HIGH ALTITUDE BAKING ADJUSTMENTS

Mountain Mama COOKS

Why Does High Altitude Matter?

Anything 3500+ feet above sea level is considered high altitude. In a nut shell- as altitude increases, air pressure decreases. This affects baked goods in two main ways: they will rise more easily, and lose moisture faster. Liquids evaporate more quickly since water boils at lower temperatures. Because leavening occurs faster, gas bubbles expand too quickly and create unstable baked goods. They rise too quickly- before they can stabilize- and then collapse. Quicker evaporation also has ramifications. Baked goods dry out easier, they're more prone to sticking, and sugar becomes more concentrated.

What Can You Do About It?

The good news is that with a few basic adjustments you can avoid high altitude baking disasters. I've created a chart with some helpful guidelines to help you convert your favorite recipes. So much of high altitude can be trial and error. As altitude goes up, more adjustments may be necessary. I usually start with one or two adjustments at a time and make a note of what worked and didn't. Good luck!

oven temperature	Increase oven temp by 15-25 degrees over 5000 feet.	Evaporation happens more quickly the higher in elevation you go so the idea is that a higher oven temperature will stablize the structue of the baked good(s).
baking time	decrease by 5-10 minutes per hour of baking time	Baking at higher temperatures means baked goods will be done sooner.
sugar	Decrease by 1-2 tablespoons per cup	Sugar concentrates at higher altitudes which can weaken the structure of what your baking.
liquid	Increase liquid by 1 tablespoon at 3,000 feet. Add 1/2 tablespoon for each additional 1,000 feet.	Extra liquid helps baked goods from drying out due to higher oven temperatures and extra evaportation.
flour	Add 1 tablespoon per cup of flour at 3,000 feet. Add an additional 1 tablespoon per cup for each additional 1500 feet.	Adding an extra bit of flour helps strengthen the structure of the baked good(s).
leavening	Decrease leavening agent by 1/8 teaspoon per 1 teaspoon at 5000 feet. Decrease by 1/4 teaspoon per 1 teaspoon 6000 feet to 7500 feet.	Leavening is what gives baked goods their rise/poof. Because leavening agents have more power at altitutde, baked goods rise too quickly- before they can stabalize- and then fall flat. Decreasing the l eavening allows the baked goods to rise more slowly and stabilze.
eggs	Always use large eggs and take care not to over beat	Overbeating the eggs creates too much air and decreases the stableness of the baked good(s).
yeast	You may need to decrease the amount of yeast by 15-20%. Give dough an extra rise by punching it down twice before forming it OR let it rise in the refrigerator to slow down the rise and allow the flavor to develop.	Yeast bread dough rises more rapidly at higher altitudes and the rising period is shortened. Yeast doughs can easily over-rise if not watched carefully. Good flavor is dependenton the length of the rise so adjust by using one of the two methods mentioned.

Get more high altitude tips and tried and true high altitude recipes at **www.mountainmamacooks.com**