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# The Great British Bake Off: How To Bake: The Perfect Victoria Sponge And Other Baking Secrets



## Synopsis

Twelve new amateur bakers are ready to rise to the Great British Bake Off challenge. While they don their aprons, adjust to their new ovens, and get used to baking in a tent, this book takes you through the challenges from the series and shows you how to achieve baking perfection.

Throughout the book, Mary and Paul are on hand with expert advice and practical tips to help you create perfect cakes, biscuits, breads, pastries, pies, and teatime treats every time. Each chapter begins with a specific baking skill, which, once mastered, allows you to tackle Mary and Paul's technical challenges, as seen on the show, with confidence. There are over 120 recipes in this book, including traditional British bakes and imaginative twists using classic ingredients, as well as the best contestant recipes from the series. There is plenty to challenge keen bakers here, from brandy snaps to elaborate pastries, pavlovas to iced celebration cakes, and with a sensuous and yet practical design and full-color, step-by-step photography, this really will become the baking book that you will turn to for years to come. Includes metric measures and conversion chart.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Linda Collister is an experienced cook and baker, having trained at L'Ecole de Cuisine La Varenne in Paris and Le Cordon Bleu in London. She is the author of a number of baking books, including The Great British Book of Baking. Mary Berry is the Queen of Cakes. Much-loved for her trusted recipes and experienced advice, she has been teaching the nation to bake for over 30 years. In

2004, Mary was voted Top 3 by BBC Good Food for "Most Reliable Celebrity Cook Book" alongside Jamie Oliver and Delia Smith. Mary Berry's Baking Bible was published in 2009. Paul Hollywood is one of the best known artisan bakers in the UK. His bestselling book 100 Great Breads was voted "Top Bread and Pastry Book in the English language" by the Gourmand Academy.

After a bit of confusion over a gift certificate I received for my birthday a couple of months back I found myself with a rather nice credit. It took some thought, but since I have been having great fun watching episodes of The Great British Bake Off on Youtube, one of the things that I finally settled on was "The Great British Bake Off: How to Bake: The Perfect Victoria Sponge and Other Baking Secrets". I've spent the last month reading every word, comparing the book to a number of other "How to Bake" books in my collection and, of course, baking. Here's what I've found. The book is nicely laid out, uses an easy-to-read font and features lots of pictures, one for nearly every recipe in the book. Divided into eight chapters (Cakes, Biscuits & Teatime Treats, Bread, Pies & Savoury Pastry, Tarts & Sweet Pastry, Patisserie, Puddings & Desserts, and Celebration Cakes), each section highlights two recipes for detailed instructions that include step-by-step photos - a basic How To, and one that is more advanced. The book uses metric measurements in the UK style (spices and small amounts are given in the same teaspoons and tablespoons that we use), so you will need a digital scale. If you've not yet acquired one, good scales can be had these days for a very moderate cost. (\$20 or so.) Liquid measures are in ml, which you will find on one side of your Pyrex glass measuring cup (been there for years - a couple of decades) as well as most other liquid measuring cups available in the US these days. I spent the weekend having a Bake Off of my own, specifically testing recipes and taking notes in preparation for several reviews. Let me tell you about the recipes that I tried from "The Great British Bake Off: How to Bake: The Perfect Victoria Sponge and Other Baking Secrets".

**TEST RECIPE 1 - GOLDEN APRICOT AND MARZIPAN LOAF**

In choosing recipes to test, I tried to use things that I already had in the pantry. Since I had a block of marzipan that was approaching the time it needed to be used, Golden Apricot and Marzipan Loaf was an easy choice. This is a very easy to put together cake that you bake in a loaf pan, chock full of golden raisins (sultanas), bits of dried apricot and little cubes of marzipan. Gorgeous when sliced and utterly delicious with a cup of plain tea, the cake requires but one bowl and no mixer. It keeps well for about five days or could be frozen. The cake is labeled as both Easy for Children to make and Suitable for Celebrations. Grandma absolutely agrees! This is one of the few recipes in the book that calls for golden caster sugar, which isn't readily available in the US. I used Florida Crystals

Natural Cane Sugar instead. The complete list of recipes included in the Cakes chapter can be seen in the Look Inside feature at the top of the page. Note that UK cakes tend to be smaller and less sweet than cakes on this side of the pond. Caster sugar is called Superfine or Bartender's here and it is NOT the same as granulated sugar, but much finer to absorb more readily. Icing sugar is the same as confectioner's sugar. Plain flour is all purpose flour. Self raising (self rising) flour is the same. Sultanas (called for in the Golden Apricot & Marzipan cake, among others) are golden raisins.

### TEST RECIPE 2 - SPICY CHICKEN PASTIES

Our British cousins have a long tradition of pie-making using savoury ingredients that has been more or less overlooked here in the US. The Great British Bake Off: How to Bake: The Perfect Victoria Sponge and Other Baking Secrets features an entire chapter of savoury pies, virtually all of which look scrumptious, so I wanted to try one of these. Britain, of course, ruled India for a couple of centuries and the flavors of the British Raj are extremely popular in the UK, to the point that curry is said to be the national dish. Spicy Chicken Pasties reflect that heritage with a bright yellow crust and a mildly spiced chicken filling highlighted with a dab of mango chutney. The pastry for these Spicy Chicken Pasties is identical to the pie pastry I've been making for 50 years or so, save for the addition of a half-teaspoon of turmeric, which gives the finished dough a bright yellow color that is just stunning when cooked. The filling required so little in the way of expensive ingredients that I was surprised - about 1/3 of a pound of boneless chicken breast and 3 tablespoons of yogurt plus a dab of garlic, fresh ginger and a couple of spices - perfect for using up that last piece of chicken breast or providing a meat dish for six for pennies a serving. The recipe said that it would make 6 turnovers. I got 8. (The saucer I used for a pattern was probably slightly small.) This was not a labor intensive recipe at all. I made the dough for the crust and put the chicken to marinate the night before I made the pasties, then cooked the filling (it goes under the broiler for a couple of minutes) the following morning. I cannot tell you how good Spicy Chicken Pasties are! Let's just say I was in no rush to call anyone up and ask them around to share. These would be fantastic as part of a picnic lunch or, cut smaller, would make stunning finger food for a party. (Do note if you decide to go that route that the chicken filling is not entirely cooked through when you fill the pasties, so they need to be assembled at close to the last minute, though they do also reheat well.) Would I make these again? Oh yes - probably this afternoon! These are to-die-for good, 10 out of 10.

Other recipes in the Pies & Savoury Pastry chapter include - Shortcrust Pastry - identical to that I've made most of my life  
Beef & Red Wine Pie Filling  
Stilton, Potato and Caramelised Onion Pie  
Paul's Pork Pies with Quail Eggs - neat little "hand pies" baked in muffin tins, Step-by-step Photos  
Spicy Chicken Pasties - TEST RECIPES  
Somerset Pork and Apple Pie  
Stilton, Spinach and New Potato Quiche  
Salmon and Pak Choi

(boy choy) QuicheSmoked Haddock and Watercress QuicheWarm Crab TartRich Beef Casserole with DumplingsThree Cheese and Spinach Pie\* - an unusual take on Spanikopita that uses feta, Parmesan and ricotta cheesesMushroom and Gorgonzola Twist\*Recipes marked with an asterisk use purchased filo dough instead of shortcrust pastry.

### TEST RECIPE 3 - MARY'S CHOCOLATE ROULADE

Mary's Chocolate Roulade is the Technical Challenge recipe from the Puddings & Desserts chapter of the book. Chocolate cake rolled around a whipped cream filling, it looks spectacular - glamorous, delicious and difficult. Nothing could be further from the truth! I chose to make this because Chocolate Roulade is a recipe that I already knew how to make. Some years ago I happened to be sitting around watching Julia Child reruns. Julia whipped up one of these Chocolate Roulades in about ten minutes flat and made it look so easy I said to myself "I can do that!", went into the kitchen and did. If you never in your entire life learn to bake anything else, add Chocolate Roulade to your repertoire. Mary's recipe is nearly identical to mine.Chocolate Roulade requires almost nothing in the way of ingredients - some chocolate, a bit of sugar and some eggs. (Some recipes, including Mary's, include a couple of tablespoons of cocoa powder.) With no flour, this is an ideal recipe to serve your gluten-free friends and with no butter it is reasonably "safe" for dieters & others watching their weight. (You could, though it would be almost criminal, substitute a low-fat "whipped topping" for the whipped cream filling.The one thing you have to watch with Chocolate Roulade is that it is very thin and thus it is quite easy to overbake, so do keep a close eye on it. And start checking early. The recipe in the book says baking time is 20-25 minutes. In my oven it is about 16. That said, if you do overbake it a tad all is not lost. If the roll cracks too much (a little bit of cracking is normal) to look lovely on the plate, grab some pretty glasses, chunk up the roulade (you'll have lovely little "sandwiches" of cake and cream), pile the chunks into the glasses and drizzle a teeny bit of fudge sauce over. Nobody will ever know you didn't plan it that way!Other recipes in the Puddings And Desserts chapter include -How to make perfect MeringuesPavlova with Mango and PassionfruitWarm Chocolate Mousse CakeDouble Chocolate Chip CheesecakeRum and Raisin Baked CheesecakeRhubarb and Ginger Baked CheesecakeMary's Chocolate Roulade - TEST RECIPE, Step-by-step photosChocolate MousseLemon Ice Cream Meringue PieHot Lemon Curd Soufflé©Fresh Raspberry SauceChocolate Bread and Butter PuddingPeach and Ginger CobblerChocolate Fudge Hot-Pot PuddingQueen of Sheba - flour-less chocolate cake, Julia Child's favoriteRecipes from the other chapters in the book -BISCUITS & TEATIME TREATSMary's Brandy Snaps - step-by-step photos includedAlmond Tuiles - step-by-step photos includedWalnut CrumblesRoyal Icing for PipingIced Lemon BiscuitsMelting Moments - different than the US version, sandwiched together with fillingChocolate Chunk CookiesChristmas Shortbread and Marzipan

Biscuits  
Stem Ginger Shortbread (Stem ginger is ginger in syrup)  
Double Chocolate Buns  
Drop Scones - cooked on a griddle  
Chocolate Crackles  
Two-chocolate Zebras - striped cookies in dark and white chocolate  
Piñafâ a Colada Macaroons (French style)  
Mojito Macaroons  
Cranberry Cooler  
Macaroons  
Banana and Almond Slice  
Little Stem Ginger Gingerbreads  
Carrot and Pistachio Traybake  
Coffee and Walnut Traybake  
Sticky Maple-Apple Traybake  
Coconut Macaroons - little pyramids of finely flaked coconut, dipped in chocolate  
Oat and Raisin Biscuits  
Mint Chocolate Macaroons  
Florentines  
A bit of "translation" here - a traybake is what we would call a sheet cake here in the US. Biscuits are cookies. Slices are what we would call bar cookies.  
Stem ginger is generally unavailable in the US. I would substitute either candied ginger or Pickled Watermelon Rind.  
BREAD  
White Loaf - How to with step by step photos  
Cheese and Onion Tear and Share Loaf  
A Good Rustic Loaf - Wholegrain or spelt flour  
Glazes and Toppings - can be used for a variety of breads to make your's unique  
Old Fashioned London Loaf  
Paul's Focaccia - Step by step photos  
Picnic Loaf - two fillings, one sweet, one savory so you get some of each in every slice  
Sweet Coconut Rolls  
Black Olive and Thyme Bread  
Monkey Bread  
Pizza  
Rum Babas  
Hazelnut, Apricot and Honey Wholemeal\* Loaf  
Sticky Buns\* Wholemeal flour is whole wheat flour  
Strong flour is bread flour.  
TARTS AND SWEET PASTRY  
Mary's Tart Au Citron  
Blueberry Bakewell Tarts  
Quick Apple Tarts  
Chocolate, Fennel and Ginger Tarts  
Strawberry & Pistachio Tart  
Elderflower and Honeycomb Tarts  
Mud Pie  
Rhubarb Meringue Pie  
Sticky Walnut Tart  
Apple Beehives  
Simply Good Apple Pie  
Warm Cherry Crumble Pie  
Tarte Tatin  
PATISSERIE  
Puff Pastry - How To with step by step photos  
Millefeuilles with Raspberries - crisp puff pastry layered with whipped cream & raspberries  
Palm Leaves and Almond Straws  
Home-made Buttery Croissants  
Ham and Cheese Croissants  
Almond Croissants  
Chocolate Croissants  
Danish Pastries - includes photos and directions for a variety of shapes  
Raisin, Banana and Chocolate Pastries  
Choux Pastry  
fâ clairs  
Profiteroles - ("cream puffs")  
Almond Filling  
Chantilly Cream  
Pastry Cream  
Limoncello and White Chocolate Croquembouche  
Paul's Iced Fingers  
Chocolate Orange Mousse Cake  
CELEBRATION CAKES  
Large Iced Fruitcake - How To with Step by Step photos, also covering the cake in marzipan & rolled icing  
Simmnel Cake  
Yule Log  
Twelfth Night King Cake  
Panettone  
Mincemeat Lattice Tart  
Christmas Pudding  
A Celebration Sherry Trifle  
Rich Vanilla Cup Cakes  
Chocolate Velvet Cup Cakes  
Very Lemony Cup Cakes  
Easy Vanilla or Lemon Icing  
Chocolate Fudge Frosting  
Making A Party Cake - directions & quantities for a tiered cake  
Maple and Marshmallow Fluff  
Chocolate and Raspberry Opera Cake  
Grandma's \$0.02 - Every single recipe that I've tried has been both scrumptious and successful. Recipes for the more complicated items are spot-on. One of the, perhaps THE, very best How To Bake books that I've ever seen, a book I'll use regularly for years to come. You won't

go wrong with this one. Very Highly Recommended

Enjoy photos of the first bake off in England. Along with recipes. Some recipes inside are interesting!

The first two recipes are great. Each has clear, concise photos of each step as I saw in the sample I reviewed. So I ordered the book. I tried the first two recipes. Results: Perfection! However, the remainder of the book does not have photos of the step-by-step process, which a beginner baker like me needs. Plus, I'm much more interested in Mary's recipes and Paul's, not the bakers from the show. Will continue to try some more of the recipes as there are tips and insights peppered throughout! My first Battenberg cake is shown.

Love the Great British Baking Show series on PBS. I enjoy baking for others and This is a wonderful addition to my cookbook section. Arrived on time in like new condition. Thank you & I Recommend this seller.

I have liked all the tie in books to the Great British Bake Off series and this was no exception. The books themselves have varied slightly from season to season as far as layout, but they all have plenty of recipes to try!

Anyone who is a fan of the PBS baking show, 'The Great British Bake Off' will love this book. Following the bake off contest in the UK in 2011, this cook book was developed. Mary Berry and Zpaul Hollywood, the superb judges, each have a forward and their technical recipes are featured. The recipes of the winning technicals, and the best of show are featured. This book encompasses everything you would ever want to know about baking. The British baking units are used, Celcius and grams. But, there is a conversion chart at the end. It should be known that, large eggs in the UK are the equivalent of extra large eggs in the US. The UK also uses caster sugar in most of its recipe. It is very small fine sugar, much finer than the US's regular sugar. Remember this when you start baking and the product may not be as light as they mention in the book. There are 120 recipes, 315 pages, and lots of photos. However, each baking product is not photographed, and I would like to see a photo for each product. The cookbook includes cakes, biscuits and teatime treats, bread, pies and savory pastry, tarts and sweet pastry, patisserie, puddings and desserts, and ends with celebration cakes. Recipes are included in each of the eight chapters. The recipes are

very precise, either Mary or Tom talk about the technic in the particular bakery product, and how it should be made. Some of the products are unusual, but that is the way it should be. We see photos of each participant, but that is all. Not much information about any of them. We do learn the winner. I made the Rich Vamilla Cupcakes, and they were the best I have had. I made two frosting so, one easy vanilla and the other lemon. They are delicious frostings. Several of the recipes appeal to me. Puff pastry, not so much. I can purchase beautiful puff pastry from the frozen food aisles. All in all, a perfect cookbook. This is one for the new or older baker. For a cookbook collector, this is a superb present. My granddaughter, who is five, loved the baking show on PBS, and when last year's cookbook is available, I will purchase that for she and her mom. Highly Recommended. prisrob  
03-13-15

I got such a kick out of watching the Great British Bake Offs on TV. I had to have this book if only for the Victoria Sponge Cake recipe.

Good book with plenty of notes and pics. Enjoyable to compare some of the British baking lingo with our own descriptions. A nice variation of recipes that vary from what I am used to.

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