



# The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes from the Texas Hill Country's Rather Sweet Bakery & Cafe

By *Rebecca Rather, Alison Oresman*

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## The Best Little From-Scratch Bakery in Texas

The pastry case in Rebecca Rather's bakery in Fredericksburg is packed with ultra-buttery scones, luscious cakes, cookies the size of saucers, brownies as big as bricks, and fruit pies that look as though they came straight out of Grandma's oven. Since the day Rebecca and her Rather Sweet Bakery and Café came to town, life in this Hill Country hamlet has been even sweeter and the townsfolk now know why she is the Pastry Queen. Everything she makes is a lot like her: down-home yet grand, and familiar yet one-of-a-kind.

A native Texan, Rather makes the most of her Lone Star state's varied traditions, whether looking to the kitchens of Texas's Mexican and German immigrants or to the cowboy culture of her own forebears. Best of all, her recipes aren't fussy—one of her best-selling cakes stirs together in a single saucepan. Add in a cupful of Texas attitude and her made-from-scratch-with-love philosophy, and you've got an irresistible taste of American baking.

What's best at Rather Sweet? Rebecca's customers all have their favorites (and she is happy to cater to their cravings), but here's just a taste of the perennial best sellers:

- Apple-Smoked Bacon and Cheddar Scones
- Texas Big Hairs Lemon-Lime Tarts (the only big hair Rebecca has ever had!)
- Fourth of July Fried Pies
- Peach Queen Cake with Dulce de Leche Frosting
- Turbo-Charged Brownies with Praline Topping
- All-Sold-Out Chicken Pot Pies
- Kolaches (pillowy yeasted buns with sweet or savory fillings)
- PB&J Cookies

With over 125 surefire tested recipes and 100 photographs that richly capture small-town life in the Hill Country, *The Pastry Queen* offers a Texas-size serving

of the royal splendor of Rebecca's baked goods—courtesy of the rather sweet gal behind the case.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

This cookbook offers recipes for dozens of classic treats like oatmeal cookies, carrot cake and pecan pie—but often with novel twists: pineapple and coconut swirl through the carrot cake, the pecan pie takes the form of a brownie and the oatmeal cookies are fashioned into "crisps." Still, most of the recipes are pleasingly old-fashioned and sweet enough to send an unsuspecting baker into diabetic shock. The Grasshopper Pie calls for an entire cup of sugar, plus marshmallow crème and hot fudge sauce, and the Bananas Foster Shortcakes deliver sugary banana flavor amped up to maximum volume. The author is the proprietress of The Rather Sweet Bakery and Café in Texas, and she offers several signature Lone Star state desserts: a rich Fredericksburg Peach Cream Cheese Tart, crunchy Texas Pralines and Texas Big Hairs Lemon-Lime Meringue Tarts, with meringue piled as high as a Houston debutante's coif. The cookbook also offers a few non-dessert selections, mostly soups, salads, quesadillas and the like. Though these dishes are tasty—it's hard to object to Prosciutto Tostadas with Shrimp and Parsley or a warm, pleasing Wild Mushroom Soup—it's the sugary-sweet and fun-to-bake Texas-style desserts that make this rather sweet, and rather expensive, cookbook worth the splurge.

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#### Review

"Every baker, from country folk to city slicker, will find something deliriously delightful to bake in this book. Hail to the Pastry Queen—Rebecca Rather!"

—David Lebovitz, author of *The Great Book of Chocolate*

"Rebecca Rather personifies the great American bootstrap, built on grit and tenacity upon which communities are enriched and enlivened (and happily well fed). Anyone who bakes from this book will want to meet the Pastry Queen in person."

—Peter Reinhart, author of *The Bread Baker's Apprentice*

"Texans at their best are honest, friendly, helpful, and engagingly unpretentious. Oh, and pretty darned good cooks. Rebecca Rather, Hill Country *reine de patisserie*, is all of these things, as will be immediately apparent to anyone who dives into this delicious book—a rich, good-looking, sweet and savory masterpiece, full of baking lore, kitchen tips, charming stories, and (above all) irresistibly indulgent recipes."

—Colman Andrews, Editor-in-Chief, *Saveur*

#### From the Publisher

\* More than 150 rigorously tested recipes and 50 fullcolor photos from the best little from-scratch bakery in Texas.

\* Rebecca Rather was featured in the 2003 *Saveur* 100 (#43).

\* The first baking book from Texas, a state with a rich baking tradition shaped by its cowhand culture, Mexican roots, and Czech and German settlers.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

**Cornelius Callaghan:**

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**Jeffrey Barclay:**

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**Nicole Dilbeck:**

As people who live in typically the modest era should be update about what going on or details even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is certainly always change and move forward. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by reading through books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to a person is you don't know what kind you should start with. This The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes from the Texas Hill Country's Rather Sweet Bakery & Cafe is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and need in this era.

**Joyce Pippin:**

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