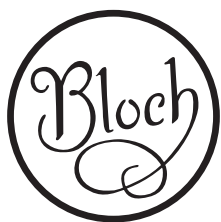


THE HOME
BAKING
BOOK



STEFAN ELIAS

THE HOME BAKING BOOK



TIMELESS RECIPES FOR ARTISANAL TREATS

HANNIBAL





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FOREWORD

STEFAN ELIAS

“BAKING BRINGS HAPPINESS, MAKING PEOPLE HAPPY AND MAKING YOURSELF HAPPY.”

In this book, I mainly elaborate on the recipes from *Het Belgisch Bakboek*, which I published in 2016. I searched for variations on these baking recipes with fruit, spices or toppings, exploring the incredible and infinite wealth of flavours you can add. On Instagram, I was introduced to the tasty treats of bakers from faraway places, from which I still draw a lot of inspiration. And on my travels, people gave me recipes that I recreated upon my return. You'll find, like I did, that what may look exotic and complicated is sometimes surprisingly simple and that it can be made with many of the staples that most people have in their pantry.

Baking brings happiness. The satisfaction of taking something out of the oven that you baked from scratch or savouring the taste of your homemade bread. The joy of being able to put something on the table that makes people visibly happy. Because baking makes people happy and it makes you happy. Tucking into pastries on a sunny Sunday morning, tearing and sharing a delicious savoury loaf of bread during a picnic with friends, cutting into a birthday cake, comforting a loved one with a cup of tea and a fragrant piece of cake.

But baking is also hard work. For beginners whose first attempt failed because they didn't knead their dough long enough or didn't use the exact ingredient weights. Baking takes time, dedication, precision and patience. It requires you to take it slow in a society obsessed with moving at a fast pace. For me, baking has also often been hard. At Bloch, the bakery in Ghent where I mastered this craft. The best possible place to learn but also the most demanding. Because my *patron*, Mr Bloch, may not have been the easiest person to work with. He insisted that we sell everything that other bakers had. Not a selection, mind.

Everything. And if a customer asked for something we didn't have, he would invariably reply: “We don't have it today, but we will tomorrow.”

It is hard graft, but I also have a lot of fun, like with the videos I make on YouTube to go with my cookbooks. People keep asking for more. Because baking provides warmth and cosiness, a sense of focus, allowing you to create something delicious and comforting with surprisingly simple ingredients. Over the years, interest has grown exponentially. I also notice this in the workshops I give: people often arrive feeling slightly uncertain, only to step out a few hours later with a bag full of delicious treats. Amazed at everything they made themselves in just a few hours and at how the afternoon flew by.

This is my fourth cookbook after *Het Belgisch Bakboek*, *Het Wereld Bakboek*, and *Het Feestbakboek*. I have written these books for you to introduce you to the wonderful world of baking, which is a feast in itself before the actual feast begins. To give you a taste of an unparalleled world of flavours with endless variations. To share tips and tricks, and inspire you to unleash your culinary creativity. But I also write these books for myself. They are my catalogue, my archive of recipes that I cannot and will not forget. These are delicacies that I enjoy. And rather than keeping them for myself, I prefer to share them with everyone.

I hope you will share them with your friends, family and loved ones. Or enjoy them on your own, which is also fine. Have fun with them, and enjoy!



BLOCH

PÂTISSERIE BLOCH: A FAMILY BAKERY IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD

Bloch prides itself on a rich history. The bakery was founded in 1899 in the heart of the Belgian city of Ghent, in the Veldstraat, by the Bloch family, who wanted to share their passion for bread and pastries. Locals soon found their way to the Boulangerie Viennoise, as it was known in those days.

In the early years, Bloch mainly specialised in traditional Ghent specialities, such as the famous Ghent bread and various types of pastries. The recipes were carefully preserved and passed down from generation to generation. Over time, the bakery was renamed Pâtisserie Alsacienne, a reference to the Bloch family's origins.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the bakery, with Jacques Bloch at its helm, expanded its range of innovative products to include various types of artisan breads, pastries and patisserie. Flavours from different worlds were included in the already extensive range.

The 1980s and 1990s proved somewhat challenging, with the rise of industrial bakeries and changes in the food industry. But Bloch always remained true to its artisan tradition, its emphasis on quality and its unrivalled customer service. The bakery thus managed to maintain and even strengthen its position in Ghent and beyond.

Bloch closed its doors in 2008, but the story did not end there. In 2015, two entrepreneurs from East Flanders decided to breathe new life into the bakery, together with Stefan Elias, former chef at the bakery. Their intention was to share all the unique products and recipes with the public again. In 2020, the bakery reopened on Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat in Ghent.

Today, Bloch is the go-to for freshly baked bread, pastries and many other sweets, as well as an important pillar of the community in Ghent, a city where this establishment earns a special place thanks to the emphasis it places on tradition and heritage as well as on innovation and enterprise.



MORNING ROLLS AND BUNS

Whether crusty or soft, all these rolls and buns make for an irresistibly delicious breakfast. Choose something different every time, or put together a varied breakfast buffet with lots of fun options. *Boerkes*, piccolos, bagels... You name it, there's something for everyone to indulge in. What's more, you can elevate your rolls with all kinds of savoury toppings: a fresh homemade pesto, Caesar mayonnaise and chicken, or harissa and hummus for something completely different. A real treat for yourself, your friends and family! You can also freeze any leftover rolls you didn't eat.





SAVOURY TOPPINGS FOR MORNING OR LUNCHTIME BAGELS



SALMON

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 100 G (½ CUP, 3.5 OZ) CHEESE SPREAD, PLAIN
- 5 G (1 TBSP, 0.18 OZ) FRESH CHOPPED DILL
- 20 G (1 TBSP, 0.71 OZ) HORSERADISH PASTE
- 80 G (½ CUP, 2.8 OZ) SMOKED SALMON STRIPS
- 40 G (¼ CUP, 1.41 OZ) FRESH CUCUMBER, CUT INTO HALF MOONS

1. Mix the cheese spread with the dill and horseradish, and spread it on the sandwiches.
2. Garnish with salmon strips and a few slices of cucumber.

HEALTHY (VEGAN)

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 140 G (⅔ CUP, 4.9 OZ) GUACAMOLE (MASHED AVOCADO SEASONED WITH GARLIC AND HERBS)
- 60 G (4 CUPS, 2.1 OZ) CHERRY TOMATOES
- 10 G (¼ CUP, 0.35 OZ) FRESH ROCKET LEAVES
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) TOASTED PINE NUTS

1. Spread the guacamole on the rolls.
2. Garnish with two half cherry tomatoes, some rocket leaves and a few pine nuts.

SPICY

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 40 G (3 TBSP, 1.41 OZ) HARISSA (SPICY PASTE OR SAUCE MADE FROM TOMATO PUREE, CARROT, ONION, ALLSPICE, GINGER, CARAWAY, GARLIC AND SMOKED PAPRIKA)
- 40 G (3 TBSP, 1.41 OZ) HUMMUS (MASHED CHICKPEAS FLAVOURED WITH SESAME PASTE, LEMON AND GARLIC)
- 60 G (½ CUP, 2.1 OZ) FETA CHEESE
- 30 G (½ CUP, 1.06 OZ) GRATED CARROT OR 4 SLICED RADISHES

1. Mix the harissa with the hummus.
2. Spread it on the sandwiches and garnish with a piece of feta cheese and carrot or radish.

CAESAR

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 80 G (2.8 OZ) CAESAR MAYONNAISE (65 G (4 TBSP, 2.3 OZ) MAYONNAISE MIXED WITH 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) PARMESAN, 5 G (1 TSP, 0.18 OZ) ANCHOVY PASTE AND SOME LEMON JUICE)
- 80 G (2.8 OZ) COOKED CHICKEN-THIGH MEAT CUT INTO PIECES
- 30 G (¼ HEAD, 1.06 OZ) FRESH LETTUCE LEAVES OF YOUR CHOICE
- 5 G (1 TBSP, 0.18 OZ) MINCED CHIVES

1. Spread the Caesar mayonnaise on the sandwiches.
2. Top with the chicken-thigh pieces, lettuce leaves and chives.

HAM SALAD

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 60 G (4 TBSP, 2.1 OZ) MAYONNAISE
- ½ HARD-BOILED EGG, CUT INTO PIECES
- 60 G (¼ CUP, 2.1 OZ) FINELY SLICED HAM
- SALT AND PEPPER
- 5 G (1 TBSP, 0.18 OZ) MINCED CHIVES
- 30 G (¼ CUP, 1.06 OZ) GRATED CELERIAC
- 30 G (¼ CUP, 1.06 OZ) FINELY SLICED GHERKINS
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) FINELY CHOPPED FRESH PARSLEY

1. Mix the mayonnaise with the egg and ham, and season with some salt, pepper and chives.
2. Spread it on the rolls and garnish with celeriac, gherkin and parsley.

CHEESE

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 40 G (¼ CUP, 1.41 OZ) CHERRY JAM
- 80 G (4 SLICES, 2.8 OZ) MATURE CHEESE
- 30 G (½ BULB, 1.06 OZ) FENNEL SALAD SLICED THINLY

1. Spread the jam on the rolls, and top with the sliced mature cheese.
2. Garnish with fennel salad.

ITALIAN

FOR 4 ROLLS

- 80 G (½ CUP, 2.8 OZ) PESTO (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 27)
- 120 G (4 SLICES, 4.2 OZ) DRIED HAM CHIFFONADE
- 50 G (4 SLICES, 1.76 OZ) GRILLED COURGETTE
- 10 G (¼ CUP, 0.35 OZ) PARMESAN FLAKES

1. Spread the pesto on the rolls.
2. Garnish with the ham chiffonade, courgette and parmesan.

TIP

Make the pesto the day before so its flavour can develop.

MAKES 8 BOERKES

- 5 G (0.53 OZ) FRESH YEAST OR 2 ½ TSP (0.09 OZ) INSTANT DRY YEAST
- 240 G (1 CUP, 8.5 OZ) WATER
- 140 G (1 CUP, 4.9 OZ) WHOLEMEAL BREAD FLOUR
- 260 G (2 CUP) BREAD FLOUR
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 3.5 OZ) GOOD-QUALITY MARGARINE
- 6 G SALT (1 TSP, 0.21 OZ)
- FLOUR FOR DUSTING THE BOERKES

BOERKES PLAIN, WITH NUTS, SULTANAS, OR CURRANTS ^(VEGAN)

These soft bread buns with bran always taste great with a delicious topping, whether for breakfast or lunch, or even during a picnic.

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Preheat the oven to 220°C (425°F).
2. Put the yeast in a large bowl (if fresh yeast, crumble it), add the water, and stir until completely dissolved. Add the rest of the ingredients, and mix everything into a homogeneous mass.
3. Pour out the dough on the work surface, and knead for 8 to 10 minutes until elastic. Let rest for 30 minutes.
4. Weigh out 8 portions of 80 g (2.8 oz). Shape them into round balls, and arrange them on the baking tray. Make sure the dough balls are spaced sufficiently apart. Let rest for 60 to 70 minutes.
5. Dust the boerkes with flour, and bake at 220°C (425°F) for 10 to 12 minutes.

TIP

For boerkes with nuts, sultanas or currants, after kneading add 75 g chopped walnuts with 20 g (2 tbsp, 0.71 oz) of water, or 75 g (½ cup, 2.5 oz) of raisins/currants with 10 g (1 tbsp, 0.35 oz) of water to the dough, and mix. The dough will feel sticky, but the fruit will soak up the water during the first rise. Other than that, the method is the same, except that you need to weigh out portions of 90 g (3.2 oz).

I often serve these rolls with cheese platters, in which case I halve the weight and bake them for less long.





SWEET BREAKFAST

All these pastries are simply irresistible and, in my opinion, the staples of any sweet breakfast. Over the years, I have tried all kinds of variations, and I am happy to share them here. Enjoy croissants with an almond frangipane filling, or make them even sweeter with cherries. I've added vegan cruffins, which are tremendously popular and even richer in flavour thanks to delicious nut spreads. Good news also for bakers looking for a quick fix for serving breakfast in bed, for example. The baked pastries can all be frozen, but remember to wrap them carefully in freezer bags to avoid freezer burn. On the day you want to serve the pastries, preheat your oven to 230°C (450°F). Remove the pastries from the freezer and place them on a baking tray. Pop the baking tray with the frozen pastries in the oven for about two minutes. Take them out and let them thaw further at room temperature for about 15 minutes. They will taste like fresh.

MAKES 16 BOULES

- 1 RECIPE RISEN PUFF PASTRY
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- 1 BEATEN EGG
- 400 G (1 ¾ CUP, 14.01 OZ) PASTRY
CREAM (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- 250 G (1 ¾ CUP, 8.8 OZ) GRANULATED
SUGAR

BOULES ALSACIENNES

This addictive pastry, made with viennoise dough, is a variation on the *boule de Berlin* (Berliner or *Krapfen*), which is made with brioche dough.

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Preheat the deep fat fryer to 180°C (350 °F).
2. Make the basic dough, and roll it out into a 2.5 mm (1/10 in) thick rectangle measuring 28 × 64 cm (11.02 × 25.2 in). Cut the slice into two strips measuring 14 × 64 cm (5.52 × 25.2 in), and from these strips cut 16 rectangles measuring 14 × 8 cm (5.52 × 3.15 in). Leave these rectangles like this. Brush their edges with the egg wash.
3. Fill a piping bag (with a large non-serrated nozzle) with the pastry cream. Pipe a thick glob of pastry cream at the top into the centre of the rectangles. Make sure to leave 1.5 cm (0.59 in) free on either side. Roll up the rectangles from top to bottom. Press the sides as you roll.
4. Place the dough rectangles with the seam facing down on a floured towel. Press them down firmly, and leave them to rise for an hour.
5. Carefully place the boules in the frying fat, first with the bottom side up, and fry each side for three minutes until golden brown.
6. Take them out of the fat, and dip them in the granulated sugar.

TIP

When making boules with jam, use a solid-set jam so that it does not leak while baking.



MAKES 16 RONDELETTES

- 250 G (1 CUP, 8.8 OZ) PASTRY CREAM (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- 1 RECIPE RISEN PUFF PASTRY (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 26)
- 1 BEATEN EGG
- 100 G (⅔ CUP, 3.5 OZ) CHOCOLATE DROPS FOR BAKING
- 200 G (7.1 OZ) FONDANT SUGAR WITH COCOA (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 25)
- 200 G (1 ¼ CUP, 7.1 OZ) MILK-CHOCOLATE CURLS (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 25)

CREAM AND CHOCOLATE RONDELETTE

This pastry is a riff on the chocolate cookie but filled with pastry cream and chocolate.



1. Make the pastry cream beforehand so it can cool.
2. Line a baking tray with baking paper, and preheat the oven to 220°C (400°F).
3. Make the basic dough, and roll it out into a 3 mm thick rectangle measuring 40 × 48 cm (15.75 × 18.9 in). Cut the dough into two sheets measuring 20 × 48 cm (7.87 × 18.9 in). Spread the cream on each piece, but make sure to leave a 3 cm (1.18 in) bare border at the bottom. Brush this border lightly with the egg wash. Sprinkle the chocolate drops over the pastry cream.
4. Starting from the top, roll up each strip into a 48 cm (18.9 in) roll. Make sure the seam at the bottom is in the middle, and press the dough down well.
5. Divide with a chef's knife each roll into eight strips, each 6 cm (2.36 in) long, and place them on the baking tray with the seam facing down. Press and leave to rise for 60 to 70 minutes.
6. Brush the biscuits with the egg wash, and bake at 220°C (400°F) for 12 minutes. Leave to cool. Brush them with fondant sugar, and decorate them with chocolate curls.

MAKES 16 CROISSANTS

- 1 RISEN PUFF PASTRY (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 26)
- 500 G (2 CUPS, 17.6 OZ) ALMOND FRANGIPANE (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- 1 BEATEN EGG
- 100 G (⅔ CUP, 3.5 OZ) ROASTED SLICED ALMONDS (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 26)
- 200 G (7.1 OZ) FONDANT SUGAR (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 25)
- 50 G (⅓ CUP, 1.76 OZ) ICING SUGAR

ALMOND CROISSANT

This recipe is for a croissant with an almond frangipane filling. This croissant is folded from a square, not rolled from a triangle. Did you know that croissants taste best when eaten within 4 hours of baking?

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper, and preheat the oven to 225°C (435°F).
2. Make the basic dough, and roll it out thinly into a 2.5 mm ($\frac{1}{10}$ in) thick 48 cm (18.9 in) square. Cut this into sixteen 12 cm (4.72 in) squares with a chef's knife.
3. Fill a piping bag (with a large nozzle) with the frangipane and pipe some filling into the centre of each square (30 g (1.06 oz) per croissant). Fold a corner over the filling, and pinch it closed. Fold over the other corner, and tuck it under the dough. Arrange the pieces of dough on the baking tray, press slightly, and let rise for an hour.
4. Brush the croissants with the egg wash, and bake at 225°C (435°F) for 12 minutes. Leave to cool. Brush them with the fondant sugar, and garnish with roasted almonds and icing sugar.





BREAD AND BUTTER

Is there anything better than waking up to the smell of fresh, home-baked bread at home? Today's world is all about instant gratification and mass production. But when you make bread yourself, you will be amazed at how delicious it can be, and you will be more inclined to start baking every day. When it comes to bread, I find it difficult to pick a favourite, but if I really have to choose, a freshly baked brioche loaf does it for me every time.

BOULDOUK BRIOCHE

This bread, which is said to have been named after the magical rock formations in Cappadocia (Turkey), is simply stunning. In terms of baking technique, it takes its inspiration from *shorgoghal* bread.

SERVES 6

- 500 G (17.6 OZ) BASIC BRIOCHE DOUGH
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 125 G (8 TBSP, 4.5 OZ) UNSALTED BUTTER,
ROOM TEMPERATURE
- 10 G (1 ½ TBSP, 0.35 OZ) ICING SUGAR

1. Grease a round tart tray (Ø 22 cm (8.60 in), 4 cm (1.58 in) high) with butter. Preheat the oven to 210°C (410°F).
2. Knead the dough, shape it into a ball, and let it rest for 30 minutes.
3. Dust your work surface with flour, and roll out the dough into a 30 cm (11.81 in) square.
4. Make the butter spreadable, and spread it over two-thirds of the dough. Fold the part without butter to the centre, and fold the other part on top.
5. Place the dough in the fridge for 15 minutes to stiffen.
6. Using a rolling pin, roll out the dough into a sheet measuring 30 × 35 cm (11.81 × 13.78 in)
7. Slowly roll (starting from the top) the dough into a firm 35 cm (13.78 in) long roll. Make sure the seam is facing down.
8. Cut into 7 portions, each 5 cm (1.97 in) wide, and place them on their sides in the baking tin, forming a circle of 6 portions with 1 in the centre. Let rise for another 70 minutes.
9. Bake the *bouldouk* at 210°C (410°F) for 20 to 25 minutes.
10. After baking, remove from the tins, and dust with icing sugar.





FOR TWO 600-G (21 OZ) LOAVES

- 25 G (0.88 OZ) FRESH YEAST OR 1 TBSP (0.32 OZ) INSTANT DRY YEAST
- 320 G (1 1/3 CUP, 11.3 OZ) WATER
- 500 G (4 CUPS, 17.6 OZ) WHOLEMEAL WHEAT FLOUR
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) GOOD-QUALITY MARGARINE
- 10 G (2 TSP, 0.35 OZ) SALT
- 120 G (3/4 CUP, 4.2 OZ) DRIED FIGS CHOPPED INTO PIECES
- 120 G (3/4 CUP, 4.2 OZ) RAISINS
- 120 G (3/4 CUP, 4.2 OZ) ROASTED HAZELNUTS (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 26)
- 40 G (4 TBSP, 1.41 OZ) EXTRA WATER
- FLOUR FOR DUSTING

WHOLEMEAL FRUIT AND HAZELNUT LOAF ^(VEGAN)

This bread is ideal for a healthy breakfast but is equally delicious when served alongside a cheese platter. The combination of mild cheeses, fruits and nuts is simply divine.

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Preheat the oven to 225°C (435°F).
 2. Put the yeast in a large bowl (if fresh yeast, crumble it), add the water, and stir until completely dissolved. Add the wholemeal wheat flour, margarine and salt, and mix everything to form a homogenous mass.
 3. Pour out the dough on the work surface and knead for 6 to 8 minutes until elastic.
 4. Add the fruit, nuts and extra water, and mix well. The dough will stick, but during the first rise, the fruit will
- absorb the moisture. Let the dough rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.
5. Divide the dough into two 600 g (21 oz) portions, shape into a firm ball, and let rest for another 10 minutes.
 6. Shape the balls into 25 cm (9.85 in) long loaves (see The golden rules of baking – (Ob)long loaves, p. 20), and let them rise for another 60 minutes.
 7. Dust the loaves with flour, and bake for 30 minutes in a 225°C (435°F) oven, turning down the oven temperature to 200°C (400°F)

TIP

You can also add other types of fruit, including dates, dried apricots, dried plums, and currants. Make sure to respect the total weight.





ON THE CAKE STAND

All the cakes and tarts in this chapter have one thing in common: they are all equally delicious. Take a bite, and you won't be able to stop! You will find many of my classic recipes here, as well as some cakes that are inspired by international recipes, such as the blueberry cheesecake. Some recipes take a bit more time and require patience as they need to be prepared in several steps. Before you start, remember to read the recipe all the way through. It will give you a good overview. Weigh all the ingredients carefully on your scale, including the liquids!

FOR 1 CAKE; SERVES 6

- 300 G (10.6 OZ) CHOUX PASTRY
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 27)
- 1 BEATEN EGG
- 20 G (3 TBSP, 0.71 OZ) SLICED ALMONDS

TO GARNISH:

- 200 G (7.1 OZ) GANACHE
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 26)
- 150 G (5.3 OZ) CHANTILLY CREAM
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 27)
- 350 G (12.3 OZ) PASTRY CREAM
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 24)
- 50 G (4 TBSP, 7.76 OZ) PRALINE PASTE (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 27)
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) ICING SUGAR

PARIS BREST

Essentially this cake is a large round éclair, filled with generous amounts of delicious praline cream. Originally, Paris-Brest-Paris was a bicycle race. It is said the cake was first made sometime in the early twentieth century to mark this occasion. These days, you can often find it on the menu when the final stage of the Tour de France arrives in Paris.

1. Line a baking tray with baking paper, and preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F).
2. Make the choux pastry. Draw a circle (Ø 20 cm (7.87 in)) with a pencil on your baking paper.
3. Spoon the dough into a piping bag with a large non-serrated nozzle. Pipe choux of about 30 g (1.06 oz) close together all around within the circle. There should be about ten in all.
4. Brush the choux with the egg wash and sprinkle with the sliced almonds.
5. Bake the choux for 35 to 40 minutes. Stick a wooden spatula in between the oven door to allow the steam to escape. Let the cake cool properly before garnishing it.
6. Carefully cut the choux ring in half and place both halves on the work surface. Put the ganache in a piping bag with a non-serrated nozzle, and pipe it all around the base of the cake.
7. Using a whisk, mix the cream, pastry cream and praline into a smooth batter. Fill a piping bag with a large serrated nozzle with the filling, and pipe tall rosettes around the bottom half. Place the top half on the cake, and dust with icing sugar. Slide a cake card under the cake so it does not break.





FOR 1 CAKE; SERVES 4

- 175 G (6.2 OZ) BUTTER PASTRY
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 25)
- 45 G (4 TBSP, 1.59 OZ) GRANULATED SUGAR
- 15 G (1 ½ TBSP, 0.53 OZ) WATER
- 40 G (3 TBSP, 1.41 OZ) UNSALTED BUTTER
- 15 G (1 ½ TBSP, 0.53 OZ) DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 3 CONFERENCE PEARS

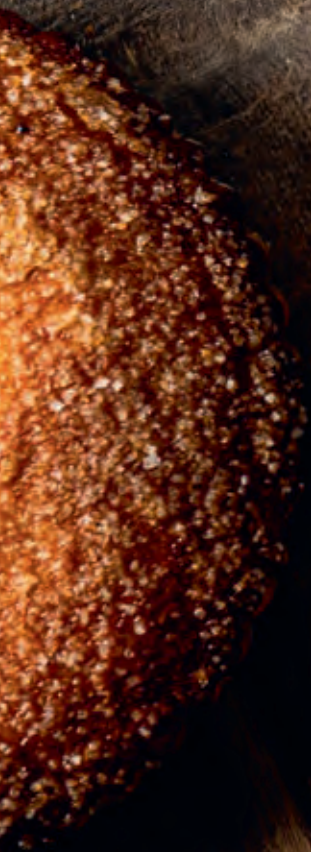
PEAR TARTE TATIN

Possibly one of the most famous cakes in the world. It is baked upside down, so the butter and sugar at the bottom of the cake tin form a delicious caramelised top layer when the cake is flipped over just before serving (a tarte tatin is eaten warm). The cake was supposedly invented in 1888 by Stéphanie Tatin, who owned a hotel in the Loire Valley with her sister Caroline. One day, she accidentally placed her cake in the oven upside down. And that's how this classic was born.

1. Make the butter pastry the day before so it can stiffen in the refrigerator.
2. Take a round cake tin (Ø 20 cm (7.87 in), 4 cm (1.58 in) high), and a baking tray with a high rim to ensure that any moisture spilling out of your tarte tatin during baking does not spill onto the bottom of your oven. Preheat the oven to 210°C (410°F).
3. Boil the granulated sugar with the water in a saucepan over high heat until a light caramel forms. Add the butter and brown sugar, and keep stirring until everything has nicely dissolved. Pour the mixture into the cake tin, and let it solidify. Please note: the mixture is very hot.
4. Peel the pears. Quarter them, and arrange them with their rounded sides on the caramel.
5. Take the butter pastry from the refrigerator, work it briefly with your hands so it becomes more malleable, and roll it out with the rolling pin into a round sheet the size of the cake tin.
6. Place the dough on the pears, and prick it a few times with a fork.
7. Bake the cake for about 30 minutes at 210°C (410°F).
8. After baking, run a sharp knife along the edges of the tarte tatin to loosen them, and immediately flip it over onto a rack. Beware of the hot juices spilling out of the cake.

TIP

You can also use apples for this tarte tatin. Choose a sour, firm apple variety. The tart will need to bake a bit longer until the apples are soft, about 50 minutes at 190°C (375°F).



DELICIOUS FRUIT PIES

These ten fruit pies will leave you wanting more. They are so delicious! They are also quick and easy to make, which is always handy when you are short on time. Taste the bounty of nature and all the delicious things it has to offer in every bite. In late summer, head into the forest with your pail to pick blueberries and other wild berries at picking sites. Self-picking farms and gardens are also worth investigating, as they often have even more of a selection. Mix the berries with some sugar water and store them in the freezer for when you feel like making one of these fruit pies. A burst of summer sweetness for your taste buds!



FOR 1 PIE; SERVES 4

- 3 FIRM SOUR APPLES
- 100 G (¾ CUP, 3.5 OZ) CREAM (40% FAT)
- 1 EGG YOLK (0.71 OZ)
- 50 G (¾ CUP, 1.76 OZ) ICING SUGAR
- 20 G (2 TBSP, 0.71 OZ) ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 1 VLAAI PIE CRUST (SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 28)

APPLE PIE ALSACIENNE

I never turn down a slice of this apple pie. Unlike other apple pies, this one is filled with a custard-like mixture of egg, sugar, flour and cream. This pie is especially famous in Alsace (France).

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Peel the apples, core them, and then cut them into four pieces.
3. Put the cream, egg yolk, sugar and flour in a small bowl, and mix well.
4. Arrange the apple pieces on the pie base. Pour the sauce over the apples.
5. Let the pie rise for another 15 minutes. Bake for 45 minutes.

TIP

You can add some kirsch (sour cherry liqueur) to the sauce.

FOR 1 PIE; SERVES 4

- 125 G (4.4 OZ) PIE SAUCE
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 28)
- 300 G (2 ⅔ CUPS, 10.6 OZ) DRAINED
DARK CHERRIES IN SYRUP
- 5 G (1 TBSP, 0.18 OZ) ICING SUGAR
- 1 (VEGAN) VLAAI PIE CRUST
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 28)

CHERRY PIE (VEGAN)

Did you know that cherries belong to the plum family? For this pie, I prefer to use dark cherries instead of the sweeter red ones: the combination of the tart cherries and the sweet pie sauce is delicious.

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Put the cherries in a colander, and drain. Make the pie sauce and mix in the cherries. Set aside to cool.
3. Spread the cherry filling over the pie base. Let rise for another 15 minutes.
4. Bake the pie for 25 to 30 minutes.
5. Let the pie cool, and dust the edges with icing sugar.





WAFFLE FEST

There are many different types of waffles, each made in a different way and each with its own specific flavour and texture. But nothing beats sitting around the table and tucking into a freshly baked waffle with friends or family. One recipe that I reckon most people will love is chocolate-dipped Liège waffles. Deliciously rich in flavour, not dry, and just as tasty a few days after baking. I started experimenting with my heart-shaped waffle maker and ended up with five different waffles, from filled *kermishartjes* to vegan heart-shaped waffles. The tastiest waffles are those you make yourself, with the fragrance of butter, vanilla, cinnamon and love filling your kitchen.

HEART-SHAPED WAFFLES

Besides tasting amazing, these heart-shaped waffles also look gorgeous. You can choose between all kinds of hearts. Crispy, fluffy, filled, *speculoos*, vegan, chocolate...

HEART-SHAPED FUNFAIR WAFFLES

FOR 15 WAFFLES

- 25 G (0.88 OZ) FRESH YEAST OR 1 TBSP (0.32 OZ) INSTANT DRY YEAST
- 45 G (1/5 CUP, 1.59 OZ) WHOLE MILK
- 190 G (1 1/2 CUP, 6.7 OZ) ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 75 G (5 TBSP, 2.5 OZ) UNSALTED BUTTER, ROOM TEMPERATURE
- 1 SMALL (1.41 OZ) EGG
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) GRANULATED SUGAR
- A PINCH OF SALT
- FILLING OF YOUR CHOICE
- ICING SUGAR

FILLING FOR 15 DARK BROWN SUGAR WAFFLES

- 270 G (9.5 OZ) BUTTER
- 100 G (2/3 CUP, 3.5 OZ) ICING SUGAR
- 120 G (1/2 CUP, 4.2 OZ) DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 15 G (1 1/2 TBSP, 0.53 OZ) WATER
- 1/2 TEASPOON CINNAMON

FILLING FOR 15 VANILLA WAFFLES

- 250 G (8.8 OZ) BUTTER
- 200 G (1 1/2 CUP, 7.1 OZ) ICING SUGAR
- 25 G (3 TBSP, 0.88 OZ) WATER
- 15 G (3 TSP, 0.53 OZ) VANILLA SUGAR

1. Put the yeast in a bowl (if dry yeast, crumble it). Add the milk, flour, butter, egg, sugar and salt, and mix to form a homogeneous mass. Knead on your work surface for five minutes.
2. Weigh out 15 portions of 25 g (0.88 oz) each, and shape into balls. Let the dough rest under a towel for an hour.
3. Preheat the waffle maker on medium. Lightly brush with softened butter.
4. Place a dough ball on each heart. Close the waffle maker, and keep pressing it down for about 1 minute until the waffle is baked.
5. Take the waffles out of the waffle maker one by one, immediately cut them in half with a sharp serrated blade (remember: they are hot!), and let them cool.
6. Spread the filling of your choice on one half of the waffles, and place the other half on top to form a waffle sandwich. You need about 30 g of filling per waffle. Dust with icing sugar.

Filling for 15 dark brown sugar waffles:

Beat the butter until fluffy, and mix in the icing sugar, dark brown sugar, water and 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon.

Filling for 15 vanilla waffles:

Beat the butter until fluffy, and mix in the icing sugar, water and vanilla sugar.



READY

CRISPY HEART-SHAPED WAFFLES

FOR 25 WAFFLES

- 150 G (1 CUP, 5.3 OZ) SELF-RISING FLOUR
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 29)
- 120 G (½ CUP, 4.2 OZ) WHOLE MILK
- 120 G (½ CUP, 4.2 OZ) SPARKLING WATER
- 20 G (2 TBSP, 0.71 OZ) SUNFLOWER OIL
- 1 LARGE EGG (1.76 OZ)
- 10 G (1 TBSP, 0.35 OZ) GRANULATED SUGAR
- ¼ TEASPOON OF SALT
- 100 G (⅔ CUP, 3.5 OZ) ICING SUGAR

1. Preheat the waffle maker on medium.
2. Place all the ingredients except the icing sugar in a large measuring cup, and blend with a hand blender to obtain a smooth batter.
3. Grease the waffle maker with some butter. Scoop a ladleful of batter into the centre (90 g (3.2 oz) of batter). Spread the batter with a plastic spoon. Close the waffle maker, and bake for 4 to 5 minutes until the waffle is crispy and golden brown. If you notice that your waffle is done after a few minutes, turn down the temperature a little.
4. Dust with a thin layer of icing sugar. Eat the waffles while they are still warm and crispy. That's when they are most delicious!

TIP

For a fun twist, serve with a dollop of Chantilly cream and fresh fruit.

SPECULOOS HEART-SHAPED WAFFLES

FOR 15 HEARTS

- 110 G (7 TBSP, 3.9 OZ) BUTTER
- 110 G (½ CUP, 3.9 OZ) DARK BROWN SUGAR
- 25 G (3 TBSP, 0.88 OZ) WATER
- 220 G (1 ½ CUP, 7.8 OZ) SELF-RISING FLOUR
(SEE PASTRY BASICS, P. 29)
- 5 G (1 TSP, 0.18 OZ) CINNAMON

1. Preheat the waffle maker on medium.
2. In a bowl, beat the butter until soft. Add the other ingredients, and mix everything with your hands while squeezing to form an even dough. Do not knead.
3. Weigh out 15 portions of 30 g (1.06 oz) each, and shape into balls.
4. Brush the waffle maker well with softened butter. Place a ball of dough on each heart, and close the waffle maker. Press down until the waffle maker is completely closed. Bake for a few minutes until the waffle feels firm.
5. Open the waffle maker, and use a plastic knife to separate the hearts. Using a plastic palette knife, remove each individual heart from the waffle maker, and transfer them to a flat plate. Leave to cool, and store in an airtight container.



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