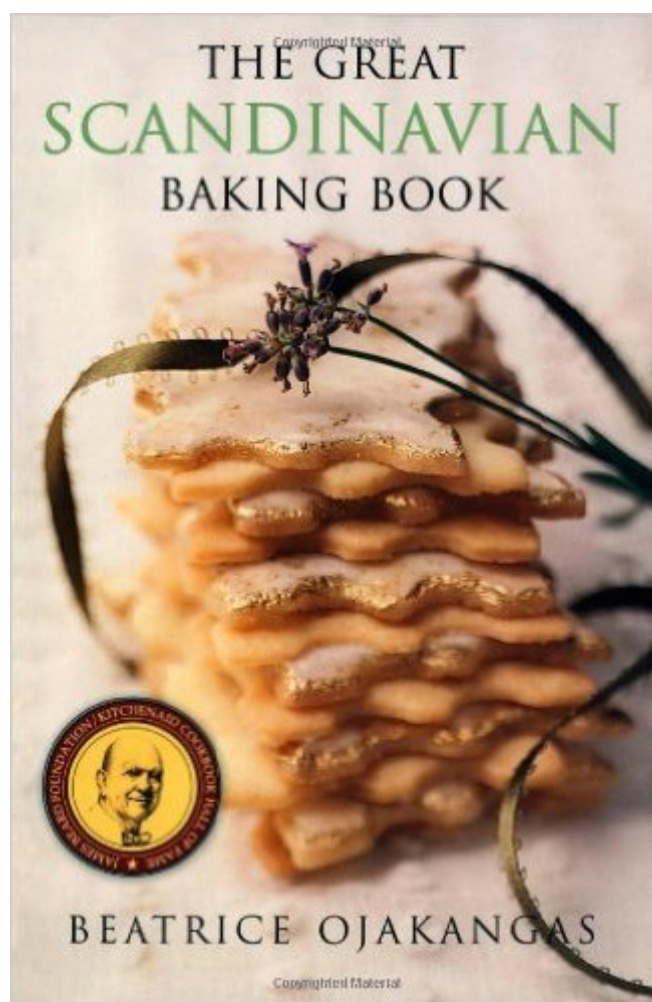


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The Great Scandinavian Baking Book



Synopsis

Recipes for savory and authentic morsels from the north country, now in paperback! Food is the heart of a Scandinavian home: scrumptious pies, delicate pastries, millions of cookies, and, of course, savory breads. Each country—Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland—has its specialty and no one goes hungry. In this mouthwatering collection, Beatrice Ojakangas calls on her own Scandinavian heritage and wide-ranging knowledge of baking to produce the definitive cookbook for this rich cultural heritage. Because Ojakangas stresses ease of preparation, even novice bakers will be able to make filled Danish pastries, Christmas buttermilk rye bread, or a few dozen pepparkakor, better known as gingersnaps. This handy reference highlights Scandinavian traditions too. There are recipes for sweet breads to be served with morning, afternoon, and evening coffee; for trays upon trays of cookies to serve as holiday or everyday treats; and for savory meat-and-vegetable pies. The Great Scandinavian Baking Book will warm your heart and fill your stomach. Beatrice Ojakangas is the author of more than a dozen cookbooks, including Great Whole Grain Breads (1993) and The Finnish Cookbook (1989). Her articles have appeared in Bon Appétit, Gourmet, Cooking Light, Cuisine, and Redbook, and she has appeared on television's Baking with Julia Child. She lives in Duluth, Minnesota.

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Customer Reviews

I bought the older hardcover version of this cookbook that was issued in 1988 and there probably is not a lot of difference between the two versions. I highly recommend this cookbook for two

reasons. First of all, it is written by Beatrice Ojakangas who, in my opinion, is the queen of all recipe book writers:) I own a number of her cookbooks and she writes in a very clear, concise way. All of her recipes are accompanied by a cultural anecdote or an informative note or two about the recipe so that you feel that you own more than a cookbook - you gain an insight into the Scandinavian culture and way of life. Secondly, and just as important, the recipes in this book are simply delicious. They run the gamut from breads and rolls to mouth watering pastries, both sweet and savoury. I had seen the many shapes that Danish pastry came in and they looked somewhat daunting to prepare but, in her book, Ms Ojakangas provides easy to follow diagrams that made them a breeze to shape. Being a chocoholic, I never thought that desserts could be tasty unless they were loaded down with the stuff. I stand corrected!:) Again, I highly recommend this book. The recipes are delicious and it is an excellent book for anyone who has ever felt daunted by baking. Well done!

This book is loaded with recipes for all kinds of baking, from hardtack to fancy layer cakes. It covers all the classics recipes from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. Anyone familiar with baking from those countries will find their favorites, and for those who are new to this region's baking plenty of delectable new discoveries are in store. Many recipes come with little stories and explanations about the traditions. The only thing I miss are photos, which make any cookbook even more tempting.

In my Norwegian-American family, baking well is considered a high art form. Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without the seven kinds of fresh-baked cookies, and the whole point of our Sankta Lucia celebration is the Lucia buns, fragrant with cardamom and saffron. And where would we be without home-baked rye bread? Although most of these recipes came down through the family, I now always double-check with Ojakangas' book. She's accurate, clear, easy-to-understand, and everything we've ever baked from this book has turned out just as well, if not even better than when we use the family recipes. I always measure the quality of my cookbooks by how grungy they get from spilled ingredients, etc. Well, this one's a winner, with the pages automatically falling open to all our family favorites.

The Great Scandinavian Baking Book is something I wanted to add to my cookbook collection for two reasons: 1) I'm from Minnesota and my Mom and her side of the family are all of Norwegian descent. The thought that I could recreate some items from my Mom's childhood excited me. 2) I wanted a collection of baking recipes that yielded results appropriate for "company." Also I really like

the flavor of cardamom :) This book served both purposes. I've made some great items with wonderful results. I'll be honest, some of them sounded quite difficult and I didn't have a lot of confidence in my abilities. I'm a great cook (if I do say so myself) but baking - following directions really - is not my forte. But Beatrice Ojakangas' instructions are so precise, yet natural that I got things right the first time. The first thing I made was an Icelandic coffee wreath. No, it's not Norwegian like my Mom. But it did make a great and beautiful pastry fit for serving at a holiday potluck at work. Everyone was impressed. It was so simple to make but it looked like a million bucks. That's the impression I want to make with my food at work, you know? Then I made Norwegian butter cookies. Oh my gosh. How can a 6 ingredient recipe turn out something so lovely and melt-in-your-mouth good? The real payoff was Crispy Krumkake. My Mom still has Grandma's Krumkake iron, but doesn't ever make the cookies because, well Mom is into lots of domestic arts, but cooking isn't one of them. So I gave Krumkake a shot and the recipe was fantastic. Light delicate cookies, made pretty by the iron's design, they were a hit! Unfortunately the German side of my family filled them with Cool Whip which made me cringe, but they liked it so I guess it's okay. So why did I remove a star? Well the book has this gorgeous photo on the cover but no photos inside. There are some line drawings where appropriate (like explaining how to slice and shape that coffee wreath), but no inspirational photos. And the book isn't bound so as to be very useful in the kitchen. It's a paperback that isn't heavy enough to stay open. Not that format is everything, but transcribing or photocopying recipes isn't my idea of a good time. Overall it is a minor thing, but still worthy of comment. If you like the flavors of cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, butter, almonds - you'll love this book whether you have a Scandinavian history or not.

The Great Scandinavian Baking Book is an addictive collection of recipes from author Beatrice Ojakangas. From Cardamom Coffeebread (Pulla) and Sweet Cream Waffles to Danish Strawberry Scones (Kraemmerhuse) and almond glazed Swedish Tea Rings (Vetekrans), once you start baking from this book you'll have a hard time putting it away. I was delighted with everything I made and appreciated how Ojakangas introduced me to the many delectable ways Scandinavians use cardamom in their baking. Her recipes are easy to follow and accompanied by conversational intros that share cultural tidbits or serving tips. Although there are no photos in this book, when more complicated steps are required to complete a recipe the how-to portion is frequently illustrated with helpful diagrams. The lack of photographs is really the only thing about it I didn't absolutely adore about the book, which will make a welcome addition to any kitchen and is appropriate for beginner and experienced bakers alike. You'll revel in the heavenly aromas emanating from your oven, not to

mention the baked goods you'll soon be enjoying with a cup of hot coffee or tea. Chapters: Breads for Meals, Breads for Coffeetime, Cookies and Little Cakes, Cakes and Tortes, Pastries and Pies, Savory Pies and Filled Breads. Chapters about mail order sources, baking tips and ingredients are also included.

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