

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Toastie Heaven

Karen Saunders

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About the Book

All too often a memory of our distant student past, toasties are the ultimate no-fuss snack, prepared in seconds and ready to eat in just a few minutes. With just a couple of basic ingredients, delicious economical meals can be made in minutes, providing tasty snacks and sandwiches for every part of the day. With a few added extras, sweet and savoury gourmet toasties can take tired taste buds on an entirely new adventure. *Toastie Heaven* explores variations from the conventional, to the extravagant, quirky and indulgent. From classic toasties like Tuna, Sweetcorn and Pepper Melt, to vegetarian options like Brie, Redcurrant and Watercress toasties and even sweet desserts like Bread and Butter Pudding Toasties and Toffee Apple Toasties, there is a recipe for everyone. A must-have item perfect for people living on their own, children and students, *Toastie Heaven* is the ultimate book for anyone wanting quick and tasty snacks with minimum effort and maximum taste.

About the Author

Karen Saunders is the author of *The Breadmaker Bible*, *Traditional Breads for Your Breadmaker* and *Tips for Your Breadmaker*, all published by Ebury Press, as well as the small books *Allinson Bread*, which sold more than 250,000 copies (mainly through Sainsburys), and *Allinson Continental Deli Cookbook*, which sold more than 125,000. She is a qualified home economist and an expert in breadmaking and works closely with the Allinson Baking Club, developing recipes and offering help and advice to members. Karen lives in Somerset with her husband and two children.

Toastie Heaven



Karen Saunders



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introducing toastie heaven

Welcome to *Toastie Heaven* - the little book that will revolutionise how you use your sandwich toaster. Whether it's been stuck in the back of your kitchen cupboard for years or you've just invested in a new toastie maker, this book is the essential 'must have' guide to ensure you get the very best out of your sandwich toaster.

Toasted sandwich makers are the ultimate gadgets for preparing quick and nutritious meals and snacks for one - so they're perfect for those living alone. And with a wealth of good-looking models now on the market, you'll be happy to give yours pride of place in the kitchen, meaning the sandwich toaster is always to hand whenever you need it.

Many sandwich toasters make two rounds of sandwiches and have triangular recesses in the plates (although single-round and larger four-round models are also available). The recesses in the plates are very important and set toasted sandwich makers apart from contact grills and panini makers. The recesses mean that runny, liquid fillings can be used which, in turn, greatly increases the choice of ingredients you can have in a sandwich and the variety of dishes you can make in your toaster.

When planning this book I set out to achieve three things: to produce a collection of recipes that could be used throughout the day for as many meal occasions as possible; to show that toasties can be varied, nutritious and tasty; and to ensure that you could use your sandwich toaster instead of the oven or other cooking appliances to save on energy when cooking for one. Having been a student on a tight budget I remember the reluctance to put the oven on for a single item; and later in life during major house renovations I've been in a situation where, for a good few months, a toasted sandwich maker and a camping gas stove

were my only means of cooking food. Together these two experiences taught me to be creative and to always question why the sandwich toaster couldn't be used to cook a wider range of dishes - hence when asked to write this book, I knew I could take toasties to an entirely new dimension.

With essential hints and tips that will help overcome the most common toastie problems and over 100 tasty recipes for meals and snacks throughout the day - this little book is all you'll need for great-tasting toasties. And, with new techniques showing how you can use your toastie maker instead of the oven for calzone, scones, pasties and pancakes, you'll discover how using the toasted sandwich maker will help save washing-up and total cooking energy compared with traditional techniques.

toastie tips

- Take the time to read the instructions provided by the manufacturer of your sandwich toaster and make sure you are familiar with how to operate the machine before you start to cook.
- Before using your sandwich maker for the first time season the plates. See your manufacturer's instruction book or brush the plates lightly with a little sunflower oil, close the lid, switch on the toaster and heat for 5 minutes. Turn off and leave to cool. It's worth making a note to re-season the plates from time to time to ensure your plates remain non-stick.
- If you're a serious toastie fan I would highly recommend buying a heatproof pastry brush (for brushing oil onto the plates) and a heatproof thin plastic spatula (for removing toasties safely from the machine) as these two items will make using your toaster both easier and safer.
- Always ensure your toaster has reached cooking temperature before placing your sandwich inside. Most models have a heat indicator light to show this.
- Take care when putting sandwiches into the toaster and especially when releasing the catch and taking them out. Steam often puffs out of the toaster when the lid is lifted so ALWAYS wear oven gloves. Ease the sandwich out of the toaster with a plastic spatula.
- Clean your sandwich toaster well after each use following your manufacturer's instructions. NEVER use metal utensils or abrasive pads and cleaning products, as they will damage the non-stick plates.

choosing toastie ingredients

Medium-sliced bread from a large loaf is the best size for your sandwich toaster. You can choose virtually any variety of bread - from white and brown through to wheatgerm and oatmeal. If using crusty or home-baked bread cut slices from a large loaf and remove any hard crusts before making your sandwich.

Very fresh bread will not brown as well as day-old bread. In some recipes I have stated day-old bread, as it's a little drier and will absorb more liquid from the filling.

I have used a range of other sandwich 'outers' throughout this book and have had particular success with wheat tortillas (a type of flatbread), pitta bread, shortcrust and puff pastry, pizza dough and croissant dough.



my basic toastie pizza dough

This variation on classic pizza dough uses more oil than normal, which helps ensure the dough doesn't stick and also means it cooks to a crisp outer crust when used in the sandwich maker.

This recipe makes enough dough for two rounds of toasties. If you only want to make one round, the remaining dough can be refrigerated or frozen for later.

MAKES ENOUGH FOR 2 ROUNDS OF TOASTIES

400g strong white (bread) flour

1 tsp salt

1 tsp sugar

1 tsp Easybake yeast

2 tbsp olive oil

1.5 cups warm water

- Place the flour, salt and sugar into a bowl and sprinkle over the yeast.
- Mix to a soft dough with the oil and water.
- Knead the dough on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes and then use as directed in the recipe.

tips to prevent sticking

Even though toasted sandwich makers come with non-stick plates that are seasoned ([see here](#)) prior to use, it is still advisable to give your sandwiches a little extra help to prevent sticking. Generally, I use one (and sometimes two) of the following methods.

- Brushing the plates with sunflower oil and wiping off any excess prior to preheating. This gives the lowest-fat option and gives a traditional toast-style crust to your sandwich.
- Brushing the plates with sunflower oil and preheating the machine and/or brushing bread on the outside of the sandwich with sunflower oil. When used on white bread this gives a lovely light, crisp outer crust.
- Buttering the outside of the sandwich with soft butter or margarine. This is probably the best-known method and gives a 'fried' flavour and a slightly crispy outer crust to the toastie.

NEVER use low-fat spread or any spread high in water, such as an olive-oil-based spread, on the outside of your sandwich as it will NOT prevent sticking. Use butter, sunflower spread (designed for cooking), margarine or sunflower oil.

toastie techniques

I have learned an awful lot having developed and tested hundreds of toastie ideas for this book and, in short, I have concluded that the technical expertise comes with being able to hold enough filling to make the sandwich a delight to eat, without making a huge mess of the machine. Manufacturers understandably urge on the side of caution, recommending modest filling quantities, but I found that sometimes a little more was needed. As a result some of my methods, like gently resting the lid on top of the sandwich for a few minutes before sealing the sandwich toaster completely shut, has meant that I can get a greater variety of taste and textures into the sandwich without the filling leaking out.

My expertise in breadmaking has also proved invaluable. Understanding that brown and wholemeal loaves will absorb more liquid than white ones can be the difference between success and failure in the sandwich maker; so I have endeavoured to choose the best bread to complement every sandwich filling in terms of taste, texture and its ability to contain the filling.

As with all cooking there is an element of trial and error, as every toasted sandwich maker will have a slightly different capacity and cooking temperature. So use your common sense together with your manufacturer's recommendations, and use my recipes as a guide to success in your own machine.

For the widest universal appeal, I have generally given quantities for one round of toasted sandwiches, except where recipe quantities make this impracticable. If you want to make two or more rounds of sandwiches simply multiply the ingredients quantities to meet your requirements.

