

## Baking tips from The Hummingbird Bakery

Thank you for purchasing The Hummingbird Bakery Cookbook!

Most of our recipes have been collected from old friends and relatives, so they come from a variety of sources and use many different cooking methods. We have modified them so that they will turn out as they do in our shops, picking the goodies that sell the most when we put them out on our shelves. They are our take on good, old-fashioned American favourites: nothing fancy, just very tasty treats!

The 60 recipes for The Hummingbird Cookbook were tested by our development chefs and then tested further when made by the Publisher's team when styling and photographing for the book!

Since publishing in March 2009, this book has sold over 400,000 copies, and all 60 recipes have been successfully baked by thousands of people across the world! Please join our Facebook page to look at pictures of our goodies made by other readers: <http://www.facebook.com/HummingbirdBakery>

All editions after May 2009 have no corrections.

We have some tips, which we hope will help you to get the best results from our recipes:

- Sounds simple, but please do follow the recipes exactly as written! Baking is a chemical reaction, and so any experimentation with the recipe amounts can potentially cause a recipe to fail.
- If you change an ingredient, a method, or an amount, no matter how small, then this will change the recipe from the way it was intended to turn out.
- Some of our baking methods may seem unconventional to experienced bakers, but the recipes will work if followed exactly.
- Don't rush when measuring out ingredients and following the cooking method. In haste, we can all forget to measure out or add a certain ingredient!
- Don't worry if a batter looks runnier or thicker than you're used to...trust it, it will bake as it's supposed to!
- Only use the correctly sized tin! If you put the whole batter amount into a tin that is too small, then the batter will overflow. Only ever fill the tin you have two-thirds full.
- If you've filled your tins/cases and you have leftover batter, make some extra cupcakes or muffins!

- Our cupcake recipes should make around 12 cupcakes. The final amount will depend on the size of the paper cases you use and how much you fill them! There is no correct size, it's totally up to you!
- BUT: fill your cupcake cases 2/3 full! If you're too stingy with filling them, they won't rise nicely and they'll overcook and be dry. The finished sponge should rise to the top line of your paper case!
- For our cupcake recipes, we recommend 'muffin cases' from [Waitrose](#), [Lakeland Limited](#) or other supermarkets. These will give you larger cupcakes (as sold in our stores), but you may get fewer than 12.
- For the muffin recipes, use the same size cases but fill  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. OR you can find 'extra large muffin cases'. These, however, will require a deeper muffin tin, or else the batter may overflow down the sides of the cases!
- When creaming butter and sugar together, always make sure you do this until the mixture is light and fluffy, usually at least a good 5 minutes. Otherwise your cakes will NOT rise nicely!
- Do the same for recipes that ask you to whisk together the eggs and sugar: this should result in a nice, light airy mixture, at least 5 minutes of electric whisking! Especially the cookies, otherwise they'll be flat as pancakes.
- After adding flour to a mixture, don't overbeat as this will overwork the flour and make the cake dense. Simply beat or stir until the flour is just incorporated.
- Get an oven thermometer that you can hook into your oven permanently. This ensures that your oven temperature is accurate and well calibrated.
- Ovens vary greatly, so use our suggested cooking times as a rough guide. First bake to the shorter cooking time, and then check every few minutes until finished.
- If you're using a Gas Oven, this might require longer cooking time.
- Our recipes are NOT designed for Aga Ovens or similar.
- Cakes, cupcakes and muffins are only ready when a skewer comes out clean when inserted. They are not automatically ready when the recommended time is up!
- If you take them out too soon, they will flop and sink deeply in the middle.
- Please don't open your oven until at least the minimum recommended time has passed. The more items baking at the same time, the longer the baking time might be. Too much cold air coming in from an open oven door can cause cakes to sink or not rise properly.
- Make sure that your baking powder and bicarbonate of soda have not passed their best before date.
- Please don't substitute self-raising flour for plain flour – this will affect the outcome of the recipe!

- A good-quality cocoa powder, such as [Green & Blacks](#), is preferred. Weaker cocoa powders may produce inferior results.
- All recipes that ask for cream cheese must be made with Full Fat Philadelphia Cream Cheese. Other brands are too low in fat and will not work.
- For the Red Velvet recipe try and find [Dr Oetker Red Colouring](#). Do not use Scarlett or “Natural Red” otherwise you’ll get brown cakes!
- Finally: if your outcomes don’t look exactly like the pictures in the book, don’t worry! These were professionally styled. As long as your goodies taste good and your friends and family enjoy them, then you’ve succeeded!

Happy Baking!

<http://www.facebook.com/HummingbirdBakery>