correct errors or repair damage. Compared with other books on baking, this one has particularly been clear with the techniques that may be applied to almost any baking activity. I have just purchased the hardcover and kindle editions and already I'm able to apply some of its tips. (How to make your own fine and confectioner sugar using regular, granulated sugar, for instance.) If you want to develop and improve your baking skills rather than to find recipes (tons of good ones are available on the net anyway), this book is the one for you.

My new favorite cookbook! I've been a fan of Cook's Illustrated for a while now, and this one is another A+ book by them. I've already won 2 cookie contests! Every one of these is delicious and I love how they do a write up on each recipe on why they think this version is the best, and how they tested out different methods. I love learning about the science behind it all. They talk about what ingredients interact with each other, and how to choose the best products, both food products and kitchen tools. These recipes take a little patience though. They take longer than your average treat, but it is so worth the extra effort. They take all the guess work out of it and if you follow the recipe,

you are guaranteed a great result!

Great book. I love the way each recipe has "reasons" why certain ingredients are used. Great help!

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