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A CIP catalogue record for this title is available from Library and Archives Canada. ISBN 978-0-9880859-3-0

Published by Pamela Powered Inc. Burlington, Ontario publisher@pamelapowered.com www.abbeycooks.com



Exercise caution while using kitchen utensils and operating electrical appliances, ovens and stoves.

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Credits

All of photos in this book were taken with my trusty iPhone. Thanks, Apple.

Photo retouching and digital file conversion was merrily provided by Blair Hall and Leah Gryfe.

Thank you to Lady Laleh Hedayati for her role as etiquette model.

Conversions diligently calculated by Arlene Gryfe.

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been possible without the loving support of my husband, my Lord D, who wears his noble heritage with humble pride. He and I are drawn to English period dramas which offer a glimpse into the lives of ancestors who lived in grand castles scattered across Britain. And the food! Imagining relatives dining on the same dishes we eat today provides a direct connection to our past. I give my undying thanks to my Lord D for tasting all the dishes without complaint. His past experience publishing a national gourmet magazine prepared him well for his role as my Chief of Taste and Quality.

I have always been surrounded by great food. My maternal grandmother sang while she cooked: my introduction to the love of cookery. My parents love to entertain and experiment with new dishes. As a child, I marvelled at the sight, smell and the volume of food which emerged from our kitchen.

I truly have been blessed in this journey and amazed by the number of people who have come alongside me. Inspired by the food on the popular drama *Downton Abbey*, I finally put my History degree to work and started a blog, abbeycooks.com to share my love of food, history and health. Many of you came alongside me and graciously shared your own family stories and traditions.

My inspiration came from a number of sources: treasured family recipes, period cookbooks, and recipes found on newspaper archives. My goal was to present this great food for our own times, using our current understanding of health and nutrition as a guide.

An extraordinary thing happened on my 50th birthday. I was approached by two large publishers with book projects. I was honoured and the idea of writing a book lingered. In the end I took this journey on my own, but not alone. Thank you to fellow period writers, food historians and talented food writers for your inspiration, support and encouragement.

Thank you technology. We now live in a digital age where self-publishing is achievable.

I published two editions of *Abbey Cooks Entertain*, an entertaining cookbook with 225 recipes in both ebook and printed formats. The current version is on Amazon.com as well as on my website abbeycooks.com. The printed version is a hefty 450 pages. *Relaxing Over Afternoon Tea* is one of the my favorite chapters from the larger work, and I have updated the content for those who love Afternoon Tea just as much as I do.



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FOOD



Each tea tray will feed four people. Remember this is not a full meal, think of it more of a scrumptious snack. Load each tray with:

- *Scones* allow one or two per person
- Sandwiches allow two sandwiches per person
- *Sweets* allow three pieces per person

SCONES

ABBEY COOKS MAGIC SCONES

Scones are the foundation of a great Afternoon Tea or garden party. This basic recipe is like magic. They are faster to make than a drive to your local coffee shop, lower in fat and can be adapted in an endless variety of ways. Create your own Abbey House brand to entertain guests.

Here are three essential tips to help you create these magnificent scones:

- Sift dry ingredients three times
- Use and grate frozen butter
- Gently work the dough and layer before cutting to give you best results

Makes eight 2 inch (5 cm) scones

1 cup (110 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

2 tsp. (10 ml) baking powder

1/4 tsp. (1 ml) salt

2 tbsp. (30 ml) frozen grated butter

½ cup (115 ml) cold milk

- 1. Preheat oven to 475°F/250°C/Gas 9 and prepare a baking sheet.
- 2. Sift the dry ingredients 3 times into a large bowl. Rub the frozen grated butter into the dry ingredients until it feels like sand. Unless otherwise specified, add your secret ingredients at this point. Add enough milk just until you get a sticky dough.
- 3. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured board; lightly flour the top. Knead very gently once, then fold and turn the kneaded dough 3 or 4 times until the dough has formed a smooth texture. Pat the dough into a rectangle about 6×12 inches $(15 \times 30 \text{ cm})$, then fold into thirds.
- 4. Using a well floured 2 inch (5 cm) biscuit cutter, make six 2 inch (5 cm) rounds. You can get 2 more scones from the scraps but they won't be as tender. Alternatively, use a well floured sharp knife to form wedges.
- 5. You can either brush the top of the scones with milk or flour lightly.
- 6. Bake on a baking sheet for 8–10 minutes until the scones are lightly coloured on the tops. Immediately place on a cooling rack to stop the cooking process.
- 7. Traditionally served with clotted cream and preserves, try substituting the cream with non-fat Strained Yoghurt and your favourite preserves.



CUCUMBER SANDWICHES

MAKES 8 TEA SANDWICHES

½ English (seedless) cucumber, thinly sliced (peeled or unpeeled)

Fresh mint, finely chopped (optional)

1 tsp. (5 ml) unsalted butter, softened

4 slices white bread

- 1. Lightly butter each slice of bread. Lay two layers of seedless cucumber on 2 slices of bread, adding a sprinkling of mint if desired.
- 2. Cover with the remaining slices. Using a sharp knife, remove the crusts and cut each sandwich into 4 pieces in the shape you prefer.

EGG SALAD SANDWICHES

Makes 8 tea sandwiches

2 hard-boiled eggs

1 tbsp. (15 ml) low-fat mayonnaise

1 tbsp. (15 ml) non-fat Strained Yoghurt

1 tbsp. (15 ml) Dijon mustard

1 tsp. (5 ml) fresh dill, chopped

1 tsp. (5 ml) flat leaf parsley, chopped

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

4 slices bread (white or whole wheat)

Unsalted butter, softened for spreading

- 1. Mash the eggs, mayonnaise, yoghurt and mustard with a fork, adding the herbs and spices.
- 2. Lightly butter and spread the egg salad onto 2 slices of bread, and cover with the remaining 2.
- 3. Cut the crusts off to make a square and make 2 additional cuts, either vertically or at an angle to make 4 sandwiches from each large sandwich.



FINANCIERS

This is a light, moist tea cake, similar to a sponge cake, and usually contains almond flour, crushed or ground almonds, or almond flavouring.

The name "Financier" is said to be derived from the traditional rectangular mould, which resembles a bar of gold, but a friand tray looks more like a tear drop. Others say that it comes from their popularity in the Paris financial district surrounding La Bourse du Commerce (the former name of the Paris stock exchange). Either way they are wonderful. Try replacing some or all of the melted butter with applesauce for a lighter, cakier version.

Makes 9 cakes

4 egg whites

1/4 cup (55 ml) unsalted melted butter, cooled

1 tsp. (5 ml) pure vanilla extract

1 cup (130 g) icing sugar ¼ cup (30 g) flour, sifted ¾ cup (175 ml) ground almonds

Zest of 1 lemon
Handful blueberries

- 1. Preheat the oven to 375°F/190°C/Gas 5. Grease a 9-hole friand tray. You can also use muffin tins.
- 2. In a large bowl, whisk the egg whites until frothy. Fold in all the remaining ingredients.
- 3. Spoon into your prepared tray and push a few blueberries into each cake.
- 4. Bake for 20 minutes until golden and a skewer comes out clean.
- 5. Leave in the tray for 5 minutes, then transfer to wire rack to cool. Dust with icing sugar before serving.



FLORENTINE BISCUITS

Sometimes it can be challenging to trace our favorite foods to the source. While called Florentines, food historians are not convinced that these popular biscuits came from Florence, Italy. One story gives credit to the French and not the Italians, tracing the delicate treat to King Louis XIV of France, created in honor of a state visit by the Medicis of Florence.

The toffee crispy taste comes from the butter/sugar combination, so it is not the healthiest of treats so I would put this into the "sometimes" food, but enjoy the pure ingredients and flavours.

Makes 25 biscuits

1/3 cup (75 ml) sliced almonds

¹/₃ cup (75 ml) hazelnuts, chopped

1/3 cup (75 ml) sultana raisins 1/3 cup (75 ml) chopped citrus peel

 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (30 g) rice flour

¹/₃ cup (40 g) unbleached all-purpose flour (or use all rice flour)

1/4 cup (55 g) unsalted butter

¼ cup (40 g) caster sugar (granulated sugar pulsed in a blender)

1 tbsp. (15 ml) molasses 2 tbsp. (30 ml) golden syrup 1 cup (225 ml) quality dark chocolate to finish

Bake

- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F/180°C/Gas 4 and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or silicon liner.
- 2. Mix the first 6 (dry) ingredients together in a mediumsized bowl.
- 3. Combine the butter, golden syrup, molasses, and sugar on low heat until the mixture has melted.
- **4.** Add the wet ingredients to the dry and mix thoroughly.
- 5. Spoon teaspoons of the mixture, well spaced apart on the baking sheets and bake for 12 minutes or until the edges are golden brown.
- 6. If the cookies melted together while baking you can separate them while they are still hot.
- 7. Cool on the sheet and then transfer to a wire rack, lined with a paper towel to absorb some of the oil from the butter.

Decorate

- **8**. Melt the chocolate in a metal bowl placed on top of simmering water (do not let the bowl touch the water).
- 9. Use a pastry brush to paint the bottom of each cookie with chocolate and let set chocolate side up.
- **10**. Paint another and thicker chocolate layer and make some decorative squiggles or marks with a fork in the chocolate before it sets.



LADYFINGERS

Makes 24 to 30 Ladyfingers

½ cup (115 g) granulated sugar

3 eggs, separated

1 tsp. (5 ml) pure vanilla extract

Pinch salt

1 tbsp. (15 ml) granulated sugar

½ cup (55 g) unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted Icing sugar

- 1. Preheat oven to 300°F/150°C/Gas 2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2. Gradually beat the sugar into the egg yolks, add the vanilla and continue beating for several minutes until the mixture is thick and pale yellow.
- 3. Beat the egg whites and salt together in a separate bowl until soft peaks are formed. Sprinkle on the sugar and beat until you get stiff peaks.
- 4. Gently fold in the egg whites and flour (alternating between whites, then flour, in 3 stages) into the egg yolks. The batter needs to maintain a light fluffy consistency.
- 5. Scoop the batter into a large pastry bag fitted with a large plain tip. The task is easier if you place the bag in a tall flower vase which will support the bag while you fill it.
- 6. Make the finger shapes 4 inches (10 cm) long and about ½ inch (1 cm) wide, spacing about 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart. Gently sprinkle with icing sugar. Bake in the middle level of preheated oven for 20 minutes. The ladyfingers should be pale brown, slightly crusty and dry on the inside. Tap lightly, to help give you an idea of whether the middle has been set.
- 7. You can serve ladyfingers on their own at tea, make a sandwich with jam or use to make great desserts like Strawberry Charlotte Russe. (p. 75)



CHOCOLATE MADELEINES

MAKES 24 MADELEINES

½ cup (115 ml) Unsweetened Applesauce

3 large eggs

1/4 cup (60 g) sugar (or sugar substitute)

34 cup (85 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

½ tsp. (2 ml) baking powder

Pinch salt

¹/₃ cup (75 ml) honey

3 tbsp. (45 ml) Dutch processed cocoa powder

1 oz. (30 g) (1 square) bittersweet chocolate, melted, cooled

Icing sugar for dusting

- 1. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in the flour, baking powder and salt and beat until well blended. Stir in the honey, applesauce, cocoa powder and melted chocolate.
- 2. Cover the batter with a piece of plastic wrap and refrigerate for 3 hours or up to 1 day.
- 3. Preheat the oven to 325°F/160°C/Gas 3. Grease two 12-well madeleine pans.
- **4.** Scoop 1 rounded spoonful of the batter into each well. They will be about two-thirds full.
- 5. Bake the pans in the upper and lower thirds of the oven, switching the positions of the pans halfway through baking, for 20–25 minutes total, or until golden around the edges.
- 6. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes on a wire rack. Invert the pans to remove the cookies and dust with icing sugar.

EARL GREY MADELEINES

Earl Grey adds a lovely flavour to your madeleines.

MAKES 24 MADELEINES

½ cup (115 ml) Unsweetened Applesauce

4 Earl Grey tea bags

2 large eggs

1/4 cup (40 g) caster sugar (or sugar substitute)

1 cup (110 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

1½ tsp. (7 ml) baking powder Pinch salt

1/4 cup (55 ml) honey

Icing sugar for dusting

- 1. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the applesauce and tea and let sit for 5 minutes. Press on the tea bags to extract maximum flavour. Discard the tea bags and set aside.
- 2. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in the flour, baking powder and salt. Stir the applesauce/tea mixture into the batter. Stir in the honey.
- 3. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap and refrigerate the batter for 3 hours or up to 1 day.
- 4. Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C/Gas 6. Prepare two 12-well madeleine pans by lightly greasing with oil.
- 5. Scoop 1 rounded spoonful of the batter into each well. They will be two-thirds full.
- 6. Bake the pans in the upper and lower thirds of the oven, switching the positions of the pans halfway through baking, for 20–25 minutes total, or until golden around the edges.
- 7. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes on a wire rack. Invert the pans to remove the cookies and dust with icing sugar.



PAIN AU CHOCOLAT

Pain au Chocolat is a lovely french pastry which translates into "chocolate bread" and often graces breakfast plates in France. While you may not find chocolate appealing at breakfast, it also makes a lovely sweet treat as a snack or as part of your Afternoon Tea. It is typically served without decoration, but I have found that a chocolate drizzle helps identify the contents of dish for the uninitiated.

Making croissant dough can be a challenge for beginners, and you may be so horrified by the amount of butter you may never eat a croissant again, so try the easy version by using frozen puff pastry. This really is a sometimes food, but portion control helps.

Makes 16-32 (depending on the size)

2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed

1 egg, beaten

1/4 tsp. (1 ml) vanilla

2 3½ oz. (100 g) high-quality* imported chocolate bars (bittersweet or dark), broken into small squares.

* A lesser quality chocolate will melt and drip out of the pastry.

- 1. Preheat oven to 400°F/200°C/Gas 6.
- 2. Line a baking sheet with silicon sheet or parchment paper.
- 3. Place the pastry on parchment paper or lightly floured cutting board. Using a sharp knife, divide the dough in half, rotate 90° and half again, repeating until you have 16 squares. If you prefer you can make 8 squares for larger pastries.
- 4. Mix the egg and vanilla, adding a little water to thin.
- 5. Lightly brush the squares with the egg wash.
- 6. Place a square of chocolate on the edge of a pastry square and roll up, placing the seam side down. If you are using a thin chocolate bar you may want to stack 2 squares.
- 7. Place the roll on the prepared baking sheet and brush the tops with the remaining glaze.
- 8. Sprinkle with sugar (optional).
- 9. Bake the rolls until golden brown about 15 minutes.
- **10**. Serve warm or cool and drizzle with melted chocolate if you like.



NEVER FAIL SHORTBREAD

Shortbread is really easy to make and is a classic English treat. Using rice flour is the secret ingredient to give shortbread a nice crisp texture. Work quickly with the dough to avoid it becoming greasy.

Makes 16 fingers

% cup (150 g) unsalted butter 1/3 cup (55 g) caster sugar, plus extra to sprinkle 1 cup (110 g) unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted 1/2 cup (55 g) rice flour

- 1. Preheat oven to 300°F/150°C/Gas 2. Lightly grease a 9 inch (23 cm) square pan.
- 2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a large bowl. Add the white flour and rice flour and use a wooden spoon to work all the ingredients together to make a paste. Knead lightly.
- 3. Press the mixture into the pan, using the back of a spoon to smooth down the surface. Use a table knife or your kitchen cleaver to press a line down the middle of the pan, then rotate and divide the halves into quarters. Then divide those quarters again to make 16 fingers. Prick each finger decoratively along its length with a fork.
- 4. Bake for about 30 minutes, remove from the oven and retrace your lines. Return to the oven and continue to bake for 30 minutes until the mixture is set but not brown.
- 5. Sprinkle with a light dusting of caster sugar. Cool in the tin for about 30 minutes, then cut into pieces which should easily snap into fingers. Carefully remove from the pan and place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6. Store in your favourite tin or airtight container.

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About the Author



Pamela Foster has always been surrounded by great food. She became an Abbey Cook at an early age, learning to prepare the organically grown produce and free range livestock raised on her family's small country estate. Her maternal grandmother sang while she cooked; it was her introduction to the love of cookery. While she once catered her own hand-crafted Swiss chocolate truffle confections, she now prefers to simply share her passion of these delightful treats with family and friends.

She holds a degree in History and is fascinated by how people lived, what they ate, and how traditional dishes evolved. The Edwardian period was an exceptional time for food: it played a key role in how wealth was displayed. Her passion for history, food, healthy eating, and period dramas—including *Downton Abbey*—resulted in her popular blog www.abbeycooks.com.

Pamela's first cookbook, *Abbey Cooks Entertain* is available on Amazon. She has appeared on national television and interviewed in national newspapers and magazines.

She often speaks at guided Afternoon Tea gatherings for business and charity events in the Toronto area.

Pamela is married to her Lord D, living happily ever after in the Greater Toronto Area of Canada.