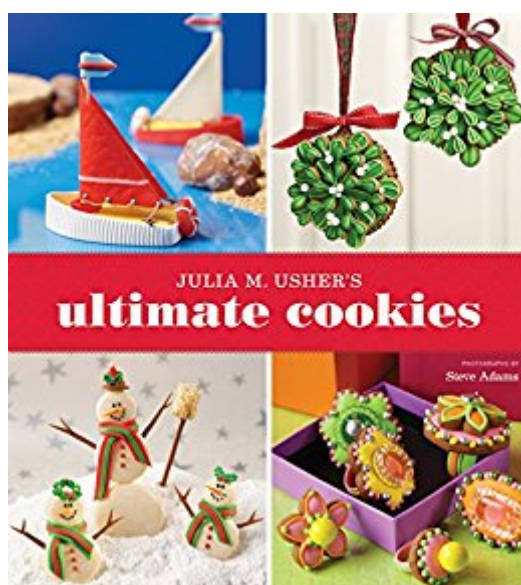


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Julia M. Usher's Ultimate Cookies



Synopsis

Delve into the world of cookie magic, where you can make everything from edible jewelry to cookie bacon and eggs! Organized by theme, each chapter is overflowing with luscious photographs and dozens of recipes and ideas. In carefully illustrated details, the author guides you to make perfect little cookie masterpieces. Julia Usher is a celebrated pastry chef and food writer. She is a James Beard Foundation Journalism Awards finalist and a Director of the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP). Usher has designed desserts for Better Homes and Gardens, Fine Cooking, Bon Appétit, and Modern Bride, as well as for the book Vera Wang on Weddings. She divides her time between St. Louis, Missouri, and Stonington, Maine. A new book from the author of the best-selling Cookie Swap

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book for all levels of expertise. There are lots of examples of decorating techniques, including fondant, royal icing, chocolate clay, stenciling, painting, using frosting transfer sheets, etc. All techniques are easy to follow with detailed photos. The numerous photos of the decorated cookies are literally breathtaking!!! The 3D Peacocks are amazing and templates are

provided for making these, as well as other 3D cookies. There are a handful of cookie recipes, including Sugar Cookie, Shortbread, Tuiles, "GoofProof" Macarons, Meringues, Gingerbread, etc. There also is a recipe for Royal Icing with detailed instructions on how to achieve the "right" piping consistency. Several other useful recipes are included (chocolate clay, chocolate ganache, Italian Buttercream, etc). The extensive Resource List is helpful for locating decorating necessities. This is a BEAUTIFUL, informative book. The author REALLY takes Cookie Decorating to the next level!!! She is extremely creative in her decorating. It's worth purchasing this book just for the photos of her beautiful cookies!!! I HIGHLY recommend this book to anyone who enjoys decorating cookies. Her clever decorating ideas are very impressive!!!!

For those just venturing into the craft and art of cookie decorating, this book is a must. The book starts by covering all the basic tools (and where to get them), tools to avoid, and tools to put on your wish list. Next, Julia explains the how-to's of doughs (rolling, cutting, baking), how to make a pastry cone, and the various "bedazzlers" (extras you can put on your cookies in addition to royal icing). Then comes the tour-de-force section--"15 bottom-to-top decorating techniques"--all the different methods to ice a cookie. Everything is illustrated, step by step, with clear photos, so you know exactly what to do. Even marbling, stenciling, and using decorative wafer papers are covered. These are followed by a section on decorative borders, including beadwork. At the end of the book are recipes and tips for making the perfect consistencies of icing for piping, flooding, and "topcoating" -- even tips on how to make sure your icing makes a perfect, rounded bead. No more pointy dots for anyone! The next 150+ pages are dedicated to various cookie projects, which are explained in minute detail with accompanying photos of each stage. The end of the book is dedicated to various recipes for doughs, icings, and modelling media. A really lovely book; clear, well-written, and well-illustrated. Julia takes the fear and mystery out of cookie decorating, and makes the reader feel that anything is possible with practice. Highly recommended!

I was amazed at what Julia accomplished with this book and I had pretty high hopes already based on her first book, Cookie Swap! The recipes are each labeled with a complexity level of 1, 2 or 3 (basically beginner, intermediate, and advanced), but even the beginner cookies yield stunning results, like the spiral lollypaloozas. The author also shares the recipe for her signature sugar cookie dough as well as several other dough and frosting recipes. Plus, there's a tutorial on how to make the perfect "goofproof" macarons. Ultimate Cookies goes over, not only the basics of decorating cookies, but all the extra fancy techniques, too. Each recipe has complete instructions and pictures

to help you to produce extra special delights. The Party Girl section seemed more like the "royalty" section to me with its ornate cookie jewelry boxes and jewel toned rings, pendants and crowns. Incredible Edibles has show-stopping treats for parties like meringue ice cream cones and cupcakes and adorable tiny tiered cakes. Where the Wild Things Are has ideas like stunning butterflies, cute cookie caterpillars, ladybugs, and more. There's even a gorgeous peacock cookie that can be transformed into a turkey for Thanksgiving! Of course, there are seasonal favorites for the whole year. I just loved the darling little topiary cookies, perfect for any Spring holidays or get-togethers. And the author uses the classic stained glass cookie effect, popular for Christmas cookies, to make spooky fun spider webs and Jack O'Lanterns for Halloween. I can't wait to make the cookie snow globes, with their beautiful 3D Winter scene! I just loved Ultimate Cookies, its like a complete cookie course in a book!

I absolutely love this book. It is the best cookie decorating book I have ever seen. I am an experienced decorator and yet I learned so much. All of the ideas are so creatively clever. The photography is beautiful and the detailed instructions, with pictures, are so easy to follow. I love the book so much that I am going to order one for each of my 3 daughters as Christmas gifts. This book is perfect even though my girls have varying degrees of experience ranging from very little to quite a lot. It is a book they can also use for baking and decorating with their own children. I love the variety of using royal icing, fondant, wafer paper, stencils templates and the list of ideas goes on and on. This book is for everyone who wants to decorate beautiful cookies. The recipes are perfect, too. I highly recommend Ultimate Cookies. I would give it 10 stars if I could.

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