



Boss the Basics – Course 2

Lesson 6: Soups & Stews

In Course 1 we learnt how to make a good chicken stock. In this class, we'll be looking at how to make comforting dishes made by cooking ingredients in a stock or liquid. There are many similarities in the method used to make soups and stews, the main difference being the amount of liquid used, the cooking time, and thickness. Obviously, a soup uses lots of liquid and doesn't take long to cook, while a stew involves less liquid and usually a cut of meat that requires long, slow cooking. In this class, you'll learn how to make a basic puréed vegetable soup, a chunky fish chowder, a quick gazpacho, and a slow-cooked beef stew. These are basic methods which you will go on to use again and again, and modify to your own tastes.

Skills: Knife skills; sweating vegetables; meat cuts; browning meat; slow cooking meat; simmering; reducing; seasoning; poaching fish; thickening with flour; blending a soup.

Lesson 7: Rice

Rice is one of the world's most important staple foods and has been cultivated for over 9,000 years. The world of rice is huge and varied and offers a myriad different varieties of this versatile cereal grain and countless ways of cooking it. In this class we will look at different types of rice and cooking methods. You'll learn foolproof ways of cooking long-grain rice (absorption and baked) and how to make a pilaf. Then we'll take a look at medium and short-grain rice and learn how to make a risotto, a rice pudding and paella.

Skills: Learning about different types of rice, their properties and how to cook them. Learn ratios of rice to liquid and cooking times. Cooking rice using the absorption method, stirred rice (risotto); unstirred rice (pilaf, paella); baked rice (rice pudding).

Lesson 8: Cakes

Not dissimilar to the world of rice, the universe of cake baking will take you to infinity and beyond! In this class, we are going to pare back to a few basic cake making techniques and recipes that, as usual, will provide you with a springboard to your own creativity (and maybe enter Bake Off?). You will learn how to make a simple sponge cake using the "creaming method", a deliciously moist chocolate fudge cake using the "all in one" method, and an oil-based, gluten free citrus polenta cake drenched in a citrus syrup. Finally, I'll show you how to make basic buttercream and chocolate ganache icings.

Skills: Using eggs as a raising agent; creamed cake method; all-in-one cake method; oil-based cake method; gluten-free baking; baking with alternative flours; drenching a cake in syrup; buttercream icing; chocolate ganache; preparing cake tins;

Lesson 9: Cookies, Biscuits & Brownies

While cakes rely on eggs and added liquids for a soft, spongy texture, cookies and biscuits have a different liquid content, fat-to-flour ratio and baking process. Brownies lie somewhere in between and are classified as "bar cookies" (cut into bar shapes, not eaten at the pub!). In this class, you'll learn how to make a basic chocolate chip cookie and the properties that give cookies their delicious chewy bite. We'll move on to look at a range of drier, firmer biscuits including digestives and savoury sablés and a multiseed cracker. Finally, I'll show you how to make an excellent chocolate brownie.



Skills: Melted chocolate batter brownie method; spooned cookie method; shortbread technique; rolled & cut biscuit method; basic savoury sablé recipe; log & cut method; cracker method; preparing baking sheets

Lesson 10: Salads & dressings

Oh, the joy of a really fabulous salad! There's no comparison between a well-crafted, deliciously balanced salad and a really bad one - limp lettuce, rock hard flavourless tomatoes and watery cucumber coated in an industrially produced, UPF-laden dressing. So in this final lesson of Boss the Basics Course 2, we'll be looking at how to make a perfect green salad with an excellent vinaigrette which will be a canvas for you to add your own salad creativity to. From there, we'll make a Caesar salad with a proper Caesar dressing, then look at ratios and dressing for coleslaw and potato salads. Finally, we'll make a couple of classic "composed" salads - Niçoise, and a lovely retro prawn cocktail.

Skills: making a vinaigrette - "unstable emulsion"; making croutons; making a hybrid egg-based emulsion; shredded vegetable salad / coleslaw; composed salad - Niçoise; marie-rose dressing

Boss the Basics Course 2 costs £250 for a course of five 2-2.5 hour classes. For class dates and times, please click the booking link on the website.