



[Happiness Is Baking](#), copyright © 2019 by Maida Heatter. Illustrations by Alice Oehr. Published by Little, Brown and Company, New York.

Our Summary:

Does baking intimidate you? Are you overwhelmed by the precision? Well, have no fear, the “Queen of Cake” has come to the rescue! In [Happiness Is Baking](#), Maida Heatter writes each of her recipes with enough detail to lead all bakers, beginner or experienced, to success! [Happiness Is Baking](#) is a collection of Heatter’s classic recipes culled from the many cookbooks she published over her decades of baking. Her personal notes have been used to update, improve and modernize each one. Like all great recipe writers, Heatter provides instructions that may seem trivial, arbitrary, or insignificant, but she offers a practical explanation for everything. She encourages you to treat her book like a school textbook: before you get to the fun of making the recipes, read the cookbook,

write in the margins, and take notes. This will make the recipes your own and the book a treasure to pass along to future generations. Heatter says baking is “special-effort cooking” – truly one of the creative arts, and when you create something and share it with those you love, you experience a joy that makes life fulfilling!

What you need to know:

Get it: [Happiness Is Baking](#), copyright © 2019 by Maida Heatter. Illustrations by Alice Oehr © 2019. Published by Little, Brown and Company April 16, 2019, Hardcover \$27.00 ([Amazon \\$24.30](#); [Kindle \\$13.99](#))

See it: 288 pages of precisely written recipes accompanied by cheerful illustrations rather than photographs, a practice used by Heatter in all her books. Four chapters packed with recipes – two chapters for cakes – *Everyday Cakes* and *Special Occasion Cakes*, a chapter on *Cookies*, plus a chapter called *Pies, Tarts, Brownies and More*. Included is a *Before You Bake* section that offers sage advice to beginner and experienced bakers alike, as well as an all-inclusive and easy-to-reference index.

Make it: A collection of over 100 recipes for classic, fool-proof desserts written with meticulous care and injected with a bit of wit and humor. Each recipe has notes that help you hone your baking skills. Her instructions are so detailed and thorough that it feels as if Heatter herself is with you in your kitchen.

Cherie’s Review:

I fell in love with [Happiness Is Baking](#) because of Maida Heatter. As the self-proclaimed “Chairperson of the Board of the Chocolate Lovers Association of the World,” and her *Positively-the-Best-Chocolate-Chip Cookie* recipe? Regardless, she now holds a place in my heart as one of the most influential bakers of my time. As this review comes to print, I’m sorry to write that Heatter recently passed away, just two months after this cookbook was published. Her humor and zest for life is evident in [Happiness Is Baking](#). She recounts watching TV and recalls hearing a doctor talk about ways to reduce stress. She stood up and yelled at the television “Bake cookies!” Well, baking cookies must be the key to longevity, since she lived to be 102!

[Happiness Is Baking](#) is a must-have compilation of Heatter’s best-loved recipes. These recipes are tried and true, reflecting decades of experience, and three James Beard Awards. Her recipe for *Brownies* is where her passion for baking began when she was just ten years old. When she was inducted into the James Beard Foundation Hall

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of Fame, she threw these decadent, beautifully wrapped treats to the crowd! She said people often forgot her name, but never forgot her brownies. [Happiness Is Baking](#) includes not only her original recipe for *Brownies*, but also *Cream-Cheese Brownies* and *Palm Beach Brownies with Chocolate-Covered Mints*. She offers this tip: allow the brownies to stand for the recipe's specified time after they come out of the oven, or they will squash when you cut them. Having learned the hard way, I advise using a plastic knife to cut them; not a crumb will be left behind, and your brownies will be cut into perfect squares!

When you are called the "Queen of Cake," it makes perfect sense to come up with a recipe for your own birthday cake. *The September 7th Cake*, in [Happiness Is Baking](#), is named in honor of the day she was born. A fabulous flourless cake with two thin dark chocolate layers, it is filled with white whipped cream and covered with a dark coffee-chocolate whipped cream. Her recipe for *Queen Mother's Cake* she says to be one of her most prized. Equally intriguing is her *86-Proof Chocolate Cake* that packs a moist punch with the unique combination of bourbon and coffee.

Heatter's style and attention to detail in [Happiness Is Baking](#) is evident in her recipe for *East 62nd Street Lemon Cake*. She instructs you to use a tube pan, plain or fancy, and to butter and dust it with fine, dry bread crumbs so the cake will release from the pan unscathed. This amazingly popular cake, which ran in the [New York Times](#), is almost as popular (for my lemon lovers out there) as her recipe for *The Best Damn Lemon Cake*, named by her late husband because that's exactly what he said when he tasted the first bite. The name, she said, stuck like frosting on a cake.

Heatter's outlook on life is truly inspiring. She published her first cookbook at the age of 58, [Maida Heatter's Book of Great Desserts](#) in October of 1974. She said keeping busy and having so much to do was what kept her happy. Going into her kitchen to bake a cake made her feel like she was in seventh heaven. It didn't matter if she gave the cake to the mailman, she said, because when you're busy and you're being creative, that's something the outside world can't compete with! Those are words to live by. So dive in, choose a recipe from [Happiness Is Baking](#), and start creating!

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[Budapest Coffee Cake](#)

[Lemon Bread Pudding with Lemon Curd](#)