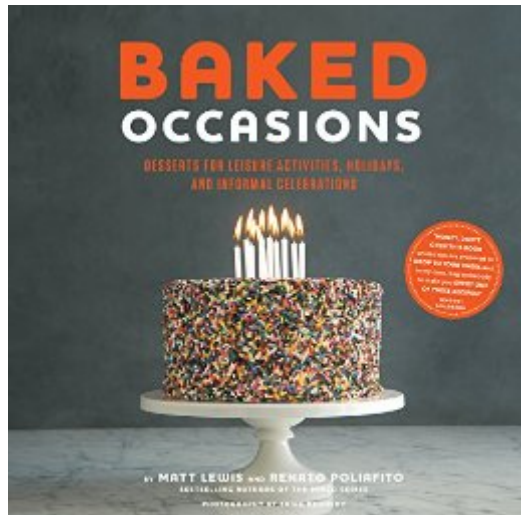


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Baked Occasions: Desserts For Leisure Activities, Holidays, And Informal Celebrations



Synopsis

Celebrating a year in desserts, BAKED's beloved duo Matt Lewis and Renato Poliafito offer cookies, puddings, whoopie pies, cakes, brownies, and more to commemorate holidays both expected and unexpected. Rum-infused Hair of the Dog Cake for New Year's Day and Peanut Butter Sheet Cake for Texas Independence Day join Praline Ice Cream Cake for Mardi Gras, Chocolate Pop Tarts for Halloween, and 12 Days of Cookies for Christmastime. With 65 gorgeous photographs and 75 unique recipes, you'll have everything you need to create a wide range of sweet treats for quirky festivities and traditional holidays all year round.

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Customer Reviews

I own all the Baked Cookbooks. Chances are, when I need to bake something to impress someone, I'm going to pull out a Baked cookbook. They boast lots of ingenuity and offer refreshing, adventurous twists on the standby classics. Baked Occasions is such a book. It turns the classics on their ears and injects new life and flavor into them. Baked Occasions is exactly what it sounds like: a baking book dedicated to turning out holiday desserts. It is arranged by month instead of by category such as cookies or cakes. Some of the holidays are expected: Italian Christmas Cookie

Cake on Christmas or Vanilla Bean Angel Food Cake with Milk Chocolate Glaze on Valentines Day. Others are a blast and clearly illustrate the authors' sense of fun (as well as why I keep buying their books), such as: a Coconut Bundt Cake with a Dark Chocolate and Coconut Filling to celebrate Dolly Parton's birthday (January 19th, if you're curious) or Derby Cookies to celebrate the Kentucky Derby. The book begins with the typical "user's manual" introduction: what pans and implements will be used in the recipes and what main ingredients will be most used. I particularly enjoy the anecdotes at the beginning of each recipe. It's always fun to find out where the authors get their inspiration and pick up tidbits about perfecting each recipe. The recipes are well-written and give ingredients by both weight and volume. There are a few unusual ingredients (such as a purple yam powder and some gel colorings that are all available on). I think this is a book for the moderate level baker. Many of the recipes call for several components to make a finished dessert.

Baked Occasions is another hit, despite the less-than-useful organization scheme (Black Forest Cake Festival? National Chocolate Pudding Day? I don't need another reason to bake these goodies). I have a huge crush on Matt and Renato, having bought the last three books and finding that everything I baked from them was exceptional. The only major difference in terms of style with this cookbook is the fact that there's no paper cover for the hardback. Otherwise, they go through all the kitchen tools and ingredients you'll need, including their specific preferences for certain brands in a few cases, with sourcing options at the end of the book. As before, each section has an overall story at the beginning, and then there's a cute little blurb in front of each individual recipe. Some of these recipes are quite complicated and may span several pages, but they have included notes with options for reducing the time (coconut sheet cake) or replacing a hard-to-find ingredient (purple yam in the Gonzo cake). I was worried that there would be some "too similar" recipes, because how creative can two people be with four cookbooks in six years and lives to carry on? While there are definitely some obvious elements that are repeated across the four books, the recipes presented here are fresh and intriguing takes on their previously-established favorite ingredients (booze, coconut, chocolate, lemon, caramel, etc), with a couple completely different entries (Meat and cheese utopia easter pie). The inclusion of a vegan option - Hippie (chocolate) Cake is really nice to see. My lactose-free roommate is very excited.

2015 marks the 10-year anniversary of the stellar Baked: NYC bakery in Red Hook, where classic comfort bakes are given unique twists like chipotle, matcha, and other flavor pairings. This is the fourth cookbook from Matt Lewis and Renato Poliafito, the dynamic duo behind Baked: NYC.

"Baked: Occasions" celebrates a year in desserts, commemorating both well-known and lesser-known holidays (including World Nutella Day, National Pistachio Day and National Wine Day) alongside other festive occasions such as celebrity birthdays (Dolly Parton, Elvis, Hunter S. Thompson, Julia Child). You'll find international influences in their brioche ice cream sandwiches, palmiers, Chinese five-spice sesame scones, brutti ma buoni, Naniamo ice cream bars, and chocolate cinnamon chipotle sugar cookies. A strong sense of the nostalgic runs throughout, including homemade Pop Tarts, fruit crisps, buttermilk, sheet, and pound cakes, and if you think you hate tapioca pudding, wait until you've tried the chocolate espresso tapioca pudding with Kahlua whipped cream. There are also charming, witty interludes that give more insight into Matt and Renato's upbringing, culinary influences, and traumatic Halloween experiences (and mega kudos for mentioning the Sandra Lee Kwanzaa cake!). "Baked: Occasions" also edges into "fancy" territory with several showstopping ombre cakes and a rainbow-hued icebox cake for Gay Pride ("somewhere between a semifreddo and a mousse, all chocolaty, whipped-cream heaven - only 100 percent gayer"). However, the recipes in "Baked: Occasions" are often multi-step and perhaps best suited to those who already have some prior baking experience.

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