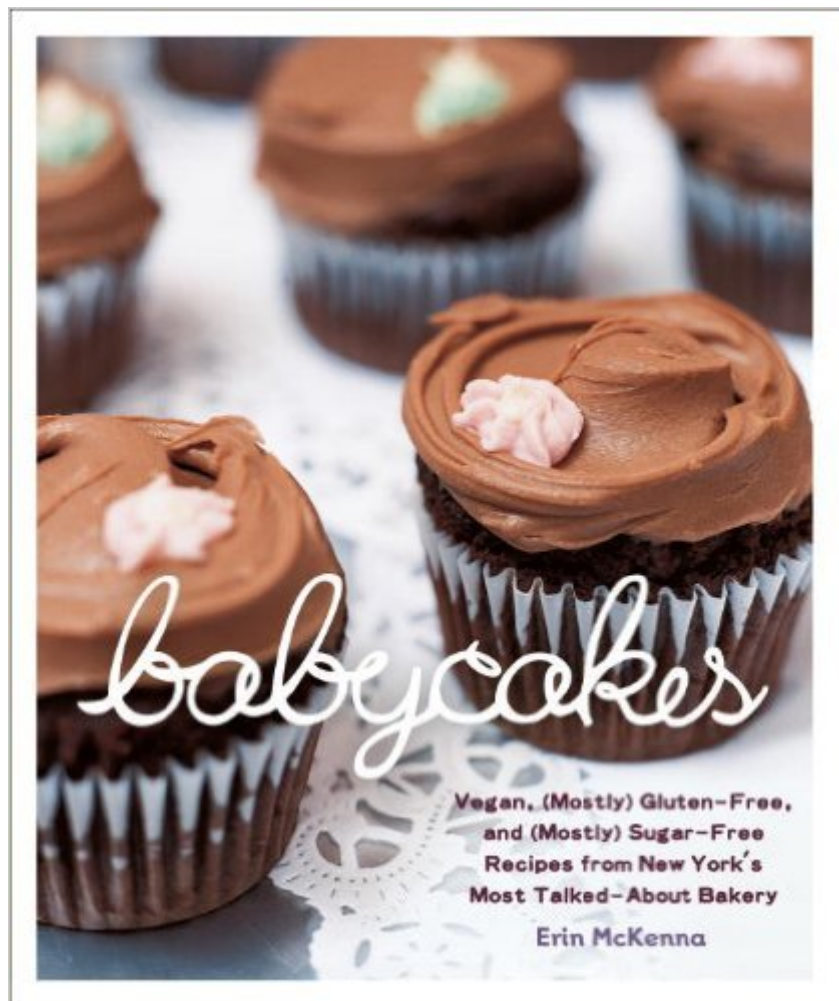


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# **BabyCakes: Vegan, (Mostly) Gluten-Free, And (Mostly) Sugar-Free Recipes From New York's Most Talked-About Bakery**



## Synopsis

Forget everything youâ™ve heard about health-conscious baking. Simply, BabyCakes is your key to an enlightened, indulgent, sweets-filled future. This is important news not only for parents whose children have allergies, for vegans, and for others who struggle with food sensitivities, but also for all you sugar-loving traditionalists. The recipes in these pages prove that there is a healthy alternative to recklessly made desserts, one that doesn't sacrifice taste or texture. Having experimented endlessly with alternative, health-conscious sweeteners, flours, and thickeners, Erin McKenna, the proprietress of beloved bakery BabyCakes NYC, developed these recipesâ“most are gluten-free, all are without refined sugarâ“in hopes of combating her own wheat, dairy, and sugar sensitivities. In BabyCakes, she shares detailed information about the ingredients she uses (coconut flour, xanthan gum, and agave nectar, for example) and how to substitute them properly for common onesâ“all the while guiding you safely through techniques sheâ™s spent years perfecting. When BabyCakes NYC opened on Manhattanâ™s Lower East Side in 2005, it helped propel the gluten-free and vegan baking movement into a new stratosphere. Suddenly there was a destination for those with wheat allergies and other dietary restrictionsâ“and, soon enough, celebrities and dessert lovers of every kindâ“to indulge freely in delectable muffins and teacakes, brownies and cookies, pies and cobblers. Enclosed within these pages are all the âœsecretsâ• youâ™ll need to bring the greatness of BabyCakes NYC into your own home as well as raves and recommendations from devotees such as Natalie Portman, Jason Schwartzman, Mary-Louise Parker, Zooey Deschanel, and Pamela Anderson. For confectionists of all kinds, delicious alternatives lie within: Red Velvet Cupcakes, Chocolate Shortbread Scones with Caramelized Bananas, Strawberry Shortcake, and BabyCakes NYCâ™s celebrated frosting (so delicious it has fans tipping back frosting shots!), to name just a few. Finally, Erinâ™s blissful desserts are yours for the baking!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was \*so\* excited when I learned that a Babycakes cookbook was in the works. When it arrived, I sat down and excitedly read it cover to cover with a pen and paper in hand to make my baking grocery list. It was then that I came across upon several issues:1) As mentioned by many others, the book is only about 2/3 gluten-free. I know that Babycakes bakery bakes spelt items, so this was not a surprise to me. However, the book sub-title calling it Gluten-Free is misleading.2) A large amount of the recipes call for Bob's Red Mill Gluten-Free All Purpose Baking Flour. There are two problems with this. First and most important to me, this flour is N A S T Y. It has garbanzo and fava bean flour in it, and those have a very strong and bitter taste. Many bakers, including myself, hate this stuff. Second, I was dissapointed to see that the book even suggests using a mix at all. On the Martha Stewart show when Erin and Martha make the Allergen-Free Cinnamon Toasties, Martha asks as she is stirring the flours together, 'Do you use mixes at your bakery?' Erin answers no. If this is the case, then why on earth is the cookbook directing me to do so? If the recipes had the true list of flours and starches used at the bakery, I would have an easier time making substitutions, like swapping garfava flour for, say, a combo of sorghum or rice flour, or subbing potato starch for arrowroot or cornstarch.3) Coconut oil and agave nectar. These fabulous, spendy, and sometimes elusive ingredients are frequently used in hefty quantities in the book, and unfortunately we are left a somewhat in the dark about the details. Yes, the resources give us brand recommendations (aside: Did you look into the coconut oil source?)

I feel slightly torn about this book. I had pre-ordered it because I have Celiac and have loved every gluten-free thing I have tried at the Babycakes NYC Bakery. Most recipes for gluten free baked goods contain high amounts of sugar, or require mixing your own flours or are all kind of generic and blah. This book promised to be free of those things without compromising taste. However, I've found there's good and bad to being a different cook book. The Good: It's beautiful; the photography is stunning, the products look amazing, it gets you in the mood to bake and have fun with it. I love the personality in it, I love the colour and food shots. It's so nice to have it feel part photo-book and part-recipe instead of the standard recipe books. And the size is nice whether you're cooking or

curled up the couch reading up on it. The recipes are laid out really well; most are just a page which is nice for those of us who don't like long directions and 17 steps. The write-ups about the items and little stories are fun. The celebrity-endorsements are kind of weird (except the "fat pants" - that's pretty awesome). There are lots of different kinds of baked goods to make from cakes to cookies. Recipes I hadn't seen before that look incredibly delicious. No more boring cupcakes and cookies for me! The Myer Lemon and Cherry Cupcakes is on my baking list for sure. The not so good: As a few people have already said, none of Chapter 2 (scones) are gluten free and there's a couple more elsewhere that call for spelt flour. Although Erin makes a comment about spelt in the beginning of the book and how it's not gluten free, it seems odd to have as a tag line on the FRONT of the book "gluten free" - especially since it says "mostly sugar free."

the GOOD:\* the book looks nice. i like the girls and their uniforms. pretty. i have been to the store in NY, and, well, it's a really small store next to chinatown. the book makes the store look much bigger and nicer, but i guess it makes the book look nicer so i marked that as good\* i like the celebrity quotes. although, yes, this is a form of marketing and the fact that i like that thin natalie portman and pamela anderson love the place makes me one big sucker (yes, i feel ashamed that i fall for this marketing stuff!)\* i like the page where erin tells you how to naturally color frosting. neat! have not tried this yet though because...the BAD:\* like everyone else who has tried to make their fabulous frosting (sooo good in the store), mine flopped big time! i'm not a full-time vegan (guilty! i know!) because i do not have really big food allergies, so i do bake regular food as well and i was VERY excited to see that erin's frosting does not require me to heat egg whites, or use my kitchen aid standing mixer (hated washing the thing twice, once for cupcakes, once for frosting usage). unfortunately, after buying tons of ingredients, my frosting was not thick the next morning. i had to junk the whole thing. it also was not sweet enough. the UGLY:\* i don't like extra work. i do not like extra clean-up. i do not like extra reading from other sources when it should all be in the same book. after my frosting disaster, i had to go to Babycakes website and read their entire FAQ section on the cookbook on how to fix the dang frosting. then i had to go to martha stewart's website to find the right recipe.

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