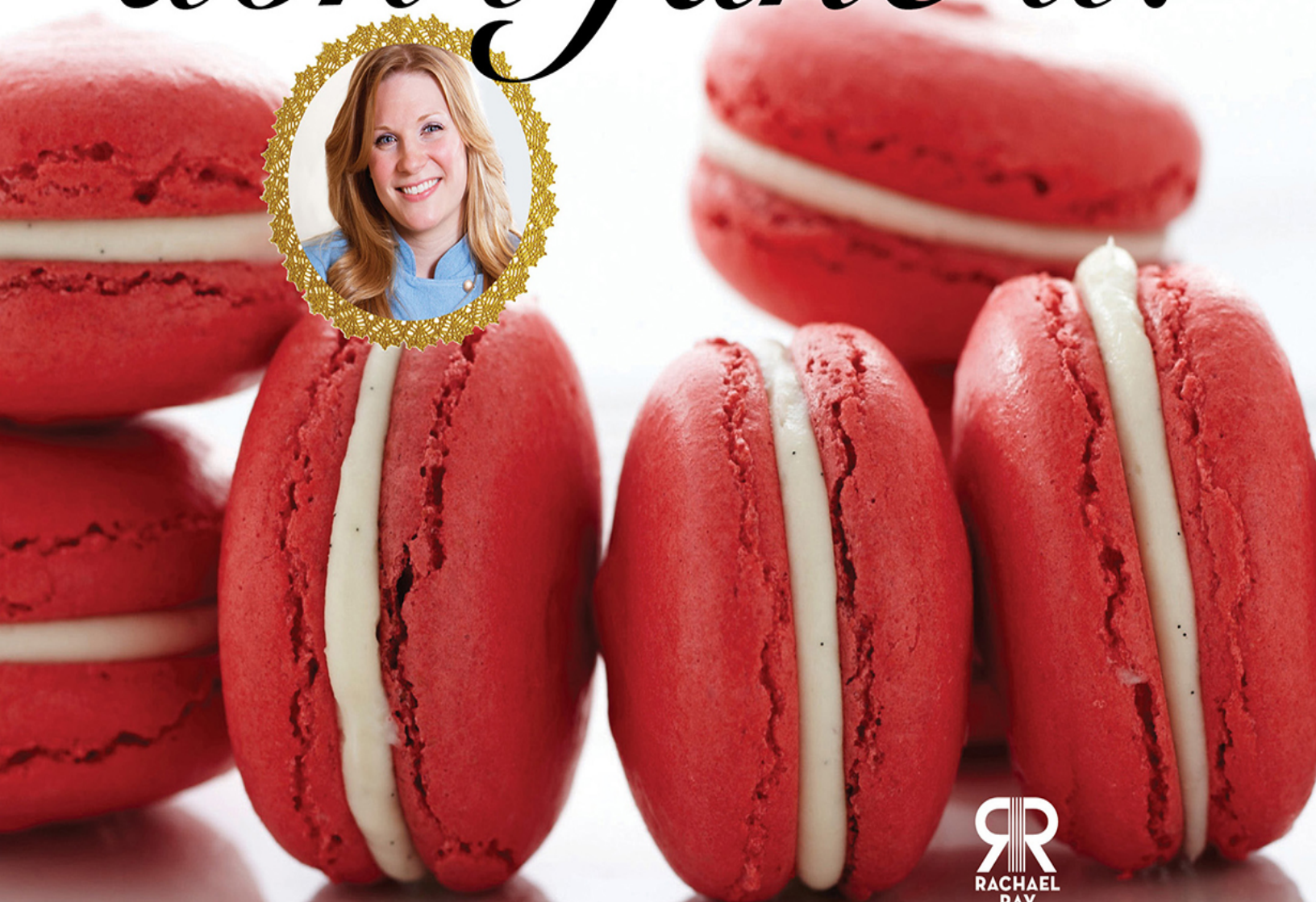


BAKE IT, *don't fake it!*



A Pastry Chef Shares Her Secrets for Impressive
(and Easy) From-Scratch Desserts

HEATHER BERTINETTI FOREWORD BY **RACHAEL RAY**

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HEATHER BERTINETTI

FOREWORD BY RACHAEL RAY

RACHAEL RAY BOOKS

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ATRIA

NEW YORK LONDON TORONTO SYDNEY NEW DELHI

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This book is dedicated to the memory of my Aunt Julie, with
love.

FOREWORD BY RACHAEL RAY

I am a good cook and a terrible baker. Baking requires patience, skill, a scientific mind, precision—right? Wrong. Heather Bertinetti can make anyone and everyone a weekend pastry chef. If you wish you had the skills and confidence to make scrumptious, showstopping desserts, you've picked up the right book—*Bake It, Don't Fake It!* Heather Bertinetti is a gifted pastry chef who's honed her craft in some of New York City's top restaurants and now she's revealing her secrets for creating *to-die-for* desserts. Yes—Heather's got everything covered for rookies and seasoned bakers alike. With her help, anyone can master Banana Cream Pie to Hazelnut Dacquoise Roulade. Head to your local supermarket for easy-to-find ingredients and enjoy making your own desserts, entirely from scratch, with the ease of an expert baker. You'll impress your friends, family, and even yourself in no time! Bake it. Don't fake it.



introduction

I think it's very rare to actually grow up to be what you always said you wanted to be when you were a kid.

Growing up, my favorite hobby was baking at home for my family. Blame it on my Easy-Bake Oven, but it was truly love at first bite! While most little girls my age were doodling hearts with crushes' initials in them, I was drawing plated desserts on my folders and lunch bags. I loved imagining all the different flavor and color options for cakes and frostings. I loved making edible art. And most of all I loved the reaction I got when people ate my creations. I knew at a very young age that pastry was my calling. Baking was something I was good at, and it was my go-to answer for the "what would you like to be when you grow up" essay question. I never once wrote anything different.

Fortunately I was able to pursue that passion in culinary school and to learn the reality of choosing baking as a career. Thrown into the hot seat at an early age, I was pastry chef at some of the most popular, most visible restaurants in Manhattan. It was sink or swim and I rose to the challenge. How exciting for me as a young chef to have a huge kitchen as my "office" and to be able to create, invent, and collaborate with talented partners to design dessert menus and serve the most discriminating palates!

Once I had met that challenge, though, I began to sense that I had a bigger goal. I realized that the most gratifying thing to me about being an executive pastry chef was teaching my cooks techniques and recipes, helping them hone their skills. And now that desire to teach what I know has outgrown the boundaries of the restaurant kitchen.

I feel quite passionate that I can help anyone understand baking. I really enjoy explaining the in and outs of baking, and I

feel that if I can give people that knowledge, they will feel empowered to do it themselves and be inspired to create. Cooking from scratch gives you such a sense of achievement . . . and it's just plain better eats! There is really nothing that can compare with a homemade dessert. The proof is in the pudding (literally).

I feel especially compelled to prove this point because I meet so many people who tell me that they're scared of baking . . . that they "fake it" by buying premade desserts or using mixes. I just know that I can fix that. That's why I wrote this book. It is the next phase in my career. If I can help you understand baking, then I consider that a "mission accomplished" for me.

So that's my mission, now let's get started. Before anything else, go to "[Read Me First!](#)". This is where I give you the important information about how to use this book—what ingredients and equipment I use, and how I use them. And how to measure ingredients!

From there you can move on to the first chapter, which I've called "Baking 101." Here are the basic techniques and recipes that will help you gain a good understanding of baking, as well as tips that will steer you clear of mistakes (my whipped cream looks like butter . . . now what?). This chapter is one of my favorites because it is your foundation for everything else. But even a basic recipe can get dressed up and be something special, so throughout the chapter I've included Chef It Up! tips where I will tell you what I would do with the cake or pie or cookie if I were serving it in one of my restaurants.

Following the basics in "Baking 101" is a chapter called "Beyond Baking." In a restaurant, the pastry chef is usually in charge of the entire dessert menu, which is a whole lot more than baked goods. So this chapter will introduce you to basic desserts like custards, sorbets, crêpes, poached fruit, simple candies, and more.

Once you've mastered all the basics, you can move on to the somewhat more demanding recipes in the chapter called "The Next Level." These recipes are not necessarily more difficult to

accomplish, but they can demand more of your time and may call for specialized pieces of cooking equipment (like a pizzelle iron). As with the “Baking 101” recipes, these recipes may also get Chef It Up! tips so you can really impress people with your dessert skills.

At this point, you’re a pro, ready to take on the world—and maybe a couple of serious challenges. So for the super ambitious, I end with a chapter called “Showstoppers.” The [St. Honoré Cake](#) is a prime example. Although it is a labor-intensive cake, you will be able to make it easily, with all your knowledge from the previous chapters. This is truly a special-occasion cake.

My hope is that if you bake your way through this book, you’ll be putting desserts on the table that might even fool your guests into thinking that you secretly went to culinary school.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials 'HB' followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

—Heather Bertinetti
November 2013

P.S. Check out my blog: “Bake It, Don’t Fake It!” at hbertinetti.com

read me first!

MEASURING

In a professional pastry kitchen, all ingredients are measured by weighing them on a scale—even water! It's the only sure way to guarantee the ratios of fat to flour or liquid to dry that will give you the results you want. However, the recipes in this book have been written with volume measurements instead, because they are more user friendly for the home cook. There is one key technique that is absolutely critical to the success of your baked goods when you're not using a scale. And that is how you measure ingredients, especially dry ingredients like flour and sugar.

TO MEASURE LIQUID INGREDIENTS, use a glass or other see-through measuring cup. Put the cup on a level surface and crouch down until your eye is level with the markings on the cup.

TO MEASURE DRY INGREDIENTS, such as flour, sugar, cocoa powder, and cornstarch, use what are called "dry measures." Those are the graduated cups (usually nesting) that have handles and look like little saucepans. Here's how you do it:

1. Place the size of dry measure you need on a sheet of wax paper.
2. Lightly spoon the ingredient out of the storage container into the cup, letting it pile higher than the rim of the cup.
3. Take the straight side of a table knife and sweep it across the rim to level off the excess. Use the wax paper to return the excess to the storage container.

INGREDIENTS

Before you begin any of the recipes in this book, it's best to know what I used when I created them. It's your surest way of achieving the right results. With a few very rare exceptions, all the ingredients in this book are available in supermarkets. Here are some notes on the very basics. For more in-depth info and some suggestions for substitutions, see the "Ingredients & Substitutions" section in the [Appendix](#).

BUTTER: All the butter in this book is unsalted. If you only have salted butter on hand, you can use it, but omit the salt in the recipe.

EGGS: All recipes were developed with large eggs. This goes for when egg yolks or egg whites are called for, too.

MILK: When whole milk is specifically called for, do not substitute a lower fat milk; the results will suffer.

FLOUR: All flour is all-purpose unless otherwise specified, and it doesn't matter if it's bleached or unbleached.

SUGAR: This is granulated white, unless otherwise specified

SALT: All salt is kosher salt unless otherwise specified. Note that I use Diamond Crystal kosher salt. This is important, because cup for cup, Diamond Crystal is less salty than other brands of kosher salt.

CHOCOLATE: Almost all of the chocolate called for in the book is in the form of chocolate chips. It's a lot simpler to measure and deal with in the home kitchen. Supermarket brands are fine, or if you're feeling fancy, you can buy the more expensive high-end chips.

EQUIPMENT

Apart from the obvious things like bowls, wooden spoons, and rubber or silicone spatulas, here is a list of the basic pieces of equipment you need for most of the recipes in this book. In cases where more specialized equipment is needed, the individual recipes will alert you. You can read more about the equipment in the [Appendix](#).

STAND MIXER (with paddle, whisk, and dough hook attachments)

FOOD PROCESSOR

BLENDER, stand and/or hand blender

BAKING SHEETS (at least two, if possible), 14 x 18 inches

RIMMED BAKING SHEET(S), 10 x 15 inches

CAKE PANS (at least two), 9-inch diameter, 2 inches deep

SPRINGFORM PANS, 9- and 10-inch diameter

BAKING PANS, 8-inch square and 9 x 13 inches

PIE PLATE, 9-inch

MUFFINS TIN, standard 12-cup

WIRE WHISK

ROLLING PIN

WIRE COOLING RACKS

OFFSET SPATULAS: a small one for decorating and a large one for sliding under cake layers to move them

MICROPLANE ZESTER

FINE-MESH SIEVE

PARCHMENT PAPER (very important)

NONSTICK SILICONE LINERS: These aren't required, because you can use parchment paper, but they're definitely useful. Buy a size that fits your baking sheets without leaving much surface uncovered.



Basic Yellow Cake with Swiss Buttercream

Baking 101

This chapter includes a collection of basic cakes, cookies, pies, and pastries. They're for beginning bakers, but also for veterans who want to hone their skills. You'll find yourself making these time and time again, as they are the foundations for both everyday and restaurant-worthy desserts.

