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# baker & cook

DEAN BRETTSCHEIDER

THE STORY AND RECIPES BEHIND  
THE SUCCESSFUL ARTISAN BAKERY AND FOOD STORE



# For Review Only



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## Introduction

Nobody reads a cookbook from cover to cover. I can tell you that from personal experience. I've written 12 of them. This book is a bit different though.



It's my attempt at documenting the life and times of the Baker & Cook business, aged five, complete with recipes, hopefully without it reading like the gushing of an oversharing parent gripped by terminal hubris. Please bear with me and my occasional nautical, paternal, and entrepreneurial references.

Beyond the rigid order and prescription of baking, and profit and loss statements, there's a story. It's not intended to be the story of Dean Brettschneider, however, Baker & Cook *is* the culmination of everything I know, and I *am* proud of how far we have come in a mere five years. Along with Plank Sourdough Pizza and Brettschneider's Baking & Cooking School, we now have 10 stores in Singapore and three in Manila, with more to come in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia and New Delhi, India in Q4 2017. The buns are in the oven, so to speak. This thing is about to go global, and while I have a window of spare time, I need to take stock. Hopefully, you will get something out of the read, whether you're already a fan of Baker & Cook, just interested to know how the business ticks, or diving straight into the recipe section. What began as a sweaty bike ride and became a successful business with a turnover of \$10 million a year, in five years. Yeah, there's a story in that.

So it's not about me. Oh sure, when I see my face on a 50-foot billboard hanging down the side of the largest shopping mall in Manila, Philippines, I realise that Baker & Cook probably *is* very much about me right now. But as the business grows, the brand will grow with it. Ownership will pass to stakeholders who come along for the ride. The customers and staff and management who invest themselves in the Baker & Cook experience will set the course for the business moving forward. Dean Brettschneider is a finite resource, a catalyst to get this thing moving. Taking ground back from the supermarkets and stuffy French bakeries, and delivering a place for family and friends to break bread together. Wholesome bread. Good bread. But then, Baker & Cook is about so much more than bread. It's that place. It's that place where everything feels instantly familiar. Young or old, willing to spend or budget-conscious, Asian or otherwise, you sit down amongst friends. There's light and wood and stone and freshly baked bread and brewed coffee. You could spend five minutes here or half a day. Welcome.



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We are still refining and developing our bakery/food store/pizza-restaurant concept. Learning by doing. We expect to make mistakes in a sophisticated market, and while fixing problems is a part of our DNA, our unique selling point will always be the quality of our baked goods and a commitment to providing a convivial atmosphere to enjoy them in. We've intentionally chosen to open the bulk of our stores in neighbourhood locations. It's here where we can truly feel a part of the community, and I get a real kick out of seeing people relax and interact in our stores.

The DNA thing — it's probably my Antipodean (there I go getting my name in there again) practicality seeping in. Actually, I'm not sure if being born in New Zealand has been a help or hindrance to my business career. I certainly enjoy the freedom and a degree of anonymity coming from a country that doesn't tie me to any particular traditional cooking norm. I haven't had to break the stereotype barriers that a French baker might encounter, for instance. Maybe it's the fact that New Zealand is an incredibly long way from anywhere (except Australia or the West Island as we Kiwis like to call it) that makes us look outward for influence, while also forcing us to be inventive with the resources we have. Cherry-picking what we like and binning what we don't is a luxury New Zealanders have enjoyed since the early days of European settlement, affording us the opportunity to adapt, experiment and revolutionise, albeit in a very small home market. Nobody expects much from Kiwis, until we deliver. That the first commercial instant coffee was invented in New Zealand is a good example. More on coffee in a second. Suffice it to say that my global vision might read perfectly if accompanied by a large flat white.

I sometimes draw parallels, late at night, to the incredible success of a company like Starbucks. That's not to say for a minute that I think Baker & Cook is the new Starbucks, but perhaps that bread is the new coffee. Indeed, bread has a longer and more far-reaching pedigree than coffee. It just hasn't been spiced up to the same extent. To that end, we've set ourselves a lofty goal — to become the world's leading artisan bakery and food store brand. In my mind, the gatekeepers of traditional baking from Europe, the Middle East and Asia have had it their own way for too long. It's time for a shake-up. And I'm not talking about an American shake and bake approach here. Let's call it new world baking, and you can call me the Global Baker. I've been called worse. As a young apprentice baker in New Zealand playing representative rugby for my province, following my passion and feeling bulletproof, my nickname was Fig Jam. That's, "F\*\*\* I'm Good Just Ask Me". In Asia, I'm referred to as Mister Dean, which I find respectful and agreeable. "Brettschneider" is a struggle for many, and I've lost count of the hotels that have me registered as "Brett Schneider". Wisely, nobody

on my staff calls me "uncle", but somebody will, inevitably. I do use the captain of the ship analogy often, when thinking about my role. And I'm thinking more Captain Onedin from *The Onedin Line* than Captain Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean* here.

What is the secret recipe to my success? You might as well ask before we go any further. "A dogged application of technique", I might answer. A big part of my personal mission is to share that technique, my method, with as many people as I can. You can look me up on YouTube and watch me on TV; you can buy one of my 12 cookbooks or enrol in a class at my baking and cooking school. You can work for me or write to me. You can even stop me in the street if you like. But be prepared to walk and talk fast. Building credibility in my personal brand and that of my business has been important too. Integrity. And passion. You hear a lot about passion, and for many, it's an elusive thing. Scratch any entrepreneur and the passion is going to ooze everywhere, if you're lucky, or explode in your face if you're not. Am I an entrepreneur? Who knows? But I've been oozing passion for baking since high school and I've thrown myself into Baker & Cook with every fibre. And then there's my personal mantra — *get shit done*. Singaporeans love their three-letter-acronyms and I drop the GSD regularly. Of course, there really is no secret, beyond having a vision and maintaining the focus necessary over time.

I realise that in telling this story, I am bound to step on some toes. Unavoidable, if I'm to recount the history of this fledgling business with any accuracy. And that's all this book is — a complete and honest account. I'm not going to name names, but I am going to tell things from my perspective. There's no malice intended, nor should anyone feel singled out for special attention, but yes, some people have annoyed me, frustrated me and amazed me along this journey. Mostly though, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and efforts of my staff. From my management and administration team to the bakers, cooks, chefs, front of house, delivery and cleaning crews, you all have my heartfelt thanks. It can't be a cakewalk working for me. Anyone who says that Kiwis are easy-going and forgiving are probably confused by tourist posters of lightly clad folk lounging around at the beach or having barbecues in the backyard. No, those are *Australians*. And don't be fooled by a bucolic scene of rolling green hills dotted with sheep and a bunch of hobbits munching in blissful ignorance on their second breakfasts either. I work hard, I GSD, and I expect my staff to do the same.

There will never be enough bouquets for those who have given their time, and done from the simple to the extraordinary, to help get Baker & Cook established. And to our customers, thank you, thank you, and please come again.





# For Review Only

## The Recipes

Every hour, every minute, every second of every day, I live and breathe bakery. I have spent years perfecting my craft, developing recipes, understanding design and ultimately learning what makes a bakery not just great, but exceptional at all levels.

My childhood memories are about going to the local baker and buying freshly baked breads, cakes, pastries and doughnuts. The smell of freshly baked bread is universal and adored all over the world.

When developing the product range I wanted to open Baker & Cook with, it was 23 miles long and basically a brain dump of everything I wanted to do. However, it needed to be turned into reality, so out came the big chef's knife and with some chopping and cutting, we opened with the core basics that I knew would work as a starting point.

Between Baker & Cook, Plank Sourdough Pizza and Brettschneider's Baking & Cooking School, we serve thousands of people every day. People gravitate towards us because of what we do and what we make. It's become part of everyday life for so many people.

Our bakery runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to keep up with the demands of our growing business and our customers' thirst for fresh products. My amazing team of professional bakers, pastry chefs and cooks churn out a huge number of products each day. Imagine the planning, execution and logistics, it's mind-boggling, and often a juggling act to do what we do.

The recipes, techniques and knowledge shared in this book is a combination of many, many years of passion, experience, testing, fine-tuning, dedication and fun. Remember, a great sourdough loaf of bread isn't made in two hours. We are on a path of continual self-improvement and we must deliver on every single occasion. There are no compromises.

Please enjoy these recipes and most importantly, enjoy baking and have fun.

Happy Baking,  
Dean Brettschneider



## Challah

**Challah is a sweet, buttery, egg-rich festive bread. It was traditionally baked by Jewish families to grace the Sabbath or holiday table. The plaited strands represent arms intertwined and symbolise love, truth, peace, creation, freedom, harmony, unity and justice. Left over challah makes amazing French toast.**

Makes 2 loaves

500 g bread flour  
8 g salt  
75 g sugar  
10 g instant dry yeast  
1 egg  
220 ml water  
100 g softened butter  
1 quantity egg wash  
(page 301)

Place flour, salt, sugar, yeast, egg and water in a large mixing bowl. Using a wooden spoon, combine to form a dough mass. Tip dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 5–8 minutes until dough is smooth and elastic. Add softened butter in 4–5 additions while kneading. Continue to knead for 15–20 minutes, resting for 1 minute every 2–3 minutes. This process will take some time; the dough will be sticky at first, but don't be tempted to add excessive amounts of flour — persevere with the softness.

Lightly oil a bowl large enough to allow dough to double in bulk. Place dough in bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Leave in a warm place (23–25°C) for 1 hour.

Gently knock back the dough in the bowl by gently folding it back onto itself. This will deflate the dough slightly, but will help it develop more strength. Cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for 30 minutes.

Tip dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Using a plastic dough scraper, divide dough into eight 120 g pieces. Gently mould each dough piece into a ball. Cover with plastic wrap and leave to rest for 15 minutes.

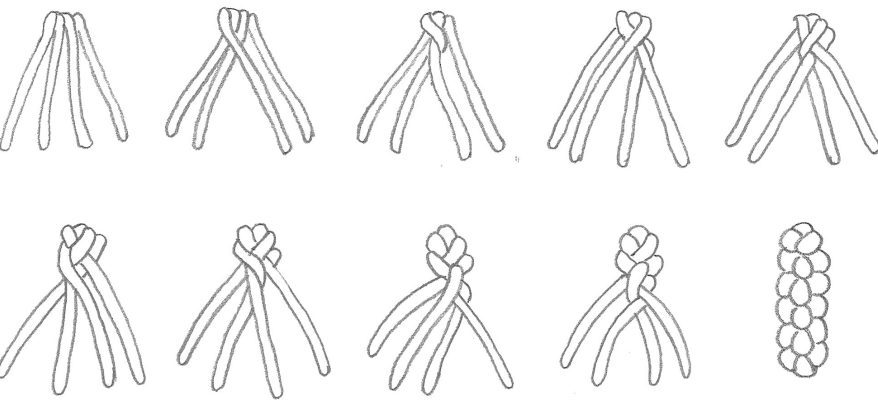
Roll each dough piece into a 30-cm long rope.

Place four ropes side by side. Following the diagram, plait to create a 4-strand plait. Squeeze ends together to prevent the plait from unravelling. Repeat to make another 4-strand plait.

Place loaves on a baking tray, leaving enough room in between for them to double in size. Cover with plastic wrap and leave for 45 minutes in a warm, draught-free place. Use the indentation test to tell when dough is fully proved.

Preheat oven to 160°C.

Brush loaves with egg wash and bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack to cool.





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## Raspberry Swirl Sweet Buns

These little raspberry iced buns are a favourite breakfast treat because the raspberry jam and white icing provides just enough sweetness with a touch of tartness to kick-start your day. I like to warm mine in the microwave oven for 20 seconds to accompany my cup of tea first thing in the morning.

Makes 12

### Yeast Slurry

15 g instant dry yeast  
50 g bread flour  
160 ml milk, at about 30°C

### Dough

450 g bread flour  
10 g salt  
75 g sugar  
100 g butter  
1 egg  
Yeast slurry (recipe above)  
100 ml milk at about 30°C

### Filling and Topping

100 g good quality  
raspberry jam  
1 quantity water icing  
(page 301)  
30 g dried raspberries

In a small bowl, whisk instant dry yeast with flour and milk to form a slurry.

Place flour, salt, sugar, butter, egg and yeast slurry in a large mixing bowl. Add milk and using a wooden spoon, combine to form a dough mass.

Tip dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 15–20 minutes, resting for 1 minute every 2–3 minutes, until dough is smooth and elastic. The dough should not be too soft. It needs to be a little firm so that it holds its shape when folding and shaping.

Lightly oil a bowl large enough to allow dough to double in bulk. Place dough in bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Leave in a warm place (23–25°C) for 45 minutes.

Gently knock back the dough in the bowl by gently folding it back onto itself. This will deflate the dough slightly, but will help it develop more strength. Cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for 30 minutes.

Tip dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Using a rolling pin, roll dough out into a 45 x 35-cm rectangle. Arrange it so the long edge faces you.

Using a palette knife, spread a thin layer of raspberry jam on surface of dough, leaving a 1-cm border at the edge closest to you. Using a pastry brush, brush this border with water. Starting at the opposite edge, roll dough towards you to get a tight and even log. Seal at the bottom edge.

Gently roll log to lengthen it to about 50 cm. Using a chef’s knife, cut log into 12 even slices, each approximately 4-cm thick. Place each slice into a muffin cup on a baking tray.

Cover dough with plastic wrap and leave for 1 hour in a warm, draught-free place, until doubled in size and light in texture. Use the indentation test to tell when dough is fully proved.

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Remove plastic wrap and place baking tray on the middle shelf of preheated oven. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until buns are light golden brown.

Remove from oven and let buns sit for 1 minute in muffin cups before removing to a wire rack to cool. Be extra careful as jam will be extremely hot! Let cool completely.

Prepare water icing.

Dip cooled buns in water icing, pressing down just far enough to cover surface. Remove and use your finger to wipe around icing to avoid getting a peak. Sprinkle generously with dried raspberries.



Tomato, Mozzarella, Caramelised Garlic  
and Basil

This is my version of the classic Italian margherita, with cloves of caramelised garlic added to make the pizza extra special. It’s amazing the difference it makes. Our customers love it.

Makes four 25-cm pizzas

1 quantity Plank Sourdough  
Pizza dough (page 160)

Caramelised Garlic

40 garlic cloves, peeled

40 ml olive oil

90 ml balsamic vinegar

90 ml water

90 g brown sugar

A pinch of salt

2 sprigs rosemary, leaves only,  
roughly chopped

Topping

1 quantity Plank tomato pizza  
sauce (page 161)

280 g buffalo mozzarella  
cheese

40 caramelised garlic cloves  
(recipe above)

20 fresh basil leaves

Extra virgin olive oil, for  
drizzling

Prepare caramelised garlic a day ahead. Bring a medium pot of water to the boil over high heat and blanch garlic cloves for 6 minutes or until al dente. Strain into a sieve. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add drained garlic cloves and sauté for 4–5 minutes, until golden brown. Add vinegar, water, sugar, salt and rosemary. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook until mixture is a thick syrup. Cool and store in the refrigerator.

Preheat oven to 250°C with a pizza stone (1 hour ahead) or baking tray (30 minutes ahead).

Prepare pizza dough and tomato pizza sauce. Divide dough into four equal pieces and stretch as instructed in dough recipe.

Spoon 100 g tomato pizza sauce onto the centre of each pizza base and spread evenly using the back of a spoon. Keep outer edge of pizza base free of sauce. Break mozzarella cheese into pieces and scatter 70 g over each base. Scatter with 10 cloves of caramelised garlic and finish with five basil leaves per pizza.

Place a pizza base onto a pizza peel or tray and slide it onto the preheated pizza stone or overturned tray. Bake for 5–7 minutes.

Carefully remove pizza from the oven and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Serve immediately.





## Lemony Hummus

Another all-time favourite dip at Baker & Cook. This can be made extra spicy or lemony by adding more lemon juice or hot pepper sauce. Serve with carrot or cucumber sticks.

Makes 400 g

70 g tahini  
80 ml lemon juice  
25 ml water  
½ Tbsp Tabasco sauce  
400 g drained canned chickpeas (2 cans)  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped  
¼ tsp salt

Place tahini, lemon juice, water and Tabasco sauce in a small bowl and whisk well.

Rinse chickpeas under cold water. Drain well. Place in a food processor with garlic and salt. With the motor running, slowly add tahini mixture and blend until smooth and creamy, scraping down the sides from time to time. This will take a good 5 minutes of blending.

Serve with a drizzle of olive oil or lemon oil and any extra chickpeas.

## Roasted Pepper and Eggplant Dip

Making your own dips is not that hard. This is an all-time favourite at Baker & Cook. Try it with toasted Danish rye.

Makes 400 g

1 large eggplant  
1 large red capsicum  
½ medium red onion, peeled and cut into thick slices  
1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped  
30 ml olive oil  
¾ tsp salt  
¼ tsp ground black pepper  
¼ tsp cayenne pepper  
½ Tbsp tomato paste  
2 stalks Italian parsley, chopped

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Cut eggplant into 3-cm cubes. Cut capsicum in half and remove seeds, then cut into 3-cm squares. Place eggplant, capsicum, onion and garlic into a large roasting dish. Toss with olive oil, salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper. Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until fragrant and golden in colour. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.

Place cold roasted vegetables in a food processor. Add tomato paste and blend well, scraping down the sides from time to time. Transfer to a bowl and fold in three quarters of chopped parsley.

Serve with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of remaining chopped parsley.



Top: Lemony Hummus  
Bottom: Roasted Pepper and Eggplant Dip



Pastries



Butter Puff Pastry

Puff Pastry, or flaky pastry as it is sometimes called, seems to be the pastry that most people shy away from making, the reason being the longer process required compared to that of its cousins, sweet, short and choux pastries. Although the building up of the thin layers of dough and butter seem to take forever, it is well worth the effort.

Points to consider when processing puff pastry

- When making puff pastry, ensure that all the ingredients are kept cool.
- Always ensure that the dough and layering fat are of the same consistency when incorporating the layering fat.
- Always use chilled water. In the summer, use iced chilled water (but do not put the ice cubes in the dough as they will not dissolve during mixing).
- Always keep the work surface lightly floured during the rolling out process. Never allow the pastry to stick to the work surface.
- When rolling and folding the puff pastry, use as little dusting flour as possible, and brush away any excess flour before completing each fold.
- When rolling out for each fold, ensure that the open ends are folded back into the centre of the dough.
- Always follow the resting times stated in the recipe to prevent shrinkage in the finished baked product.
- During resting periods, keep the pastry covered with plastic wrap in the refrigerator.
- Always rest the puff pastry products before baking, the longer the better (anywhere from 2–12 hours in the refrigerator). Allow the chilled products to return to room temperature before baking.

How does puff pastry rise?

Once the hundreds layers of dough and layering fat enter the oven (the oven must be at the correct temperature), the fat melts and the moisture within the dough begins to produce steam. The protein (gluten) in the dough layers begins to expand and separate. The steam pushes the dough layers upwards.

Once the puff pastry has reached its maximum volume and all the moisture within the dough has escaped, the protein (gluten) begins to coagulate (set) giving it its structure. If the puff pastry is taken out of the oven before complete coagulation is achieved, the structure will collapse.

Storage of puff pastry

Unbaked puff pastry can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer in block or rolled form. Thaw puff pastry in the refrigerator overnight, then let it stand at room temperature for approximately 30 minutes before using.

Product	Temperature	Time (variable)
Unfilled puff pastry	220–230°C	18–20 minutes
Filled puff pastry (sweet)	215–220°C	20–25 minutes
Filled puff pastry (savoury)	220–225°C	25–30 minutes
Reheating puff pastry products	190–200°C	15–25 minutes

Baking guidelines

The chart below is a general guide to baking puff pastry. All times and temperatures are guides only and will vary from oven to oven.

Cooling

Puff pastry should be cooled on a cooling rack to prevent it from sweating. Pies should be allowed to cool slightly before being removed from their tins. This will prevent the pastry from collapsing.

Puff Pastry

- 300 g bread flour
- 50 g chilled butter
- A good pinch of salt
- 150 ml ice cold water (refrigerated overnight)
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 200 g chilled butter for layering

Place flour, 50 g chilled butter and salt in a large mixing bowl. Using your fingers, roughly break butter into the flour. Add ice cold water and lemon juice and mix by hand into a firm dough.

Tip dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 2–3 minutes into a ball. Cover dough with plastic wrap and leave to rest for 5–10 minutes.

On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the dough into a 25-cm square sheet, approximately 1-cm thick.

Prepare 200 g chilled butter for layering. Hit the chilled butter with a rolling pin into a 17-cm square slab. The hitting will be sufficient to soften the butter. Place butter on the centre of dough sheet.

Fold corners of dough towards the centre to encase layering butter, obtaining two layers of dough and one layer of layering fat.

Now give the pastry six 'single turns' as described below.

Single turn or three fold

1. Roll out the pastry to form a rectangle 1-cm thick. Divide the rectangle into thirds.

A diagram showing a horizontal rectangle divided into three equal sections by two vertical lines. The sections are labeled A, B, and C from left to right. The rightmost corner of the rectangle is labeled D.
2. Fold A to C and then D to B to form three layers of pastry.
3. Rest the pastry in the refrigerator for 15–20 minutes, covered with a plastic bag to prevent the pastry drying out and forming a skin.
4. Repeat steps 1–3 five times.
5. You should now have given the pastry six 'single turns'. The pastry is now ready to be rolled out to the final thickness required for your product or it can be kept in the refrigerator for up to three days or in the freezer until required.







B&C Lemon Tarts

Our lemon tarts are often said to be “simplicity at its best”. We use all-butter sweet short pastry, real lemon curd — which is just the right balance of sweet and sour — made with fresh eggs, lemon juice, sugar and butter. The secret is to coat the baked sweet pastry shell with melted white chocolate. It makes a world of difference.

Makes eight 8-cm tarts

- 1/2 quantity basic sweet pastry (page 213)
- 50 g white chocolate
- 20 g dark chocolate
- 1 quantity apricot glaze (page 301)

Lemon Curd

- 120 g eggs
- 80 g egg yolks
- 80 ml lemon juice
- 110 g sugar
- 120 g butter, cut into cubes

Prepare sweet pastry. This can be done a day in advance.

Prepare lemon curd. This can also be done a day in advance. Bring a medium pot of water to a simmer over medium heat, then lower heat once water is simmering. In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs, egg yolks, lemon juice and sugar together, then place over the pot of simmering water, stirring constantly until the mixture is thick. Remove from heat and whisk in butter. Pass mixture through a sieve into a container. Place a sheet of plastic wrap directly on the curd, then refrigerate to chill.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Prepare eight 8-cm tart tins.

Prepare tart shell. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out sweet pastry into a 3-mm thick sheet. Cut out eight circles slightly larger than the tart tins being used. Press the pastry into the tart tins, pressing to fill all contours. Using a fork, prick the bottom of the pastry. Bake for 15–18 minutes, or until golden brown. Place on a wire rack to cool.

Place white chocolate in a small metal bowl over a small saucepan of simmering water. Stir until chocolate is melted, ensuring that it does not get any hotter than 40°C. Using a pastry brush, brush base and sides of cold pastry shells with chocolate.

Spoon lemon curd into a small piping bag and pipe to fill tart shells to the brim. Using a small palate knife, scrape across to smoothen tops.

Prepare apricot glaze. Once hot, brush over top of tarts.

Melt dark chocolate using same method as for white chocolate and spoon into a small piping bag. Cut a small hole at the tip and pipe to decorate tarts.





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## About the Author

Dean Brettschneider is one part professional baker and one part entrepreneur. Arguably one of the world's best bakers with an international following, Dean is truly a global baker. He now resides in Denmark, Singapore and New Zealand, where he heads up his global baking empire. He travels regularly to all corners of the world as a consultant to the global F&B and baking industry.

Dean is the founder and co-owner of the global bakery chain Baker & Cook, Plank Sourdough Pizza and Brettschneider's Baking & Cooking School. He also is a co-owner of London-based Crosstown Doughnuts.

Dean is the author of 13 award-winning books on baking. He appears as co-host and lead judge of the successful reality TV series, New Zealand's Hottest Home Baker. He also hosts the Kiwi Baker series in Shanghai, France, Singapore and California, as well as many other TV programmes that promote baking excellence, travel, food and culture.

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Published by Marshall Cavendish Cuisine, 2017

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## National Library Board, Singapore Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Names: Brettschneider, Dean.

Title: Baker & cook : the story and recipes behind the successful artisan bakery and food store / Dean Brettschneider.

Description: Singapore : Marshall Cavendish Cuisine, [2017] | Includes index.

Identifiers: OCN 993252237 | 978-981-47-5156-8 (hardcover)

Subjects: LCSH: Baking. | Cooking (bread) | Pastry. | LCGFT: Cookbooks.

Classification: DDC 641.815--dc23

Printed in Singapore by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

Editor: Lydia Leong

Designer: Lynn Chin

Photographer (food and bakery images): Ian Jeimz

Illustrator: Vincent Pang

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