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Opening Extract from...

The Great British Bake Off Another Slice

Written by

The Great British Bake Off Team

Published by Hodder & Stoughton

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A SHOW-STOPPING SELECTION OF
YOUR FAVOURITE *BAKE OFF* MOMENTS

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Authors: Andy Baker, Andrew Webb

Editorial Director: Nicky Ross

Editor: Briony Gowlett

Executive Editor: Sharon Powers

Consultant Editor: Jo Bunting

Project Editor: Patricia Burgess

Art Director: Mark Read

Designer: Estuary English

Illustrations: Melvyn Evans

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BEFORE THEY WERE BAKERS

Can you identify these pint-sized bakers, who would eventually grow up to bring their baking brilliance to the tent in 2015?



ANSWERS

1. Flora / 2. Ian / 3. Sandy / 4. Mat / 5. Nadiya / 6. Paul / 7. Stuart / 8. Ugne / 9. Marie

GBBO BINGO!

Can you complete your *Great British Bake Off* bingo card? Every time you hear or see a classic *Bake Off* phrase or tradition, mark it off on your board. The first person to get a line (horizontal or vertical) wins!

Step One: Toss a coin to decide which bingo card you want.

Step Two: Settle down to an episode of *GBBO* with your bingo pen at the ready.

Step Three: Every time you hear or see an action marked on your card, cross it off.

Step Four: The first player to complete a horizontal or vertical line wins!

Suggested prize: A cup of tea and a biscuit

CARD 1



CARD 2



AT HOME With ALVIN

What got you into baking?

When my daughter was seven years old, she came home from school and said we needed to bring cakes to the school fair tomorrow. My wife cooks, but she doesn't really bake. At that time I didn't cook or bake, so I got a cookbook from the shelf and made some cupcakes. They sold out and people were asking, 'Who made these!' My daughter was really proud. I made cupcakes for months. I've still got that original muffin tin and I want to pass it on to one of my children.

Tell us about your earliest food memory.

My seventh birthday, in the Philippines. My nan would always bake a Neapolitan cake and bring it to our house. I always looked forward to that.

What's your guilty food pleasure?

Sweets! Though I've recently enjoyed making entremets and mousse-based layered cakes. I'm working on a recipe for one now that has crème brûlée in the middle. I'll also be using a spray to glaze it, so it's quite complicated. After working four 12-hour shifts as a nurse, baking is something I look forward to enjoying at the weekend.

If you could invite anyone past or present around for tea, who would it be and what would you bake?

It's got to be Imelda Marcos! She just fascinates me; she's a larger-than-life personality. I met her once in the Philippines - I saw her eating in a patisserie and asked for her autograph.

If you could bake only one thing, what would it be?

Bread. It's one of those things that I'm really comfortable with and really happy making on a day-to-day basis. I once baked bread every day for three weeks until I felt I got it right. But secretly I don't want to get it right because I'm the sort of person that, once I've perfected something, I want to move on to something else. I don't want to find out I'm doing it right in case I get bored.



When you're not baking, how do you relax?

I like to walk, or sometimes I run. It used to be the thing I did before baking. I do run long distance.

Who do you like to bake for?

It's always got to be my family. I love it when they come down in the morning at the weekend and there's fresh bread. I don't mind getting up at 5.30am to second-prove it.

Which are your five favourite bakes?

Macarons, sans rivel (a Philippino dessert made from layers of buttercream, meringue and chopped cashew nuts), entremets or mousse-based cakes, various breads, balsamic onion batons.

What's your worst baking disaster?

Which one to choose? I've got loads. In 2011 I first tried to make choux pastry for a croquembouche. I was in the kitchen for nine hours, and at the end the whole thing collapsed. It was so frustrating - I wasted all the ingredients. Some of it was edible, but it wasn't a choux pastry croquembouche, so most went in the bin. My wife just shook her head.



What's the most surprising, unusual or interesting thing in your cupboard?

Pomegranate molasses, that's quite unusual. I haven't used it – in fact I can't remember what I bought it for!

What's your favourite kitchen gadget?

I've got this whisk and it's the first one we bought when we came to the UK. When I did *Bake Off*, I took it with me – it's a comfort thing. It's actually broken, the balloon end came undone, so I cut off the ends and now I use the remaining metals bits to flake caramel.

Describe your kitchen at home.

I have a small, basic kitchen. I'm happy with it but I wish I had a bigger one. When we moved to this house, some of my favourite baking trays didn't fit in the oven. When you're looking around a new house you don't take a baking tray with you to see if it fits in the oven, but next time I will!

What's your favourite ingredient to work with?

Vanilla. Whatever you do, if you add vanilla to anything, especially sweet things, it improves it.

Do you keep a recipe notebook?

I do. I'm starting my own collection for the kids. When I was watching previous series of *Bake Off*, I'd see others with their family recipe books, and I never had that. So I'm making a collection so my kids can say, 'This is from my dad, who appeared on *The Great British Bake Off*.'



What did it feel like when you found out you'd been selected for *Bake Off* 2015?

I was at work when I found out, and it was the same feeling as when I saw my newly born children. I'm a big fan of the show: I've applied three times. It was like when you put a shell in your ear and you can't hear anything else! It was like that, amazing. My colleagues were so proud!

As a nurse, do you get given a lot of cake by grateful patients?

It's sweets mainly. But because we're in operating theatres, most of them are asleep, so they don't see us. It's the nurses on the wards who get the treats. They do bring us some, though.

Do you take bakes in to work to help everyone get through a night shift?

Yes I do, especially leaving dos or someone's birthday. People always say, 'Alvin, will you make the cake?' I do bring cake on a regular basis – it's so difficult to say no. I do enjoy it, though.

How did you prepare for *Bake Off*?

When I knew I was going to be on the show, I suddenly forgot how to make a Victoria sponge! Suddenly, I didn't know anything, so I needed to refresh my mind. The standard has got really high each year and it's moved on from basic stuff, so I did lots of reading and research.

What's your favourite *Bake Off* moment from a previous series?

My interest grew with Series Three. John Whaite's final bake, the chocolate glaze with the hair dryer. All my glazes are inspired by that recipe. I'm still trying to achieve that.

Who's your favourite past baker and why?

It's got to be John. I've got both his books. He's great.

