

Baking and Me

I've always been keen on cooking and you'd often find me in the kitchen preparing the evening meal. **(1)**..... It started because of my young children, who were always ready to bake and loved the chance to make cakes at the weekend. I never realised at the time how important it would become in my life. What started as a way of entertaining the kids became a passion for me and one that I love to pass on to others. **(2)**.....

To begin with there's the preparation. Unlike normal cooking, baking requires a great deal of care. **(3)**..... Cooking a spaghetti or a curry does not require the same degree of attention. I find this interesting as being careful like this is not something that I have ever been strong at. Baking gives me the opportunity to challenge myself to get things right.

Then there's baking itself. Whether it's a loaf of bread or some of my favourite cakes, for around 30 minutes my attention is on the oven. I love going back into the kitchen every so often to check to see if the cake or loaf is rising as it should do, and my eyes are always on the clock to make sure I don't leave it in too long. **(4)**..... This is why people selling a house or flat are often advised to have a loaf baking in the oven when buyers arrive!

And finally, there's the chance to eat what you've made. **(5)**..... But cutting a slice and discovering it's just right inside as well is always extremely pleasing. After testing to see if it's OK, I love calling the family out to the kitchen to invite them all to try a piece. So yes, it's a hobby I think will stay with me for life, despite the fact that it might mean I put on weight!

- A The smell of freshly baked bread makes a house feel like home.
- B On one occasion, my baking was not successful.
- C So, what is it that makes baking such an enjoyable experience?
- D The cake or loaf might look perfectly cooked from outside.
- E However, the children always agreed to clear up the mess in the kitchen.
- F But my love of baking only began a few years ago.
- G Most of these problems have been due to the oven.
- H Ingredients need to be measured out exactly.

