

Ace of Cakes: Inside the World of Charm City Cakes

Duff Goldman , Willie Goldman

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In *Ace of Cakes: Inside the World of Charm City Cakes*, Duff Goldman, Food Network's indomitable "Ace of Cakes," reveals the inspiration behind some of the most outrageous and extraordinary, gravity and reality-defying confectionary creations in the world. An eye-popping collection of photos, illustrations, stories, reflections, collages, and memorabilia celebrating the eccentric Baltimore bakery where everything takes off, *Ace of Cakes* is a truly delectable volume that shows the magic that can happen when creativity is king and "no limits" is the mantra.

Ace of Cakes: Inside the World of Charm City Cakes Details


Date : Published October 20th 2009 by William Morrow Cookbooks

ISBN : 9780061703010

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Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Food and Drink, Food, Cooking, Cookbooks, Biography, Foodie, Autobiography, Memoir, Art, Media Tie In, Tv, Biography Memoir

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From Reader Review Ace of Cakes: Inside the World of Charm City Cakes for online ebook

Courtney says

I love this show and looked forward to reading this book, but I was disappointed with how I didn't really take away much that was new. Most of the book is just different staffers telling their version of the same stories over and over (how the bakery started, how various staffers were hired on, how the pilot was filmed). The last 1/3 of the book especially where every sound editor, producer, camera man, etc. of the show told how the show started became very repetitive. It is probably interesting to these people and their friends and family, but doesn't offer much to those of us not directly involved with the bakery or the show. It seems like they just went to every staffer and said write a page on the bakery. The pictures are great though, but I think the personal "behind the cake" stories sprinkled throughout would have made a better book on their own.

Ubalstech says

You've heard of Duff Goldman. You may not know his name, but you know his work. As the owner of Charm City Cakes, he makes his way into your living room every week with Ace of Cakes, the reality show that documents the cakes made for various events and the stories behind them.

This is not a cookbook, but rather a documentation of how Charm City Cakes came to be and how it came to be on TV. There are also bios of all the cast and crew of the show, plus details on how the show is produced. I, for one, finally learned what a writer on a reality show actually does.

This book also includes lots, and lots of photos. Photos of finished cakes, photos of cakes in progress, photos of the various bands to which the Charm City crew all belong.

If I had any criticism, it would be that the cake gallery is too small. I would have preferred page after page of cakes and a short paragraph about the cake rather than the six page fold out that looked more like a yearbook collage.

Still worth picking up.

Renee Wallace says

I knew when I ordered this book that it is NOT a cookbook, or how-to book, though there are plenty of fun tips included!

This review could get bogged down in details, because there was not a page of this book on which I did not find something I absolutely loved--the tips, the photos, the fun facts. The best word for this one is "lush"--the incredible photos of cakes which are eye-candy masterpieces; the photos of people to whom viewers feel a connection; the details of what it is "really like" to work at Charm City cakes... the list goes on.

You have to LOVE the show to LOVE this book--but, isn't that obvious? If someone buys this book

expecting it to detail for them how to start their own Charm City--forget it; but even the "show-uninitiated" could get pulled in by simply thumbing through this book. Show-LOVERS, such as myself, will only love the show all the more, as a result of reading ACE OF CAKES.

Some favorite bits: Mary Alice explaining herself explaining the no-visitors policy (I would need to keep Valium handy!); any one of the decorators telling his/her own story; anything, and everything, DUFF.

Duff says he does not consider himself particularly gifted. Where he errs in that statement is in the lack of detail. While he may not consider himself a gifted cake-decorator (I know; none of us who love him can understand THAT), his real gift, to my mind, is his incredible joie de vivre. I guess he must have a bad day and be a grouch sometimes; but it is hard to picture it. Also, my favorite episodes are the ones in which he donates an incredible cake to an important cause. What a large heart this "hairy baker" (An MA quote) has!!!

I cannot imagine this one getting fewer than five stars in a review; but then, I think ACE OF CAKES is one of the best things on television. The winning ingredients are the people, then the cakes.

Ingrid M. says

As a fan of the show, and the work the team creates, I was delighted to pick this book up. The interviews were quirky and fun to read, and it was cool to learn about the Charm City Cakes story. I think it awesome that Duff et al. have come up with a business model that is both innovative and successfully spirited. It's so great to come across a team as talented as this one who not only believes in the aesthetic beauty of cakes, but focuses a lot on the functionality and their ability to execute complex cakes. It's pretty inspiring and had me wanting to whip out the eggs and flour. The only thing I didn't like about the book was that it got a bit repetitive and tedious reading about how EVERY single person on staff and crew came to CCC, but I suppose that those who want to know what the producers thought of the initial concept and idea would be thrilled by how deep the book went. Overall it was a fun read, and the photos of the cakes were great. It seems like a wondrous place to work.

Jessica says

I'm a casual viewer of the show *Ace of Cakes*, but definitely not a die-hard superfan, which is what you need to be to really enjoy this book. I thought that it would be more of a glossy coffee-table book of their amazing cakes but most of the pictures are actually really small and grainy and there's a lot of text. It's more of a behind-the-scenes documentary of a book, complete with bios of each of the decorators and TV production staff and a summary of how Charm City Cakes came to be. I didn't really need all this information and I'm not really sure anybody does but it was sort of a fun book to skip around with.

Sophie says

It was really interesting to find out the back story on Duff, Charm City Cakes, and how *Ace of Cakes* was started. Pretty inspiring actually. And lots of eye-candy cakes! I really enjoyed the "in his/her own words" sections with the different decorators / icers / bakers, and learning about how they came to be part of CCC.

On the negative side... there were a lot of typos in this book. I also found the last chapter, which included perspectives from the various producers / creators/ onsite crew really repetitive; how many versions of the same story did I really need?

Anyway, I'd recommend it for fans of the show looking to know more about their favorite cake people.

Gina says

What better way to celebrate achieving my Reading challenge than with a cake.....book! Ace of Cakes is a fantastic read, offering a genuine insight into the staff of Charm City Cakes and the crew who make the magic work behind the camera.

Everything you see on the show is everything you get - from reading the stories of the staff and crew, you fully understand what makes them tick and why they truly love their work. It's fascinating to read about the friendships that were born outside of Charm City Cakes, especially the great friendship between Mary Alice and Duff and their adoration of the Lost Boys. Reading about everyone's career and academic history shows how they have brought that experience to Charm City Cakes and captured it in their wonderful cake creations, in particular Geof (swoon) - his previous job was building models for an architectural company, that helps explain why he can build those absolutely awesome buildings from cake and fondant, that is one talented bloke!

Charm City Cakes is slowly but surely knocking Google off my top spot of places I would love to work, (but hey, I am open to offers from either) - computer geeks to cake geeks - I love them both!

Melissa says

We bought this for the girls, since Ace of Cakes is their favorite show Of All Time, but I'm the one who spent most of Christmas afternoon reading it! I appreciate Duff's "well, we've never done that before, but what the hell, let's figure out how" attitude towards trying new things. The biggest compliment I can give to this title, which isn't a how-to and it isn't even a cookbook, is that it made me want to go buy some fondant, bake a couple of little cakes, and play.

Karin says

A beautiful book, but more of a coffee table one, not something to read straight through.

Megan says

Never saw the show. Not sure why I picked this up. Glad they are in baltimore a city I love!

paula says

Page 154! My picture of my parents' 50th anniversary cake! It's teeny tiny, but it's there!

Ok now that that's out of the way. The book is not what you might expect. It is not a big beautiful glossy stroke book of the exciting and unusual cakes that Duff and his posse have created. Quite honestly, I think this is because they didn't always take great pictures of the cakes. But it is awfully entertaining nonetheless, with sections such as "The Bands of Charm City Cakes" and profiles of the nonconformist bakers and artists on the crew.

When my mom and I sat down with Duff and showed him the extremely weird, extremely intricate china pattern border that we wanted on the cake, he did not bat an eyelash. And the cake came out GORGEOUS. So the other night, after waiting in the rain an hour and a half to get a copy signed for mom and dad, I pointed out our cake to Katie, who had decorated it. "Oh! I remember that cake!" she said. "That cake was HARD!" I briefly considered the fact that that cake cost more than my mortgage payment, and I was tempted to say, "GOOD!" but in the end, I didn't.

Joanna Wilson says

I love watching 'Ace of Cakes' on the Food Network and so I picked this book from its shelf at the library. I've written about the third season Christmas episode in my encyclopedia 'Tis the Season TV.' And, I was actually at the Lebowski-Fest in Louisville, Kentucky when they shot the episode 'The Big Cakeowski' for the fifth season. Yes, I got a piece of the White Russian-flavored cake that they prepared in honor of the movie 'The Big Lebowski' and it was DELICIOUS! However, this book is already VERY out of date since the TV series is still in production. That's what makes this book only a promotional device--it's out of date before they even release it. It's NOT a good book for TV fans--it's only good for readers that want a superficial look at the bakery, its employees and what happened several years ago on the TV series.

Tiffany says

I MUST HAVE THIS BOOK!!!

And now I have this book... now I must read this book.

Well... I wasn't as happy with this book as I'd hoped/expected to be. It was good, but...I don't know. It just felt too light. There was some good behind-the-scenes stuff--like what the designers do when they're not designing cakes, what the bakery's like when it's not being filmed, and duties/responsibilities of the production team--but not as much as I was hoping for. There was a lot of history of Duff, his brother/co-executive producer Willie, and Charm City Cakes, but it sometimes felt like the same story was being told over and over.

So, I don't know... there were lots of impressive pictures of cakes, and we get to know some of the designers better, and I finally found out what a writer does on a reality show, but it still.... no pun intended, but it fell flat. It wasn't quite a caketaastrophe, but it also wasn't the Ace of behind-the-scenes/backhistory books.

CB says

“Before we get started,” say the Goldman brothers in their introduction, “we’d like to define what this book is not: it’s not a cookbook or a how-to manual.” Thank goodness. When I first heard about the Ace of Cakes book, I was dubious to say the least. It didn’t seem in keeping with the character of the show or its madcap leader to monetize success by schlepping recipes. Instead, they gave this book a very clear purpose as a “fun, visual, colorful scrapbook,” which was absolutely the right path to take.

[Read my full review here](#)

Laura says

i am a fan of this show and have watched it since it started .. the book is amazing .. i really like the way they set it up .. the pieces on each of charm ciity cakes employees, lay out of bakery, pictures are fantastic, quotes throughout book are a great touch .. i am a HuGe MaRy aLiCe and GeoF fan :) .. if you like the show - you'll definately enjoy the book .. as DuFF says "it's not the wand, it's the wizard"
