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Great British Bake Off: baking courses in Britain and beyond

As the winner of the Great British Bake Off is announced, we round up where to improve your baking skills – including a course with a former winner



England's legendary tea rooms, Betty's of Harrogate, is the place to go if you want to rustle up a blackberry and lemon tart, or learn how to produce the perfect gingersnap. Photo: GETTY

By Adam Newey

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Nancy Birtwhistle has defied the bookmakers and emerged as the winner of the fifth series of the Great British Bake-Off.

So where can you learn to emulate her exceptional culinary skills? Here we would up the best cooking courses right across Britain.

UK courses

John Whaite's Perfect Afternoon Tea

This one-day course will give you an authentic taste of The Great British Bake Off, with the lesson from John Whaite, the winner of the third series. Learn to make chocolate orange eclairs, passionfruit meringue tartlets and manchego and chorizo scones.

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Location: Leiths School of Food and Wine, London

Price: £145

Contact: leiths.com

Read more: [London ten best afternoon teas](#)

Cakes & Bakes

The cookery school, run by northern England's legendary tea rooms, Betty's of Harrogate, is the place to go if you want to rustle up a blackberry and lemon tart, or learn how to produce the perfect gingersnap.

Location: Betty's Cookery School, Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Price: £180

Contact: bettyscookeryschool.co.uk

Read more: [Yorkshire travel guide](#)

The Yeast Trio

Paul Merry is the doyen of British bread teachers, bringing 40 years of artisan experience to bear in this one-day introduction to three varieties of yeast. He also runs two- and three-day courses, which cover everything from starting to bake to those who are planning to go professional.

Location: Cann Mills, Shaftesbury, Dorset

Price: from £175

Contact: panary.co.uk

Bread Baking at River Cottage

This one-day introductory course at River Cottage covers all the basics, from getting to know different types of flour to kneading techniques. There are also plenty of longer courses covering such things as pies, cakes and sweet pastries, and gluten-free baking.

Location: River Cottage HQ, Park Farm, Axminster, Devon

Price: from £156

Contact: rivercottage.net



River Cottage HQ (Photo: Alamy)

Sourdough Masterclass with Dan Lepard

If you'd like to start getting to grips with the mysteries of baking with a wild yeast culture, look no further than the Cookery School in London, where Dan Lepard runs this one-day class around once a month. An excellent introduction to sourdough breads.

Location: Cookery School, Little Portland Street, London

Price: £230

Contact: cookeryschool.co.uk

Classic British Cakes

This course, run above the baker's/butcher's in Chipping Sodbury high street, promises to be "the ultimate baking experience for cake lovers" - perfect your Victoria sponge, burnish your Bakewell tart and discover new ways with fondant fancies ...

Location: Hobbs House Bakery, High Street, Chipping Sodbury, Gloucestershire

Price: £145

Contact: hobbshousebakery.co.uk

Bread Making Class

For an insight into the way an artisan bakery is run, these classes at the E5 Bakehouse in east London are hard to beat. Run each Saturday, they typically cover pain de campagne, rye bread, ciabatta and bagels, all made with wild yeast.

Location: E5 Bakehouse, Mentmore Terrace, London E8

Price: £120

Contact: e5bakehouse.com

Milling & Grain

If you really want to get back to basics, how about learning how to mill your own grain? At Little Salkeld Watermill in Cumbria, you can do just that, with this one-day class on the ins and outs of grinding wheat, oats and rye the old-fashioned way, in one of the country's few remaining water-powered mills.

Location: Little Salkeld Watermill, Penrith, Cumbria

Price: £75

Contact: organicmill.co.uk



Little Salkeld, Cumbria (Photo: Alamy)

Croissant & Viennoiserie Masterclass

Mastering the art of traditional patisserie is notoriously difficult. Join the great French baker Richard Bertinet for some expert tips in this one-day hands-on guide to pain au raisin, pain au chocolat and the like.

Location: The Bertinet Kitchen, St Andrew's Terrace, Bath

Price: £210

Contact: thebertinetkitchen.com

Microbakin'

Those who want to take their baking a stage further and set up their own business could do no better than attend Mick Hartley's intensive, one-to-one course, held over two days, which will tell you everything you need to know about the nuts and bolts of running a microbakery.

Location: Bethesda, Gwynedd, north Wales

Price: £250

Contact: partisanbakingcourses.wordpress.com

Wood-fired Oven Management

Using an electric oven doesn't come close to the experience of baking with a wood-fired oven, and Rick Coldman's 7ft x 5ft beast at Mair's Bakehouse in Carmarthenshire, designed by the legendary Alan Scott, is a true joy to behold. As well as one-day bread-baking classes (£90), he also offers this one- to three-day bespoke course on oven management in a busy artisan bakery, covering everything from wood supply to baking in the unique environment of a retained-heat oven.

Location: Mair's Bakehouse, Cwmdud, Carmarthenshire

Price: £150 per day

Contact: mairsbakehouse.co.uk; best to contact Rick directly at richard.coldman@btinternet.com

Festive Baking: Christmas Edition

It may still be months away, but Christmas is coming and at the Lighthouse Bakery you can get ahead of the game with this one-day course that will teach you how to make such European goodies as German stollen, Provençal pompe à l'huile and the Finnish festive rye bread known as joululimppa, along with the ultimate shortcrust pastry for your mince pies.

Location: The Lighthouse Bakery School, Ockham, East Sussex

Price: £175

Contact: lighthousebakery.co.uk



The Great British Bake Off contestants (Photo: BBC)