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FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ COOKING

Cookie Craft: From Piping to Luster Dust, Designs and Techniques for Creative Cookie Occasions

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Beautiful cookies made at home can be as attractive as store-bought, while tasting much better. Beginning with a substantial photo section, these cookies in this book whet the reader's appetite and suggest ideas. Grouped by themes: Christmas, Valentine's, seasonal choices, they also include parties, like showers and weddings. Particularly notable are the lacy snowflakes—complete with a demonstration of how to cut out internal sections with artful results—and the Easter basket, a simple circle iced in a basket-weave with multi-colored pastel dots for eggs.

The how-to section starts with recommendations for needed ingredients and equipment; its tone is one of a helpful friend rather than stern directives. Also included are essential techniques; for example, using "cookie slats," or thin strips of wood when rolling out dough to ensure cookies are uniformly thick and flat for decorating. Only a few basic recipes are necessary to create these wonders, for the art lies more in the eye than in the oven.

For beginners, there are suggestions on how to decorate before baking. Cookies can be imprinted, layered, sugared, or painted with colored egg yolk. The show-stopping approach, though, is icing, a chapter of its own. Recipes cover different types that are used for outlines and coloring in large areas.

Those accomplished in decoration will find new ideas in the use of three-dimensional creations. The book's centerpiece is an illuminated Halloween display with glowing haunted house, pumpkins in a graveyard with stand-up headstones, and a moon-silhouetted witch, all cookies. Another popular decorating approach is the three-dimensional cookie favor box, which at Christmas becomes a festive sleigh. *Cookie Craft* concludes with information on freezing, wrapping, shipping cookies, and holding cookie parties where bakers/artists exchange their wares.

The authors, Peterson and Fryer, combine fifteen years of cookbook experience.

JOHANNA DRAPER CARLSON (October 9, 2007)

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