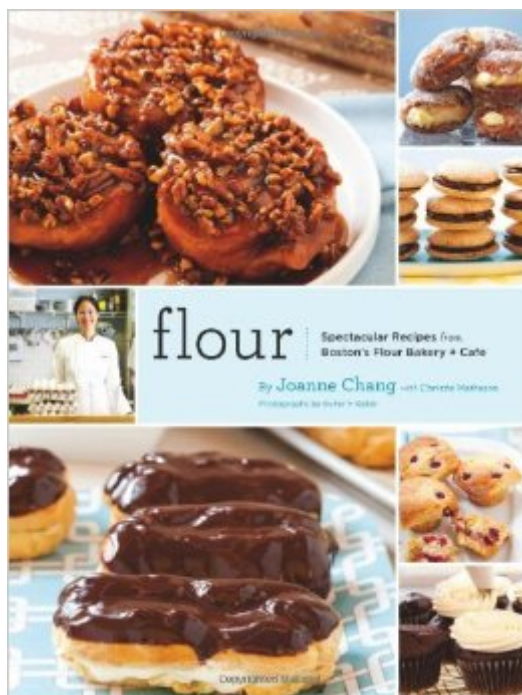


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Flour: Spectacular Recipes From Boston's Flour Bakery + Cafe



Synopsis

Every day 1,500 Bostonians can't resist buying sweet, simple treats such as Homemade Pop-Tarts, from an alumna of Harvard with a degree in economics. From Brioche au Chocolat and Lemon Raspberry Cake to perfect croissants, Flour Bakery-owner Joanne Chang's repertoire of baked goods is deep and satisfying. While at Harvard she discovered that nothing made her happier than baking cookies leading her on a path that eventually resulted in a sticky bun triumph over Bobby Flay on the Food Network's Throwdown. Almost 150 Flour recipes such as Milky Way Tart and Dried Fruit Focaccia are included, plus Joanne's essential baking tips, making this mouthwatering collection an accessible, instant classic cookbook for the home baker.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book begins with a baking overview of sorts. It gives an explanation of techniques that will be used throughout the book. Then, it goes over baking equipment. Next, the book has a short discussion of ingredients. The section on ingredients offers quite a bit of information on things like the right temperature for the ingredients and reasons why unsalted butter is better than salted butter in the recipes. After that, the book has Joanne's Top 12 Baking Tips with explanations for each tip. The author also has quite a few explanations on the science behind the tip or technique throughout the book. The book covers breakfast treats, cookies, cakes, pies & tarts, other sweets, and breads. Each chapter has popular treats (i.e. red velvet cake, sticky buns, and chocolate chunk cookies, which are wonderful) and also has more unique recipes, too (i.e. hazelnut-almond dacquoise, lemon marshmallow meringue pie, and rosemary shortbread). There are also recipes to make homemade versions of popular, American treats, such as oreos, pop tarts, and fig newtons. One downside to

this book is that there are few pictures. For example, only about four of the twenty-five recipes in the cookie section have a picture, which is a shame because the pictures in the book are beautiful. One note - the carrot cake recipe calls for baking the cupcakes for 50 minutes, but mine were done after 25 minutes. I'm not sure whether that was a typo or whether I just have a hot oven.*Update 11/7/10* The chocolate chunk cookies were some of the best chocolate chip cookies that I've ever made. I also really liked the Chunky Lola cookies. The surprise hit so far, though, was the cornmeal lime cookies. They were surprisingly addictive and the perfect end to a Latin-flavored meal.

After baking several loaves of bread, some scones, two batches of focaccia, several cakes, a chocolate tart and some granola bars from this book I have learned to treat all recipes in the book with a great deal of skepticism. Here is why:1. The times for just about all recipes I've tried have been way off. Suggested times are up to twice as long as it seems they should be. I bake/cook a lot and I've never seen anything like it. For example, the tart crust was burnt way before even the shortest recommended time was reached and I baked the granola bars for only 25 minutes after adding the topping, instead of for the recommended 50-60 minutes. I wonder if the recipes have ever been tested--a process I believe is common for good cookbooks. At first I thought my Wolf oven had lost its temperature calibration, but when I tested it with an independent oven thermometer it was right on. I have not been using my oven in convection mode, which can slightly reduce baking time. I suppose I could be wrong about the times and it is really the recommended temperatures that are off.2. At first I thought the timings for the cakes were bad because there was no real definition of the type of 8-inch pan to use--that is, one with 1.5, 2 or 3-inch high sides. I consider this to be a glaring lack of definition of the type of pan to use. The Midnight Chocolate Cake overflowed my pan with 2-inch sides and cooked in about one-half the suggested time. I then went and bought an 8-inch pan with 3-inch sides for the carrot cake and, although the cake stayed in the pan, it cooked in a mere 50 minutes instead of the recommended 80 minutes. At this point I thought I did everything I could to be faithful to the recipe and it still took only about 60% of the recommended time to bake the cake.

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