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The Gourmet Cookie Book: The Single Best Recipe From Each Year 1941-2009



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Customer Reviews

For this stunning collection, the editors of *Gourmet* delved deep into their archives and selected the most delicious cookie for each year of the magazine's sixty-eight-year existence. After marathon testing sessions and winnowing from thousands of recipes "many sent in by readers" they chose an amazing array, from the almond-scented French-style Cajun Macaroons, from the magazine's beginnings in 1941, through Mocha Toffee Bars (1971), to the contemporary Glittering Lemon Sandwich Cookies. The enticing assortment includes: Cookies of every type and description, from the homey (Aunt Sis's Strawberry Tart Cookies) to the exotic (Grand Marnier-Glazed Pain d'Épice Cookies), including balls, bars, refrigerator cookies, drop cookies, even deep-fried cookie confections. Cookies from around the world, from Dutch Jan Hagels to Irish oatmeal sandwich cookies filled with cream and Irish whiskey, to Scandinavian Rosettes. Dozens of Christmas cookies: Old-Fashioned Christmas Butter Cookies, star-shaped Moravian White Cookies, Chocolate Peppermint Bar Cookies. Printed exactly as they originally appeared in the magazine, with abundant tips and recipe notes from *Gourmet*'s test kitchen, and with headnotes describing their cultural context, the recipes present a fascinating bite-by-bite history of how our appetites evolved.

Fall into Cooking Featured Recipes from The *Gourmet* Cookie Book Click image or caption to download featured cookie recipes (PDF).

Basler Brunzli (Heart-Shaped Chocolate Almond Spice Cookies) Scandinavian Rosettes Souvaroffs

"It represents a snapshot of American cookery...an incredible seven decadesâ™ worth of cookies complete with mouthwatering photographs."----Library Journal, starred

As a longtime subscriber to both *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit*, I used to tell people that I liked *Gourmet* for its savory recipes and *Bon Appetit* for its sweets. This new compilation of the best cookie recipes, decade by decade, from *Gourmet* confronted me with the fallacy of that statement. Some of my long-time favorite cookie recipes, including strawberry tart cookies and cranberry pistachio biscotti, can be found here. The best part of this book, however, is not the recipes, as good as they are, but the history behind them. The division of the recipes by decades offers glimpses into trends, subscribers, changing culinary tastes and abilities, and, of course, the focus of the magazine itself. Interestingly, when the magazine was first published in 1940s and people baked more than they do today, the cookie recipes were much more simple, with tastes that highlighted a few ingredients: butter, nuts, spices. Even in the 1950s, when baking ingredients were more available, the cookies remained somewhat homey and classic, with gingerbread men, lace cookies, and sesame-seed-coated queen's biscuits taking center stage. In the 1960s, however, *Gourmet's* cookies started taking on a more international note; as the editors note, commercialized air travel and growing national unrest led to more daring recipes. As the book states, "not a single one of the four cookie recipes that appeared in *Gourmet* in 1963 was of American origin." With this new internationalism came other recipes with more sophisticated lists of ingredients and flavors. By jumping ahead to the 2000s, *Gourmet's* final decade, one can see how much American tastes have changed: many of the cookies are classics with gourmet twists that make them look more like professionally baked treats than homemade lunch box snacks. Because the book contains a full page photograph of each recipe, it is obvious that later recipes focused as much on aesthetics as taste, while most earlier ones were content with a plain appearance. Because this book contains recipes exactly as they appeared in the magazine (with some recipe notes for clarification), contemporary bakers may be somewhat taken aback by the format in the earlier decades, as their directions are "remarkably casual, a kind of mysterious shorthand that assumes that each reader is an accomplished cook." While I dispute that these early recipes require any sort of advanced experience, they are definitely written out as though one person is describing the process to another, with ingredients not listed separately but as part of the instructions. (Separate lists of ingredients don't appear until 1982, when recipes were "no longer able to count on the readers' experience.") In some ways, I found the earlier recipes easier to follow because I didn't have to worry about going back and forth between adding sugar and reading how much sugar was called

for. The amount was right there in the text. But how are the recipes themselves? Absolutely wonderful. Not a single one of the recipes I tried missed, although, obviously, some recipes, such as the sparkling lemon sandwich cookies, took more time and effort. From the humble honey refrigerator cookies to the sophisticated coconut macadamia shortbread, these recipes will please contemporary palates.-- Debbie Lee Wesselmann

Great cookie recipe book. There is some time travel involved while reading recipes. Yes, I actually enjoy reading recipes when I can carve out the time. I've started reading them in bed, like I do my other books, until I fall asleep. I use post-it-notes to mark the recipes I'm making. The Scotch Oat Crunchies (oatmeal cookie sandwich) recipe from the 1940s is very good. It reminded me of a cookie my grandmother made. After I made the Old-Fashioned Christmas Butter Cookies, I thought they were the very same ones my mom made when I was a kid. They are so good--they melt in your mouth. I have to confess that I used the Chocolate Wafer cookies I made, from the 1950's section, in an Ice Box Cake I put together...delicious. The lemon thins from the 1970's are very good--my daughter could not eat enough according to her. Cloudt's Pecan Treats from the 1980's is fabulous (I love pecan pie, so this is right up my palate). I am a huge biscotti fan, so I very much enjoyed making and eating the Cranberry Pistachio Biscotti. One of my sons enjoyed his with some decaf tea. The recipes are well laid out and descriptive. Each step you need to take is listed to make a cookie. The type is a little smaller so be prepared to pull out glasses. Some recipes are more advanced than others. The book leaves it up to the reader which one is right for them. The pictures are terrific and very tempting. These cookies are not just for holidays. I will be baking them year-round. If you like to bake, and if you like to bake with kids, this is a great book to have. It is also fun to learn some history and share that with others.

If you love cookies & baking cookies, this cookbook has the "Single Best of the Year" cookie recipes from Gourmet Magazine from 1941-2009. I checked this out from the library & realized I had to own this book. Not only is it beautiful with a large photo of each recipe but the recipes are fantastic. There are some really old fashioned, delicious cookies in here. Some of my favorites are the "Speculass"/1971, "Scotch Oat Crumbles"/1943, "Honey Refrigerator Cookies"/1942 & the "Bourbon Balls"/1980. I've baked my way through about half the recipes so far & every single one is wonderful. The recipes are in order by year. On the left side is the recipe with a description of where it came from & how it ended up in the magazine. On the right side is the full color photo of the baked cookie. The index is organized by ingredients such as "Almond, Anise, Fig", etc., by name of the

cookie, type of cookie such as "Bar, Christmas", etc. It is very easy to find a specific cookie. I ordered my hard cover copy from ebooksweb. It was in excellent condition, as described.

This is one of five cookie swap cookbooks I bought for a group of 15 "swappers." I bought this based on the reviews, and we were not only pleased, we were ALL thrilled. DO YOU KNOW THE ODDS OF THRILLING 15 WOMEN WITH THE SAME COOKBOOK?!?!?! (too many zeros) We had such a blast with the results for our Thanksgiving bake-a-thon and swap, that we all did it again not just for our own Christmas dinners, but for our churches and needlework/quilting clubs. Since then, most of us have baked from these books for charity fundraisers, taking to the local Fisher House and Veterans hospitals/homes, and other charity work. Just guess what we're doing again this fall - yep: finding new recipes to try from these same five books!

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