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# Great British Bake Off: Christmas



## Synopsis

Christmas is a time of friends and family. Of anticipation and excitement. Of good times and, of course, great food. This book celebrates everything surrounding Christmas with 100 delicious bakes for the festive season, as well as dishes for the big day itself. Whip up tempting Christmas nibbles like Mini Potato Farfs with Smoked Salmon, or Parmesan Palmiers, perfect for a party. Spice up your home and get the kids involved, too with Gingerbread Tree Ornaments and a Cinnamon Christmas Wreath. And, of course, there are plenty of delicious ideas for what to do with all those leftovers. Each chapter also includes spectacular recipes from Bake Off finalists, and Mary and Paul reveal the secrets to those classic Christmas dishes whether it's Paul's perfect mince pies or Mary's ultimate Christmas pudding. Packed with everything from edible decorations and delicious gifts to party dishes and showstopping centerpieces, this book is the perfect Christmas companion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lizzie Kamenetzky graduated from Leith's School of Food and Wine, and has worked as a private chef, before moving into food writing and food styling. She is now food editor at delicious. magazine, and is the author of Great British Bake Off: Winter Kitchen.

This is my second copy of this cookbook! I bought one for myself and loved it so much I bought an additional one to give as a Christmas gift! PAPERBACKSHOP.CO.UK packaging of the cookbook was stellar, it arrived in bubble wrap packaging and a cardboard sleeve to further protect the book! Kudos to them!

Great layout and design.

Stunning desserts. Directions are clear

I was so sad to happen upon the page for *Great British Bake Off: Christmas* a few days ago only to realize that not only had I forgotten to post my own review when the book came out but that nobody else had given anything resembling a substantial review either. So, in the spirit of better late than never - here you go: One of my daughters moved to the UK a few years ago to pursue an advanced degree at London School of Economics. I visit once a year (just back from this year's trip, dragging a stack of new cookbooks to tell you about) and my granddaughter & daughter each come home once a year. When my granddaughter visited in 2014 *Great British Bake Off: Christmas* came with her and its been a Fall & Winter staple in my kitchen ever since. Christmas in the UK lasts much longer than it does here. The "official" season starts with Stir Up Sunday, the Sunday before the start of Advent, and continues until nearly the middle of January, but even when I was there in mid-September Mince Pies were already starting to make their appearance. *Great British Bake Off: Christmas* contains a wealth of tried & true recipes, many traditional, to add a bit of sparkle to holiday festivities. The pages are well laid out, the recipes are easy to read and easy to follow and you'll find pictures for nearly everything. Normally I would test 3 or 4 recipes from a cookbook and tell you about those, but this is a book I've used often, so I've thought long and hard. Should I tell you about the many unique recipes that use up the leftovers from the holiday turkey or ham, like the very British raised pie filled with leftovers or Paul Hollywood's savory "Chelsea Buns" (similar to a cinnamon roll) with a filling of turkey and stuffing? Perhaps I should mention the recipes for Panforte from Italy, Kransekake from Norway or the many nibbles to keep on hand for drop-in company? In the end, I decided to tell you about several of the recipes I use the most, some of them year round.

**TRIED & TRUE RECIPE #1 - Mary's Christmas Genoa Cake**

Mary's Christmas Genoa Cake appears in several Mary Berry cookbooks under a few different names. I first came across it in *Mary Berry's Baking Bible: Over 250 Classic Recipes* as Victorian Christmas Cake. Despite the "Christmas" in the names, this is one of my favorite cakes. British fruitcake only vaguely resembles the American fruitcake of door stopper fame - more dried fruit, very little or no "mixed candied fruit" and very few nuts. This version is a light fruitcake sparked with pineapple, glistening with candied cherries and with none of the dark sugar, molasses or heavy spices of a regular Christmas cake. It keeps a long time, especially if you remember to unwrap it once a week and

brush it with a tablespoon or two of brandy, and a little bit goes a long way. I love a slice of this on a chilly winter afternoon with a cup of tea or served with a more substantial spread for company. Note that there is a typo in this recipe. It calls for just 50 grams of dried apricots instead of the 250 the recipe really calls for, but even if you use just that little bit of apricot you'll have a lovely, long lasting cake. Do remember to drain the pineapple really well and then spread it on several layers of paper towels to dry. And don't skip the step of cutting the cherries and rinsing them with hot water. If you want a darker, more traditional cake, you won't go wrong with Mary's Classic Christmas Cake. The dried fruit for mine is soaking now as the cake will take some weeks to cure. Christmas Genoa Cake doesn't require such a lengthy "curing" time. You can stir that up just a week or two before you want to serve it.

**TRIED & TRUE RECIPE #2 - Mary's Mincemeat Streusel**

My mother was from the South and my dad from New England, so when we sat down to Christmas dinner there was a turkey on one end of the table for my dad and a country ham on the other for my mother. Dad liked sage & onion stuffing, my mama liked cornbread dressing with pecans - and so it went, dish after dish, right through dessert. Mama always had coconut cake. It wouldn't have been Christmas for Dad without a mincemeat pie. In the UK mincemeat is the flavor of Christmas, though you will be hard-put to find one of our huge American style mincemeat pies. Every corner shop has little mincemeat pies (we would call them tarts) for sale and *The Great British Bake Off: Christmas* contains recipes for several versions of these, but if you want something quicker to make but just as luscious, Mary's Mincemeat Streusel fills the bill. The recipe really has two parts - the recipe for Mary Berry's very quick, very good homemade mincemeat (there is no meat in it) and the recipe for the Streusel bars (mincemeat on a shortbread crust with a crumble topping.) I've been making Mary's mincemeat for years. It's quick and easy, makes a big jar of mincemeat suitable for use in numerous recipes and it stores for a long time in the fridge. (I've kept it as long as 6 months.) Feel free to double this part of the recipe so you have some on hand for something else. (Heat a little bit in the microwave to serve over vanilla ice cream for an instant dessert.) You'll need a baking pan that measures about 9 x 11. The recipe specifies that it provides 16 servings but I tend to cut my bars smaller.

**TRIED & TRUE RECIPE #3 - Indulgent Fish Pie**

Fish Pie is one of our favorite things. A fish version of Shepard's Pie, this lovely dish contains a variety of fish - cod, smoked haddock, shrimp - in a flavorful cream sauce topped with mashed potatoes and then baked. This is an extremely flexible dish. Use whatever white fish that is fresh at the market. If you can't lay hands on smoked haddock (I bring it home from the UK) substitute salmon (smoked or not) or some other smoked fish. If you're serving someone with shrimp allergies like two of my girls, just leave those out or substitute scallop pieces. (I buy irregular scallops for about half the price of the fancy ones. They're perfect for this!) And if you

don't happen to have any watercress or parsley, feel free to just leave those out. You'll get a pie big enough to feed 6 hungry folks for about 2 pounds of fish total. Bonus: You can assemble this dish in the morning, refrigerate it and put it into the oven about 30 minutes before you want to sit down to dinner. There are a few things that you should keep in mind. This is a British cookbook, so the measurements are in metrics because that is the system used in Britain. Don't panic. Teaspoons and tablespoons are exactly the same as ours are. Every liquid measure sold in the US that I've seen in decades has metric measurements (mL) on one side. You'll need a scale but a digital scale that will do the trick can be had for \$20 or less these days. You can even find one at Walmart. Do not even consider trying to "translate" to US measurements. It took Julia Child a full decade to translate her French metric recipes into "American." Egg sizes in the UK are a bit different than ours. A medium UK egg is about the same as a large US egg and a large UK egg about the same as an extra large here in the US. Plain flour is all purpose. Strong flour is bread flour. Wholemeal flour is wholewheat flour. Caster sugar is finer than granulated. You can use super-fine or bartender's sugar instead. Alternatively, Florida Crystals sugar is about the same. (If you have any other questions about ingredients feel free to leave a comment and I'll be happy to help.) Grandma's \$0.02 - With about 100 recipes spread over 250 pages, this is one of the most-used cookbooks in my collection. Very Highly Recommended

Pages are marked and thoughts are processing in preparation for holidays

great recipes for festive occasions

Fans of the Great British Bake off will enjoy this "Christmas" recipe book.

great

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