

Library Lines by Olivia Martello, Kirkland Town Library staff

If you're anything like me, quarantine led to you pretending your kitchen is a tent on *The Great British Bake-Off*. I've always enjoyed watching cooking shows and looking at cookbooks, as well as eating all kinds of food. Food, in short, makes me happy, and with quarantine, I finally decided to try my hand at baking on my own, not just sneaking tastes of whatever my mom was making. Over the last year, I've scooped out cookies, frosted cupcakes, and kneaded mound after mound of bread dough. (I've also cleaned dough off more surfaces than I ever thought possible). With how hectic the world has been, cooking has become a soothing stress-reliever for me, with the added bonus of getting to eat your creations. Whether you're just starting to bake or have been doing it for years, the Kirkland Town Library has a variety of items that can help you practice your skills, try new recipes, and make some delicious food.

The library has several specialty cake pans you can borrow. We have birthday and holiday pans, standard round pans and mini Bundt molds, and cool designs like butterflies and dinosaurs. I recently borrowed the madeleine pan and filled the kitchen with the scent of lemon and butter as I made them one morning. With our pans, it's easier than ever to try out a special cake design for any occasion, or even just for yourself.

We also have a large selection of cookbooks to choose from, including books on baking, books on cooking, and books devoted to certain types of cuisine. Several of these cookbooks also focus on simple, easy-to-prepare recipes. These recipes pair convenience with taste and are great for beginning cooks and those who want fast meal solutions. With so many different recipes to try, you're sure to have some amazing meals.

*Five Ingredients: Quick and Easy Food* by Jamie Oliver is full of recipes that require only five ingredients, including pastas, meats, and desserts. These recipes are simple and convenient, great for quick meals and busy days. They're fit for family or for company, and are an easy way to try out new recipes.

*Jacques Pepin Quick and Simple* features hundreds of recipes from salads to main dinners to desserts. These are also easy recipes, like breakfast rolls using simple frozen bread dough, or mustard breadcrumbs elevating simple baked chicken. There are also some great dessert recipes to make use of summer fruits as the season comes to a close, like a blueberry tart or a frozen pineapple parfait that's also a tasty way to beat the heat.

*The Big Fun Kids Baking Book* by Amy Kaffka features recipes from the Food Network, each one with a large, colorful photo. The book is geared towards young bakers, but anyone can enjoy making (and eating) these recipes. The chocolate chip peanut butter oatmeal cookies were great, and I already added the rainbow sugar cookies and strawberry shortcake layer cake to my future baking list (which is roughly as long as my list of books to read). The book also includes fun 'fake-out' desserts, like a cake decorated to look like a pineapple, that would be cool projects to take on.

Finally, Nigella Lawson's book *Nigella Express: Good Food, Fast* gives you even more recipes to choose from. I've long been a fan of Nigella's cooking, and this book does not disappoint. From quick hamburgers and fries to chocolate croissants with refrigerated puff pastry, plus a section on holiday foods, you can easily turn out delicious breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and desserts.

With our wide selection of cake pans and cookbooks, the Kirkland Town Library has all the tools you need to help you create prize-worthy foods and become a star baker.