

[PDF] My Berlin Kitchen: A Love Story (with Recipes)

Luisa Weiss - pdf download free book

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Description:

Featured Recipe from Luisa Weiss: Zuckerkuchen (Sugar Cake)

Makes one 10-inch cake

Ingredients

- Butter for the pan
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast (also known as bread machine yeast)
- 1/2 cup whole milk, lukewarm

- 6 tablespoons plus 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 large egg yolk
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus 4 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into small dice
- Pinch of salt

Directions

Butter the bottom and sides of a 10-inch round cake pan. Set aside.

Pour the flour and yeast into a mixing bowl. Add the milk in a thin stream, mixing with a wooden spoon as you pour. Add 6 tablespoons of sugar and the egg yolk to the bowl and mix - the dough will start to come together rather shaggily. Add the melted butter to the mixture and the pinch of salt. Mix until a rough ball starts to form. Dump this ball onto a floured surface and knead for a few minutes until smooth. You may need to add a little flour to keep the dough from sticking, but don't add too much: you want the dough to still be soft and slightly floppy. Form the dough into a ball and place it in the buttered pan. Cover with a clean dish towel and put in a warm, draft-free place for an hour, or until the dough has doubled in bulk.

Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Using your fingers, gently deflate the dough and push it out evenly to fit the pan. Do not push the edges up on the sides of the pan. Then dimple the dough all over with your fingers.

Drop the diced butter into the dimples of the dough. Then sprinkle the entire cake with the remaining sugar. Cover the pan with the dishtowel again and let sit for 20 minutes.

Put the pan in the oven and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the cake is golden brown and bubbling. Remove from the oven and let cool for 15 minutes before cutting and serving. Zuckerkuchen is best served warm, the day it is made.

A Conversation with Luisa Weiss

Q. Do you feel there is one key to successful home cooking? Some people seem innately more talented as cooks as others, but do you feel it is something anyone can do?

A. I do think some people are better cooks than others in the way that some people are better at math than others and some are better at languages than others. That having been said, it seems to me that the simple act of cooking often is the best way to become a good cook. If you make a point of cooking every night or most nights of the week, it's hard to imagine that you won't, one day, become a good cook. Only by doing can you figure out what you like, what you're good at, what makes your culinary heart soar, what makes it sink. So the key to successful home cooking, in my opinion, is to cook. A lot!

Q. When returning to visit family in the United States, Germany or Italy, what is one dish you look most forward to eating in each of these countries?

A. In the US: Chinese food. In Germany: Pflaumenkuchen (yeasted plum cake). In Italy: Pizza al taglio (pizza sold by weight)

Q. What is one thing most people would be surprised to learn about German cuisine?

A. That it's a pretty seasonally driven cuisine. I'm not talking about restaurant fare, which seems to not have much variation, but what people cook at home. Plum cakes in plum season, asparagus only

in the six weeks it's available in the markets, chanterelles only when you can buy them from people who picked them in their backyards that morning. It's true that the Germans do love themselves some sausages and potatoes, but that's not all there is to German cuisine.

Q. Why did you feel it was important to tell your story with *My Berlin Kitchen*?

A. I've always felt pretty alone in the world with my weird situation, my parents so far apart, my life so split between such faraway places. I used to think I was the only person in the world who felt such loneliness--in my peer group, there was no one who had grown up like I did. Processing my life was a pretty solitary act. But when I wrote about little bits of it online, my readers responded to it with such compassion, sympathy and understanding that I realized that there were a lot of universal truths in my experience. Then, when I found myself at such a big crossroads, career-wise and in my personal life, and I felt brave enough to make all the big jumps that I did, I wanted to share what I'd learned. That despite terror and insecurity, living your life honestly is the best way to find happiness. Also, if I manage to make only one international mutt like me feel a little more understood and a little less alone in the world, writing the book will have been worth it.

Review

"Luisa Weiss's piquant memoir has charm, heartbreak, family history, and recipes galore."
—*Elle*

"The new *Julie & Julia*! It's part cookbook and part memoir; you'll finish a chapter and find yourself in the kitchen following the recipe Weiss includes . . . A transcontinental romance about taking risks in life and in the kitchen."
—*Marie Claire*

"A heartwarming (and often mouth-watering) memoir, German-born chef and writer Weiss recounts how . . . through hardship and heartbreak, she found solace among saucepans and stews. . . . Foodies and nonfoodies alike will enjoy chapters brimming with colorful cooking tales and savory recipes."
—Allison Block, *Booklist* (starred review)

"A thoughtful, earnestly winning memoir."
—*Publishers Weekly*

"Readers of Weiss's popular cooking blog know some of her personal history. . . . This memoir fills in the blanks, exploring the loneliness and alienation of a child who never quite feels at home wherever she is . . . and the debilitating heartbreak when an important relationship fails. But there is plenty of joy, too: summers at her grandparents' Italian farmhouse, falling in love, and, always, the pleasures of the kitchen. Each chapter closes with a recipe for a dish referenced in the text, most of which represent one of the places Weiss has called home. . . . This charming food memoir will prove

enjoyable to anyone who loves Laurie Colwin or M.L.K. Fisher.”

—*Library Journal*

“I hope you’re prepared to clear a day or two of your schedule once you open this book, because you’re not going to want to put it down to do anything—well, anything but make a beeline for the kitchen to make a rolled omelet or fake baked beans. Luisa has a way of telling her story that’s nothing short of entrancing.”

—Deb Perelman, creator of Smitten Kitchen

“A beautiful and inspiring story about how we sometimes have to take a leap of faith to follow our life’s passion. I was so charmed by Luisa Weiss’s honesty, vulnerabilities, and beautiful writing—all while craving braised endives. A lovely, remarkable, and delicious tale of the romance of a lifetime.”

—Kathleen Flinn, author of *The Sharper Your Knife, the Less You Cry*

“Luisa Weiss writes with grace and ease about her search for a sense of belonging in *My Berlin Kitchen*. That she also cooks appealing dishes and writes beautifully about food only adds dimension to her wonderful memoir. You will read with intense delight, cheering her on through heartbreak and triumphs.”

—Amanda Hesser, cofounder of Food52 and author of *The Essential New York Times Cookbook*

“*My Berlin Kitchen* is a truly remarkable memoir, told with sensitivity and honesty. Filled with the emotions—and flavors—of a life that spans three cultures and cuisines, this is a book you won’t want to put down, except to make its enticing recipes.”

—David Lebovitz, bestselling author of *The Sweet Life in Paris*

“Luisa’s heartfelt and engrossing memoir will resonate deeply with anyone who’s ever sensed the profound connection between the food we eat and our sense of home.”

—Clotilde Dusoulier, creator of Chocolate & Zucchini and author of *Clotilde’s Edible Adventures in Paris*

“*My Berlin Kitchen* is an aromatic chronicle of love, food, and finding home. Luisa’s fragrant prose will have you longing for her Tomato Bread Soup and smelling her freshly baked Poppy Seed Whirligig Buns. Her quest for heart and hearth is inspiring and touching—and leaves you feeling as if you have found a new friend.”

—Debra Weiner, author of *How to Recognize Your Future Ex-Husband*

“Part culinary journal, part love story, *My Berlin Kitchen* chronicles a young woman’s (often) difficult task of finding her way in the world. With the charm and honesty that is characteristic of her wonderful blog, Luisa Weiss has crafted a book that leaves a deep impression.”

—Heidi Swanson, creator of 101 Cookbooks and bestselling author of *Super Natural Cooking*

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