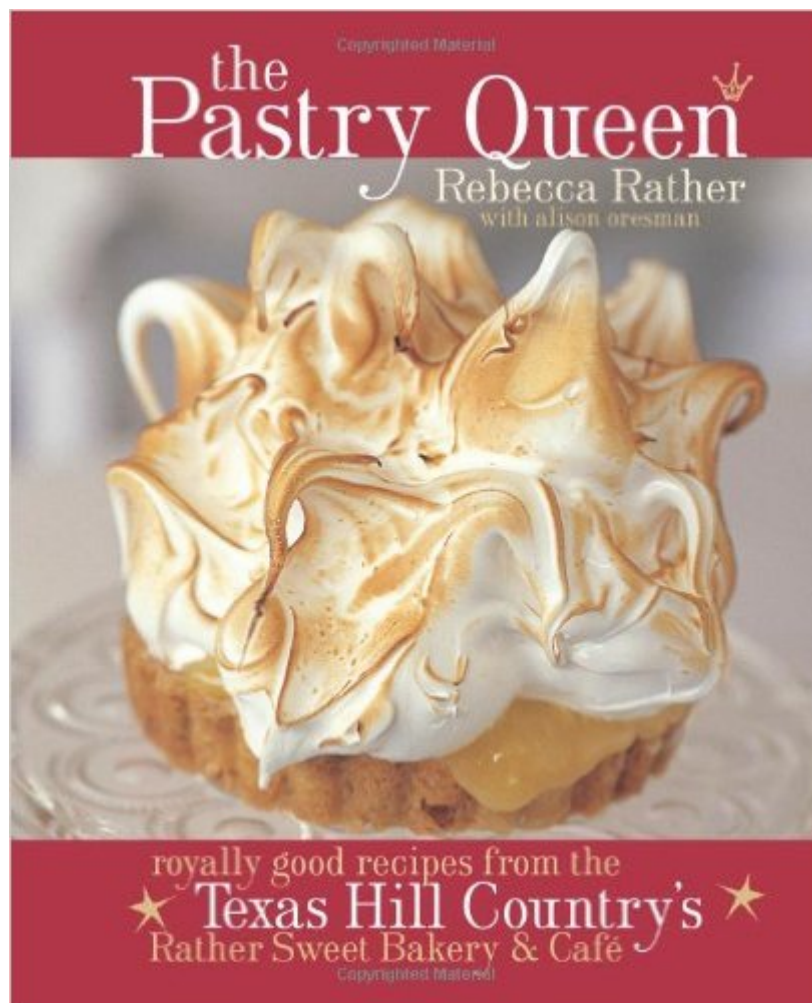


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The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes From The Texas Hill Country's Rather Sweet Bakery & Cafe



Synopsis

The Best Little From-Scratch Bakery in Texas

The pastry case in Rebecca Rather's bakery in Fredericksburg is packed with ultra-buttery scones, luscious cakes, cookies the size of saucers, brownies as big as bricks, and fruit pies that look as though they came straight out of Grandma's oven. Since the day Rebecca and her Rather Sweet Bakery and Caf  came to town, life in this Hill Country hamlet has been even sweeter and the townsfolk now know why she is the Pastry Queen. Everything she makes is a lot like her: down-home yet grand, and familiar yet one-of-a-kind.

A native Texan, Rather makes the most of her Lone Star state's varied traditions, whether looking to the kitchens of Texas's Mexican and German immigrants or to the cowboy culture of her own forebears. Best of all, her recipes aren't fussy

one of her best-selling cakes stirs together in a single saucepan. Add in a cupful of Texas attitude and her made-from-scratch-with-love philosophy, and you've got an irresistible taste of American baking.

What's best at Rather Sweet? Rebecca's customers all have their favorites (and she is happy to cater to their cravings), but here's just a taste of the perennial best sellers:

- Apple-Smoked Bacon and Cheddar Scones
- Texas Big Hairs Lemon-Lime Tarts (the only big hair Rebecca has ever had!)
- Fourth of July Fried Pies
- Peach Queen Cake with Dulce de Leche Frosting
- Turbo-Charged Brownies with Praline Topping
- All-Sold-Out Chicken Pot Pies
- Kolaches (pillowy yeasted buns with sweet or savory fillings)
- PB&J Cookies

With over 125 surefire tested recipes and 100 photographs that richly capture small-town life in the Hill Country, The Pastry Queen offers a Texas-size serving of the royal splendor of Rebecca's baked goods

courtesy of the rather sweet gal behind the case.

Book Information

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See all reviews (104 customer reviews)

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#96 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > U.S. Regional > Southwest

#110 in Books > Cookbooks,

Customer Reviews

This book is incredible. Since it has arrived, I have made three recipes and they all have been awesome. The recipes are easy to read and understand, and are organized so that no steps are omitted. I especially appreciate notations indicating that mistakes can be made in this step and what to do if it occurs. The Triple Threat Chocolate Chip Cookies are the best I've ever made or tasted. And the Omelette Kolache recipe is worth the price of the book if you ever have to make breakfast for a buffet. Overall if you are new to pastry and want a word class book with fairly simple and uncomplicated recipes - this is it. What Rather's recipes miss from traditional pastry books that resemble art work, she makes up in wholesome goodness and taste that will make this a kitchen page turner. Great job!

Texan lady makes good with her passion for baking and doing other good cooking Texas style. Such passion becomes infectious evidently from the following she has developed for your bakery and recipes. This passion continues to ooze out in this delightful cookbook from TenSpeed Press. I've come to realize and trust that if TenSpeed published it, it will have great photos on nice layout with exceptional and exciting food. This volume continues in that fine train. Rebecca is really into it, and continues to refine and develop new exciting recipes, some her take on old favorites such as King Ranch Casserole and Big Hair Lemon-Lime Meringue Tarts. This over 150 recipe offering has mostly baked goods, but as her bakery began offering lunch and dinner fare, they are included here as well: Caesar Salad Pizza; All Sold-Out Chicken Pot Pies; Savory Crab and Shrimp Casserole; Nuevo Texas Waldorf Salad. Savor the baked delights here for us: Triple Threat Chocolate Chip Cookies (three types chocolate); Chef Mark's Southern Comfort Apple Pie; Buttermilk Pecan Pie; Frangelico-Hazelnut Fruit Tart. There is so much fun Tex-Mex-German food done beautifully for us home cooks to try. The recipes don't call for wild, hard-to-find ingredients nor are any of the techniques that complicated or intimidating. Just wonderful food with clear instructions and suggestions. Fine, worthy addition to one's collection.

Having eaten at Rather Sweet many times over the years, I was excited to get this book last year so that I could showcase some of Rebecca's wonderful desserts at dinner parties. While I was sad to see that some of my favorites were not in the book (she makes the best egg salad I've ever had, and the wonderfully fluffy focaccia on which she serves her sandwiches is out of this world), there

are so many wonderful recipes that it really doesn't matter. I made the White-on-White Buttermilk Cake with Jack Daniel's Buttercream for my husband's birthday. I've never been a fan of white cake, but this one is divine. One suggestion I would make is to decrease the amount of butter in the buttercream -- it seemed to be a bit over the top. The Tuxedo Cake is incredible. The rich, dark chocolate cake is a wonderful compliment to the simple whipped cream frosting. Not to mention, the cake is beautiful -- it stands at about 10 inches tall when made with the three layers. Thanks to the other reviewers for pointing out the recipes they've tried and loved -- there are so many wonderful recipes that it's helpful to have a little push on which one to try next. While I haven't tried the recipes for the Triple Threat Chocolate cookies, any of the muffins, or the Texas Pecan Pie Bars, I've had them in the bakery, and they are all wonderful. My mom was a huge fan of the pecan pie bars, and Rebecca astutely uses brown sugar (as did my grandmother) instead of corn syrup which adds extra flavor and allows the bars to set up nicely. My all-time favorite item is the Mexican Chocolate Fudge-Pecan Cake. In the bakery, she makes them in individual bundt shapes, and they have just the right amount of cinnamon mixed in with the chocolate cake batter to impart that delightful flavor of the hot chocolate one would drink in Mexico. Kudos to Rebecca -- her bakery, restaurant, and cookbook provide perfect examples of the simple, yet wonderful desserts made in the south and in Texas.

I've collected cookbooks for years -- serious cookbooks. As in, IACP Cookbook Award winners. And many of these cookbooks I have loved, but none as much as I love "The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes from the Texas Hill Country's Rather Sweet Bakery and Cafe". Cookbooks tend to become a favorite based on their teaching the why behind tools, ingredients and techniques, as well as a "heads and shoulders above the rest" recipe or two. Every recipe in this cookbook, however, is above and beyond others I've collected. They range in difficulty, but levels of mastery are perfect when a cook is going from familiarity, to proficiency, to mastery. A cook can navigate through all these stages and stick with the same cookbook. Guests just rave over the recipes, too. There's a balance between those requiring more exotic ingredients (defined as those that I don't already have in stock, such as apple-smoked bacon) to those always kept on hand. Heaven forbid a housefire, but after my children and my pets, I'd grab this cookbook.

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