

For TOM

How to roll out an easier rugelach and bake like you're a pro



SHERYL JULIAN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Rugelach, the small crescents that Jewish grandmothers painstakingly rolled from rich pastry and filled with raisins and walnuts, is different at bakeries that make them by the thousands. Where the crescent shapes begin with a round of dough cut into wedges, the pros roll out a sheet of dough, spread it with filling, shape it into a slender jelly roll, and cut short lengths (see Page G1).

I ate my fill recently of these golden, flaky pastries at Zabar's on the Upper West Side in New York, and decided that the ~~rolled~~ version was just as delicious and probably much easier than any crescents I had ever tried. Rugelach is the most popular Hanukkah pastry. It originated in Eastern Europe with Ashkenazi Jews, who made a yeast dough with sour cream. American cream cheese and butter make pastry that rolls like chamois cloth. And though raisin-walnut-cinnamon filling is most well known, this chocolate-cinnamon combination is heavenly.

The food-processor cream-cheese dough is yeast-free and needs one hour to rest. It rolls out to make two good-size rectangles, which you fill with pulverized mini bittersweet-chocolate chips, cocoa powder, cinnamon, and brown sugar. Then spread, roll, cut, and bake. When the buzzer goes off, open the oven, look at your treasures, and beam with pleasure. You're baking like a pro.

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Chocolate rugelach

Makes 28

PASTRY

- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 5 tablespoons butter, cut up
- 3 ounces cream cheese (1/2 large package), cut up
- 1 egg, lightly beaten with 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1/4 cup ice water
- Flour (for sprinkling)

1. In a food processor, work the flour, salt, baking powder, and granulated sugar to blend them. Add the butter and cream cheese and pulse until the mixture

2. In a bowl, stir the egg and water. Sprinkle the liquids on the flour mixture. Pulse the dough just until it forms large moist clumps. It should not form a ball.
3. Turn the clumps out onto a lightly floured counter. Cut through the clumps a dozen times with a bench scraper or blunt knife until the mixture comes together. Shape into a ball and flatten into a rectangle. With a floured rolling pin, roll the dough to an 8-by-5-inch rectangle. Cut in half horizontally. Wrap each piece in foil; refrigerate 1 hour.

FILLING

- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
 - 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
 - 2 tablespoons dark-brown sugar
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 1 cup mini semisweet chocolate chips
 - 3 tablespoons butter, melted and cool but still liquid
- Cinnamon-sugar made with 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar and 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon (for sprinkling)

1. Set the oven at 375 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, combine the cocoa, granulated and brown sugars, cinnamon, and chips. Pulse until the chocolate is chopped into tiny pieces; set aside.
3. Sprinkle 1 piece of dough lightly with flour. With a floured rolling pin, roll the dough to a 12-by-9-inch rectangle, sprinkling the board and pin with flour to prevent sticking as needed.
4. Turn the dough so one long side is facing you. Brush the dough all over with half the butter. Sprinkle with half the cocoa mixture to within 1-inch of the opposite long side; it will make a generous layer.
5. Start to roll: Begin at the long end closest to you. Roll the dough into a tight jelly roll, ending with the seam on the bottom. Press the roll gently on the sides with your hands to make it compact. With a long sharp knife, cut the roll into 1-inch pieces and transfer them to the baking sheet, standing them seams down (not on the cut sides). Sprinkle the pieces with half the cinnamon-sugar. Roll, spread with filling, roll up, and cut the remaining dough in the same way.
6. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the pieces are golden and firm to the touch. Cool on a wire rack.

in airtight container Sheryl Julian

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