



## Worshipful Company of Bakers: Short Course Report

Your name:	Megan Roberts
College/Employer:	University College Birmingham

<p>What new skills and knowledge did this course give you?</p>	<p>This course gave me an outlook on another culture's bakery products and market. With the three days within the academy I learnt how to create a vast range of cakes, rolls, breads, pretzels and more, for me the best thing was to learn other ways of creating products I am familiar with and introducing me to products that I am not familiar with. The theory lesson provided me with a range of new information regarding ways of baking with rye and hydrating the bread dough.</p>  <p><i>(Discussion of how hydration levels effect the structure of bread)</i></p>  <p><i>(Hydration of rye for the next days dough)</i></p> <p>The academy also gave us online access to all the documents and recipes which have been incredibly valuable and has allowed to go over the documents and research more, the lectures at the academy have also been excellent and returning emails regarding questions and even gave us some rye sour to take home which I have used to make my own rye bread at home with the knowledge I received at the academy.</p>
<p>How do you think you will use these skills in your studies and/or workplace?</p>	<p>I have already run back to work shouting about the new products we need to make and with help from the lectures at the academy I even managed to fix a problem we were having with a product. With all the recipes the academy provided it gave me chance to try new recipes. I cannot express how valuable this has been to my career, I</p>

will be starting a role in research and development very soon and this course provided me with so much information and skills that I can take with me to my new job and from this it has given me confidence and a better understand of how some products work.

Did you notice any cultural differences between baking in Germany and baking in the UK?

How do you think these might influence your baking in the future?

There is defiantly a strong influence of rye within the bread in Germany and a strong use of sourdoughs and preferments within a range of products including stollen, pretzels and ginger bread. I found this really exciting as I am really interested in both of these, with the demand of rye products not being that strong within the UK compared to wheat bread, it can be hard to improver my skills and knowledge on how to use rye and the science behind it, therefore this opportunity gave me the chance to ask the experts and discuss what issues I am having and more importantly get hand on experience on how to use rye and different methods. Secondly the use of sourdough is something that I love and the demand for sourdough, sourdough style and preferment products within the UK is largely increasing and from this experience I gained so much knowledge on different ways of using sourdoughs and preferments and things that I hadn't looked into such as how to stiffen a sourdough and store it, how to use sourdough effectively as a flavour and how to create different acid profiles.



*(Piping of our ginger breads)*

*(Rye sourdough)*





(Rye breads with cherry)



(Shaping our pretzels)

Were there any products and/or baking methods that you found particularly interesting or unusual?

I definitely found all of the products we produced differently interesting in their own way however the ones that really struck out to me were the ginger bread we made as it was something I had not tasted before as there ginger bread is more of a fermented spiced raised product compared to the English biscuit version of gingerbread and something that defiantly stuck out to me was the use of spices within these products and how the spices are incorporated, some products that we make had their own spice blend profiles such as the stollen and gingerbread and a Bavarian bread which was made with a combination of seeds and spices such as caraway seeds, fennel seeds, and cloves but the interesting thing about the spices especially within the bread is how it is incorporated as the spices were heated to release flavour then blended with flour to keep the flavour and the oils that are full of flavour within the dough and from this the flavour profile within the bread was unlike anything I have ever had before and something I will definitely be trying.



(Pretzels ready for the prover).



(The group decorating our cakes)



*(Decorating our gingerbreads)*



*(Our rye sourdough breads dusted and ready for the oven)*



*(Our finished pretzels)*



*(Finished display of some of our products)*

Did the course live up to your expectations?  
What for you were the highlights?  
Were there any

This course absolutely smashed my expectations, I cannot express how grateful I am to the worshipful company of bakers for an experience of a lifetime. From the start of the course to end everything was amazing.

- To start, meeting everyone at the airport and travelling together was very exciting as it gave us chance to meet and greet before we reached the

disappointments?  
What recommendations  
can you suggest that  
would improve this  
course for future  
students?

academy.

- The dinners provided by the course were incredible it allowed us all to bond which I felt gave us more confidence to go for it in the lessons because we have all become such good friends no one was afraid to get stuck in.
  - The personalised whites made me so excited, it was such a lovely touch that I wore with pride within the bakery.
  - The structure of the lessons with the academy was the perfect balance of theory, watching, learning and hand on experience.
  - The academy was incredible, we received exceptional hospitality, food, accommodation and scenery.
  - The guided city tour was a lovely touch that I thoroughly enjoyed
- I honestly have had no disappointments or recommendations for this course other than to let us stay there forever as every single member in my course loved there times there and on the coach home we were all very sad that this experience was coming to an end. I met such an amazing group of people and we have all become very close.

I would just like to comment that the baking industry can have unsociable hours and therefore this can be challenge when it comes to keeping friends and these trips allow us to meet people in the same situation and to build new friendships and connections throughout the industry which is really important not only for the purpose of friendships but this brings the industry closer, because you connect with people all over the UK and within different job roles and for me this keeps the baking industry well connected and a community feel.



*(Group photo during our amazing meal in the castle)*



*(Group selfie on our first night in Weinheim)*



*(Group selfie after our tour of Weinheim)*

*(Display of all the products were produced in practical lessons)*



*(Certificate presentation with the director and the lectures)*

Were the travelling and accommodation arrangements satisfactory?

The travelling and accommodation was perfect. The airports were easy to get to and from, the transfers were quick and comfortable and the accommodation at the academy was incredible with the most amazing views.

*(Views of the academy)*



*(View from the bedroom within the academy)*

I would highly recommend this academy as the classrooms were immaculate and well equipped, the rooms were lovely, the courtyard and dining rooms were perfect and every member at the academy was delightful including the other students. I loved it that much I am considering returning to do the summer diploma.