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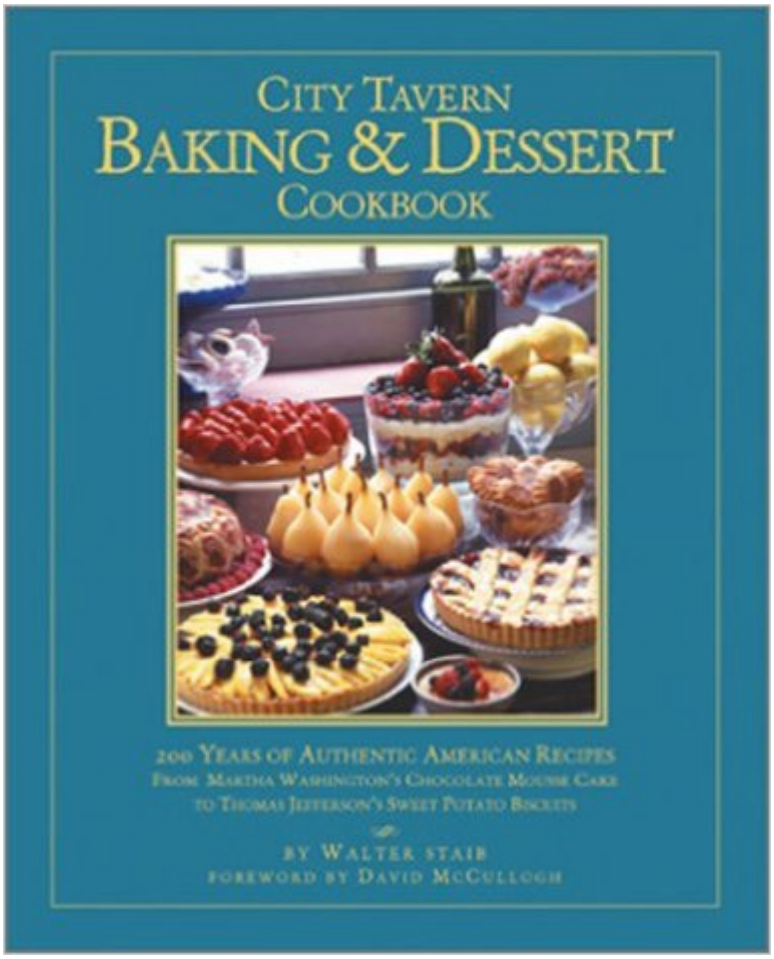
City Tavern Baking And Dessert Cookbook: 200 Years Of Authentic American Recipes From Martha Washington's Chocolate Mousse Cake To Thomas Jefferson's Sweet Potato Biscuits



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Synopsis

In this handsome sequel to the original City Tavern Cookbook, chef Walter Staib, proprietor of America's earliest gourmet restaurant, focuses on the baked goods and sweets that must have pleased the signers of the Declaration of Independence as much as they delight modern palates: Apple-Fig Crumble, Vanilla Bean Blanc-Mange, Martha Washington's Chocolate Mousse Cake, Thomas Jefferson's Sweet Potato Biscuits, and more than 175 other delicious colonial treats.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The `City Tavern Baking & Dessert Cookbook' is nominally written by chef / proprietor, Walter Staib, the guiding light behind the culinary restoration of this Revolutionary era Philadelphia restaurant to historical and financial viability. Of course, in an effort like this, there are several other parents, most especially the City Tavern pastry chef, Paul Bauer and culinary expert and historian, Jennifer Lindner.One of the very first things you need to know is that contrary to the book's subtitle, `200 Years of Authentic American Recipes', these recipes are more simulations or `realizations' of 200 year old recipes. The authors themselves admit to having lightened up the recipes from their revolutionary heartiness, but they neglect to mention the anachronism of putting Dutch process chocolate, invented in 1828 (see `Larousse Gastronomique') in a Martha Washington recipe which must have been baked first in the 1780s. Another anachronism is the inclusion of baking powder perfected in 1870 (see `The Oxford Companion to Food') in a reconstruction of a `colonial' pound cake recipe. A third anachronism is the use of active dry yeast in bread baking. Brewer's yeast was used as early as 1665 and wild yeasts were used even before that, but active dry yeast did not

become available until late in the 19th century.These facts are brought out not to denigrate the book, but simply to document the fact that this is NOT a historical treatment of culinary subjects, unlike the excellent volume `The Sauerkraut Yankees' by William Weaver about the Pennsylvania Dutch. That is not to say this is not a fascinating and useful book.

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