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The Fundamental Techniques Of Classic Pastry Arts



Synopsis

An indispensable addition to any serious home baker's library, *The Fundamental Techniques of Classic Pastry Arts* covers the many skills an aspiring pastry chef must master. Based on the internationally lauded curriculum developed by master pâtissier Jacques Torres for New York's French Culinary Institute, the book presents chapters on every classic category of confection: tarts, cream puffs, puff pastry, creams and custards, breads and pastries, cakes, and petits fours. Each chapter begins with an overview of the required techniques, followed by dozens of recipes—many the original creations of distinguished FCI graduates. Each recipe even includes a checklist to help you evaluate your success as measured against professional standards of perfection! Distilling ten years of trial and error in teaching students, *The Fundamental Techniques of Classic Pastry Arts* is a comprehensive reference with hundreds of color photographs, a wealth of insider tips, and highly detailed information on tools and ingredients—quite simply the most valuable baking book you can own.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've made several of the desserts in this book -- and most of them were amazing. Seriously, amazing. You haven't had a cheese Danish until you've had one straight out of the oven. It was fantastic. Hot brioche, the same. And the tarts, and the cookies...oh my. My roommates and coworkers alike are now hovering every weekend and Monday morning to see what I've made/brought to work. My dessert game has been elevated. Keep in mind that the ingredients are listed in grams and ounces -- you'll need a kitchen scale. It's easy to get used to, but if you don't

have one you can't even begin. I do have one big complaint. As another reviewer mentioned, there are ERRORS in the recipes. (At the end of the genoise recipe, in the "tips" section, it says that for a 6-inch cake you use x amount of flour and an 8-inch cake, y amount...but shouldn't that be in the ingredients section? And if not there, shouldn't it say, in the ingredients section, "see page z for flour amounts"? I would think so.) An example is the lemon cake recipe. In the body it mentions adding sugar twice, but it's only listed once. I worried I'd get a sickeningly sweet cake if I added too much, so I only put in the amount listed...and got a blah, boring cake. (Though the light-as-a-cloud texture was delightful. Too bad it wasn't tasty, too.) And then sometimes equipment is in the ingredients section...line breaks are off... there are pictures of the execution of recipes that contradict the directions in the recipe... I found it very strange. For an art that is as exacting as French pastries are, it's all the more striking that there are so many errors in the book. Most of the final products are AMAZING. But I wish they had paid as much attention to detail in the editing as you need to do to make pastries.

I recently purchased this book from my book of the month club. I love to bake and have quite a collection of baking specific books. I pulled out The Fundamental Techniques tonight to review genoise (french sponge cake) page 328 since I plan on giving this versatile cake a try. Everything is explained clearly and the tips seem great until you get to the ingredients where I noticed flour is missing! It is mentioned in the recipe directions but no quantity is listed anywhere. This is such a fundamental cake and the recipe is carelessly WRONG. This is the only recipe I have looked at and have not baked from the book... now I am regretting my purchase of a VERY expensive book.

The Fundamental Techniques of Classic Pastry Arts is an amazing book for pastry geeks like me. I'm a home cook, but very experienced with creating gourmet & restaurant-type desserts. I took a trip to Paris and visited some lovely little neighborhood patisseries, and tasted as many french desserts as I could during my short visit. Almost all of them were absolutely amazing, and completely different than what is available locally in my area of the U.S. This big, thick, colorful book shows how to make all of the desserts we tasted and loved on our trip. It has just enough photographs to illustrate key points of the recipes, and many of the recipes have photos of the finished product. One thing that I would have enjoyed is photographs showing some of the desserts plated and ready to serve. There were a few photos of finished desserts where I wanted to see what it looked like when it was cut. Still, I love the book, and there are a lot of things that make it "better than the rest of the crowd". I very much appreciate the "Evaluating Your Success" section for each

recipe, and also the "Tips" section that accompanies each recipe. This is a BIG book, and though I initially read the book all the way through, it's obviously better suited as a reference book, not a read-it-in-bed-as-you-fall-asleep book. It's just too heavy & bulky to read easily as a bedside book! I also liked the inclusion of not one, but *two* ribbon bookmarks to help mark pages for easy reference. Beautiful book, and worth every dime!

I received this book and have tried two of the recipes. My experience has been similar to one of the reviews I read. There are typos. Typos that could easily lead one to do things wrong and therefore requires one to read the recipes several times and very carefully, knowing that all is not there that one needs for success. I am not a professional, but I do have quite a bit of experience. I tried the Frazier Victoria (FV). This recipe requires Creme Moussiline (CM) which is Creme Patissiere (CP) with butter incorporated after completing the CP. The recipe never specifically explains that a double batch of the CP recipe is needed to properly make the CM (and complete the two cakes the FV recipe makes). I figured this out while assembling the cakes and being able to complete only one cake (and later realizing I had made the CM with twice the butter!!) I went back and checked the yield required for the CM and then saw that the yield for the CP needed to be doubled to obtain the final yield of the CM. Pretty obscure way to do it, but maybe a pro would know this.....although, the CM yield is shown in grams and pounds; the CP yield is shown in liters ~ thank you very much! Although there are a lot of pictures, there are more recipes without than with. Some of those with, don't show the completed pastry (if unfamiliar with that particular one, how do you do it!?!). Also, written instructions do not always sync with the pictures shown. My impression of the book is that the FCI chefs contributed recipes, but no one ever checked them for the "not" professional Pastry Chef and no one went through the book so they were presented in a consistent, step-by-step manner to increase one's success rate. If there is a second printing, and I think there should be (and hope there will be), they should take the time to re-work the book and send everyone that bought the first printing new one, at no charge!!!

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