

Raspberry

RUGELACH

By Jessie Sheehan
info@mainstreetmag.com

Rugelach, for the uninitiated, are extremely buttery little cookies, with a bit of tang, and an awful lot of flakiness, from a cream cheese-enriched dough. They are filled with any number of delicious fillings, such as, chocolate coffee, strawberry pistachio, and cinnamon fig. But my favorite are made with a simple store-bought jam, of my most beloved flavor, raspberry. And these are the ones I am sharing with you here, just in time for your springtime cookie-eating pleasure.

When making raspberry rugelach, cookie dough is rolled out into a circle, spread with said jam, and then sliced into triangles, like a pizza. Each triangle is then rolled up into the most adorable of little shapes, leaving each cookie to resemble a tiny, extremely cute, cousin of the croissant. An even simpler way to make rugelach, however, is to roll the dough into a rectangle, spread it with filling, and then roll the rectangle into a tight cylinder, as you would when making cinnamon buns. You then slice the cylinder into pieces, and place them on your cookie sheet to bake, with the lovely swirly side facing up.

To go rogue or not to go rogue? 'Tis the question!

I won't lie: I am partial to rugelach shaped like croissants, and so I have included directions for making those in the recipe. But by all means go rogue on me, if you'd prefer a round little cookie. You could even prepare half the dough one way, and half the other, if you're really feeling frisky.

And you can use any flavor jam of your choosing for the filling. I make currant jam every summer, and am

looking forward to trying that. Just make sure that whatever jam you do use, is nice and thick and spreadable, so it doesn't melt while baking.

Truth be told, while baking, you will notice melted butter leaking from the rugelach and on to your cookie sheet. Do not worry. These rugelach have copious amounts of butter in the dough, as that is just how I roll – pun intended – and that is why the cookies are so wonderfully rich and flavorful.

Two tips

But do not skip the freezing pre-baking step, as the freezing step helps the rugelach maintain their shape and keeps the leaking butter to a minimum.

Finally, the recipe yields a lot of cookies and I encourage you after shaping them to bake off only as many as you want to eat in the moment, and to freeze the rest. Then at a moment's notice, in the weeks that follow, or months if you are very disciplined (or forget), you can have rugelach at the ready whenever the craving hits for a tender, buttery, fruity, and very spring-y cookie.

Yield: 64 small rugelach

For the dough:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoon table salt
2 tsp baking powder
8 oz cream cheese, cold, cut into pieces
1 1/2 cups or 3 sticks, unsalted butter, cold, cut into pieces
1 egg yolk
1 tsp pure-vanilla extract

Raspberry filling:

1 cup raspberry jam



Egg wash:

1 large egg
1/4 tsp table salt

Turbinado sugar for sprinkling

And here's what you'll do:

Place dry ingredients in a food processor and process until combined. Add the rest of the ingredients and process until the dough just comes together. Do not over process.

Divide the dough in four, kneading it a bit if the ingredients need additional incorporating, and wrap each piece in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for two hours or overnight.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Roll out one piece of dough at a time on a lightly floured work surface into an 11-inch round circle. Spread with a quarter cup of the filling.

Using a pizza-cutter, or small paring knife, cut the circle into 16 triangles, like a pizza. Roll each piece up from the larger end, tucking the smaller end underneath the cookie and placing on the prepared baking

sheets. Repeat with the remaining pieces of dough and place in the freezer for an hour.

Preheat the oven to 350-degrees. Combine the egg and salt for the wash in a small bowl.

Brush all cookies with the egg wash and sprinkle with the Turbinado sugar. Bake off 16 cookies at a time for 20 to 25 minutes, rotating the pan at the halfway point, until golden brown.

Cool to room temperature before serving. Rugelach will keep tightly wrapped on the counter for up to three days. •

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.