

Bake from Scratch: Volume Two: Artisan Recipes for the Home Baker

Brian Hart Hoffman

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Baking is chemistry; baking is alchemy; baking is craft. Brian Hart Hoffman's *Bake from Scratch: Artisan Recipes for the Home Baker, Volume Two* celebrates all of these aspects with more than 600 recipes from the sophomore year of *Bake from Scratch* magazine. It's a hefty, well-illustrated idea book for the serious baker who wants to try new recipes and techniques.

The large format allows for most nearly every recipe to be delineated on a single page, and it falls open easily to lie flat for ease of use. Large, luminous color photographs for all of the recipes and smaller thumbnails for many others are very helpful guides toward the perfect crumb, crust, or cream. Bakers will also appreciate that measurements are given by both volume and weight.

There is not a lot of chapter or recipe preamble, and the book presumes knowledge of advanced techniques and cabinets full of specialized gear, ingredients, and pans. As such, it seems best suited for more accomplished bakers, though the less experienced may be inspired by all the baking porn to challenge themselves to create a special-occasion treat.

The diverse range of baking recipes is particularly noteworthy. Some are culled from a number of traditional cuisines, like Greek *tsoureki*, a braided sweet dough flavored with *mahleb* (a spice made from ground cherry pits), and the handful of recipes for variations of *roosterkoek*, puffy grilled bread from South Africa. Other innovative recipes involve unusual flavor combinations, like celery Gruyère *gougères* and charred squash pound cake with black pepper and parmesan. The book also includes an extensive holiday cookie section with instructions for everything from homey shortbreads to elaborately decorated "embroidered" cookie ornaments.

This would be an inspirational addition to an accomplished baker's cookbook collection. It's an impressive volume that is guaranteed to stretch anyone's repertoire of baking skills and recipes.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (May/June 2018)

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