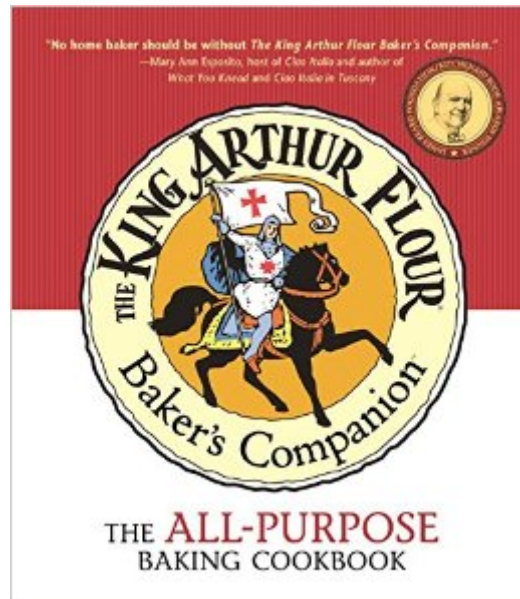


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The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion: The All-Purpose Baking Cookbook



Synopsis

The trusted companion of scores of home bakers is finally available in paperback! Originally Published ten years ago - and shortly thereafter honored as the James Beard Foundation's Cookbook of the Year (2003) - this cookbook is today every bit as relevant as it was then. And now the modern classic is in easy to use Flexibound Paperback, with its hundreds of easy and foolproof recipes, from yeast breads and sourdoughs to trendy flatbreads and crackers to family favorites such as pancakes and waffles. Leading you through the steps of leavening, mixing, proofing, and kneading through shaping and baking, the experts at King Arthur Flour also include their best fried doughs, quick breads, batter breads, biscuits, quiches, cobblers and crisps, cookies, cakes, brownies, pies, tarts, and pastries. For more than 200 years King Arthur Flour has been in the business of making the highest quality key ingredient in all of baking: flour. They've done decades of experimentation and research in their famous test kitchens on how the various ingredients in baked goods behave and why. The Baker's Companion, a kind of culmination of generations of loving work, brings you more than 350 recipes that teach you which ingredients work together as well as which don't and why. It is this knowledge that will allow you to unleash your own creativity and to experiment in the kitchen. You'll get a complete overview of ingredients in chapters on flours, sweeteners, leaveners, fats, and more. You'll find information on substitutions and variations, as well as troubleshooting advice from pros at King Arthur Flour. Two 8 Page Color Inserts. Illustrations throughout

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Customer Reviews

THE KING ARTHUR FLOUR BAKER'S COMPANION is a delight, both as a book to read and enjoy,

and as a cookbook. The slightly oversized pages allow for plenty of room for the well-laid out text. Ink and paper colors make it easy to read. The handful of photos is attractive and inspiring. Line drawings are well rendered and do a great job of illustrating techniques. Each recipe includes a short or not-so-short comment on the recipe from the King Arthur team. The comments are chatty and interesting enough that you may find yourself paging through the book, reading it for pleasure. As a guidebook and manual, THE KING ARTHUR FLOUR BAKER'S COMPANION is excellent. The book is designed to make it easy to scan and plan. Each recipe tells you how much you'll make. Quantities of ingredients are given in both cups/teaspoons and in ounces. When a dish is made in distinct stages (such as crust and filling), both the ingredients and the instructions are separately labeled. Each recipe also -- though you may not want to know! -- gives very complete nutritional information (calories; grams of fat, protein, carbohydrates, sugars, and fiber; mg of cholesterol and sodium; vitamins and minerals). Like THE JOY OF COOKING, THE KING ARTHUR FLOUR BAKER'S COMPANION includes long sections that talk about the basics, in addition to great specific recipes. I am comfortable with the basics of making piecrust. I read their section on basic piecrusts and it was very solid information. I was so inspired that I decided to step out and try a variation, the Long Flake Method. The instructions were very clear and easy to understand and follow. It was like having a master baker there to give you great bits of advice like "Give your chilled dough 10-15 minutes to warm since you made it with all butter."

This volume, subtitled the 'All Purpose Baking Cookbook' perfectly fits the criteria I typically apply to a book in order to decide if I want to give it five stars. A book gets three stars if it meets my expectations. A book gets four stars if it meets my expectations in a very successful way. Typically, that means that it has few or no detected mistakes. A book gets five stars if it exceeds my expectations. This book certainly exceeded my expectations. What I anticipated when I opened this book was a dry, technical work steeped in discussions of the effects of gluten and altitude and humidity on bread making, similar to some of the more detailed parts of better books on bread baking. All of these discussions are here, plus others on the finer points of measuring flour and types of flour, but with a difference. The biggest surprise in the book was the light, personal touch of the writing. It all has the tone you may expect in a very good book on regional cooking. And, lo and behold, there is a hint of regionality and local tradition in the selection of materials in the book. In spite of the fact that King Arthur products are available throughout the country (unlike White Lily, for example), the book retains a very New England tone to its selection of recipes. One prominent example is in the recipe for biscuits, where it advises all experienced Southern biscuit makers to

simply skip that page, as since `we don't want to shock you with the way we make biscuits up north'. That doesn't mean the book does not touch on every subject you may expect it to cover. As I said in my opening paragraph, it easily covers much more than what I expected. The very first chapter dealing with breakfast foods covers material not commonly covered in conventional baking surveys.

If you need a fantastic baking book on how to bake virtually everything, then this is the book for you! Most cookbooks out there fail to mention little things that are extremely important in a recipe, such as sifting flour, using eggs that are at room temperature, which type of oil to use etc. Most cookbook authors either know this information and figure you do too, or the author does not know these techniques and those recipes in those books are not all they could be. And most cookbook buyers know how to read a recipe, yet do not understand it. King Arthur Flour is a company that has been in business for over 200 years. It is their business to know flour, and to understand how to use it. It is also to their benefit to educate their flour buyers in how to bake better, so they will be happier with the end product, and thus buy more flour and even recommend their flour to their friends. In their latest book: *The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion: The All-Purpose Baking Cookbook* they explain why you need to sift your flour (it adds air to the mixtures which aids in leavening), why French Toast bread should be stale, why you only fry in certain oils and much more. They also offer recipes for virtually everything; from breakfast foods to quick breads, from doughnuts to yeast breads, from cobblers to cookies and cakes, as well as pies and quiches. This book even offers a section on which kitchen tools are the best for your baking projects: from type of chocolates to pie pans. This is a must-read section for any baker. This cookbook is designed for 90% of the cookbook buying population. This cookbook is fantastic as now you can understand what you are doing rather than just following directions.

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