

Speculaas Cookies

<u>Ingredient</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Instruction</u>
unsalted butter	1 cup = 8 oz.	softened
dark brown sugar	2 cups = 14.4 oz.	packed
egg yolks	2 large	room temperature
lemon zest	1 teaspoon	finely grated, packed
heavy whipping cream	3 TBLSP	
ground cinnamon	3 teaspoons	
ground cloves	2 teaspoons	
Chinese Five Spice	2 teaspoons	
ground cardamom	½ teaspoon	
salt	½ teaspoon	
vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	
almond extract	½ teaspoon	
all-purpose flour	3 cups = 14.1 oz.	
baker's ammonia	½ teaspoon	(ammonium bicarbonate)
powdered sugar	½ cup or so	
cheesecloth	6 sq. in.	

- In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter for a couple minutes. Add dark brown sugar, and beat until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Beat in the egg yolks, lemon zest, spices, and vanilla and almond extracts. Then stir in the cream.
- Slowly sift the flour & baker's ammonia over the wet ingredients, mixing together with a large spoon until blended.
- Form the dough into a ball and wrap it up in plastic wrap. Set the dough ball in a bowl, and refrigerate it for two to three hours. Put the wooden cookie mold in the freezer during this time.
- When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Using a cookie mold: (if not, then skip down to Not using a cookie mold.)

- Spread a piece of parchment paper out on the countertop, the size of your cookie sheet.
- The cheesecloth will be your cookie mold duster. Put the cheesecloth into a shallow dish so the powdered sugar doesn't go everywhere, and place a large handful of powdered sugar into the middle of the cheesecloth.
- Gather up the edges of the cheesecloth and tap it across the surface of the cookie mold to generously dust the entire cavity with a good dose of powdered sugar. This keeps the dough from sticking.

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- Use a pastry scraper or a knife to cut a quarter inch slice of cookie dough. Press it into the cookie mold. Push the sides toward the middle to define the perimeter shape. Use the pastry scraper or knife to cut away excess dough. You want the dough to be only slightly higher than the edge of the mold cavity.
- Holding your hand at the top of the mold, with the dough-filled cavity facing down, slam the bottom edge of the mold against the parchment paper on the countertop to release the cookie. The angle is about twenty degrees. You may need two or three slams. OR press the pastry scraper against the dough in the mold to pull it out.

Not using a cookie mold:

- Roll out the chilled dough to one eighth of an inch. Any thicker, and you won't get crispy cookies.
- Cut shapes using cookie cutters or use a pizza cutter to slice the dough into rectangle shapes.

Continue:

- It's best for working the dough if your hands are a little cold while making Speculaas.
- When you have enough cookies to fill the cookie sheet, slide the parchment paper onto the cookie sheet. The cookies should not touch each other, but they need no expansion room.
- Bake 10 minutes at 350 deg F.
- Put dough in refrigerator & mold in freezer while the Speculaas are cooking.
- Leave the cookies on the cookie sheet for four minutes before removing to racks to cool completely. If you let the cookies stand on the cookie sheets much longer than four minutes, they will not crisp up.
- Store in airtight containers after the cookies are completely cooled. They are still delicious two weeks later, so these are great for mailing away.

NOTES: Baker's ammonia is key to Speculaas crispness and longevity. I buy it from Amazon. Our Speculaas mold was hand carved by Gene Wilson in Illinois. He retired from carving in 2020, but his nephew continues the tradition.

www.CookieMold.com