

Italian Ricotta Pie (Crostata di Ricotta)

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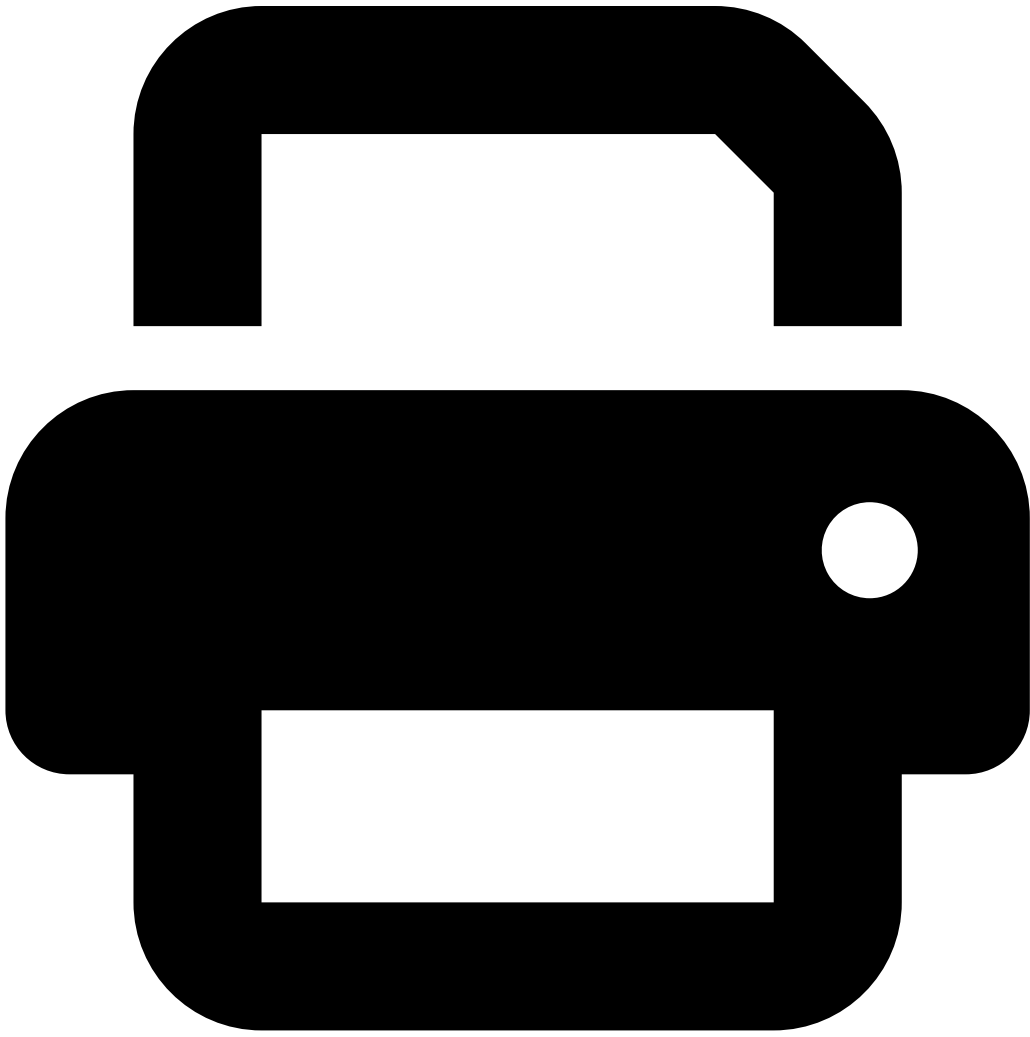
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Italian Ricotta Pie is a classic rustic dessert found in many Italian homes, especially around holidays like Easter. It's made with **pasta frolla**, a tender Italian sweet pastry dough, and filled with creamy sweetened ricotta scented with orange zest and studded with chocolate. The result is a pie that's rich but not overly sweet, with a delicate citrus aroma and a buttery crust.

This dessert has roots in southern Italian baking traditions where ricotta is commonly used in pastries. Draining the ricotta is key—it creates a thick, velvety filling that slices beautifully and holds its shape. Paired with the crisp, cookie-like pasta frolla, it becomes a simple but elegant dessert perfect for holidays, Sunday dinners, or with an afternoon espresso.

Things to know about this Italian Ricotta Pie (Crostata di Ricotta)

- **Drain the ricotta well:** This prevents a watery filling and keeps the pie creamy.
 - **Use whole milk ricotta:** It gives the richest flavor and texture.
 - **Let it cool completely:** Cutting too early can cause the filling to be soft.
 - **Even better the next day:** Like many Italian desserts, the flavors deepen after resting overnight in the refrigerator.
-

Serving Suggestions

Serve Italian Ricotta Pie slightly chilled or at room temperature. A light dusting of powdered sugar on top makes it beautiful and simple. It pairs perfectly with espresso, cappuccino, or a small glass of sweet dessert wine.

Storage

Store the pie covered in the refrigerator for **up to 4 days**. Because of the ricotta filling, it should always be kept chilled.

Love traditional Italian baking? Try these recipes next on the blog:

- Italian ricotta Cookies
- Traditional Southern Italian Cavatelli
- Tuscan Kale and Potatoes

They're simple, authentic recipes that bring classic Italian flavors right into your kitchen.

Italian Ricotta Pie (Crostata di Ricotta)



This traditional Italian ricotta pie features a buttery pasta frolla crust filled with sweetened ricotta, eggs, orange zest, and chocolate chips for a creamy, classic Italian dessert.

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 stick cubed cold butter
- 1 1 egg
- 1 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. lemon zest
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla
- For The ricotta filling
- 2 cups well drained whole milk ricotta
- 3/4 cup sugar

- 1 Tbsp. grated orange zest
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup semi- sweet chips or chopped dark chocolate
- 1 cup jam (an additional layer)

1. **1. Drain the Ricotta**

Place the ricotta in a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth over a bowl. Cover and refrigerate for **at least 1 hour or overnight** to remove excess moisture.

2. **2. Make the Pasta Frolla**

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt.

Add the cold butter and work it into the flour mixture with your fingers or a pastry cutter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Add the egg, egg yolk, vanilla, and lemon zest. Mix just until a dough forms.

Shape the dough into a disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for **30–60 minutes**.

3. **3. Make the Ricotta Filling**

In a bowl combine the drained ricotta and sugar until smooth.

Add the eggs, orange zest, and vanilla and mix until fully combined.

Fold in the chocolate chips.

4. 4. Assemble the Pie

Preheat oven to **350°F (175°C)**.

Roll out about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the **pasta frolla** and press it into a **9-inch pie dish or tart pan**, bringing the dough up the sides.

Spread the **jam evenly over the bottom crust**.

Pour the ricotta filling over the jam layer and smooth the top.

Roll out the remaining dough and cut into strips to create a **lattice pattern** over the filling.

5. 5. Bake

Bake for **40–50 minutes**, or until the crust is golden and the filling is set.

Allow the pie to **cool completely for about 2 hours** before slicing.

Dessert

Italian

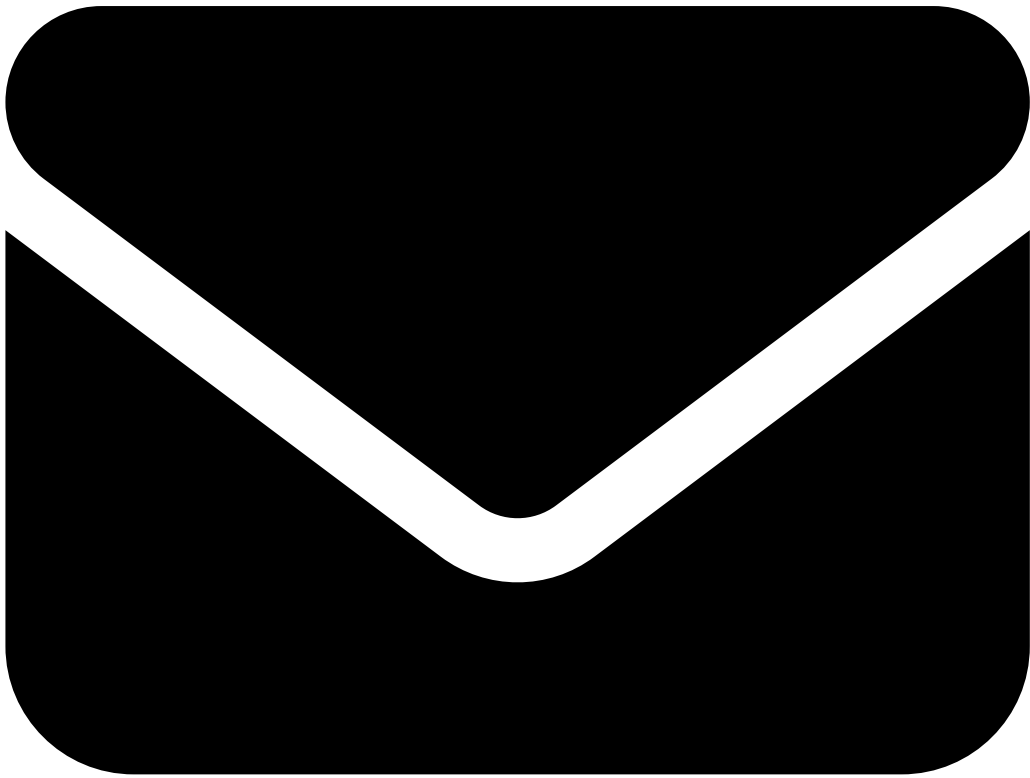
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Ciambelle (Unfilled Italian Donuts)

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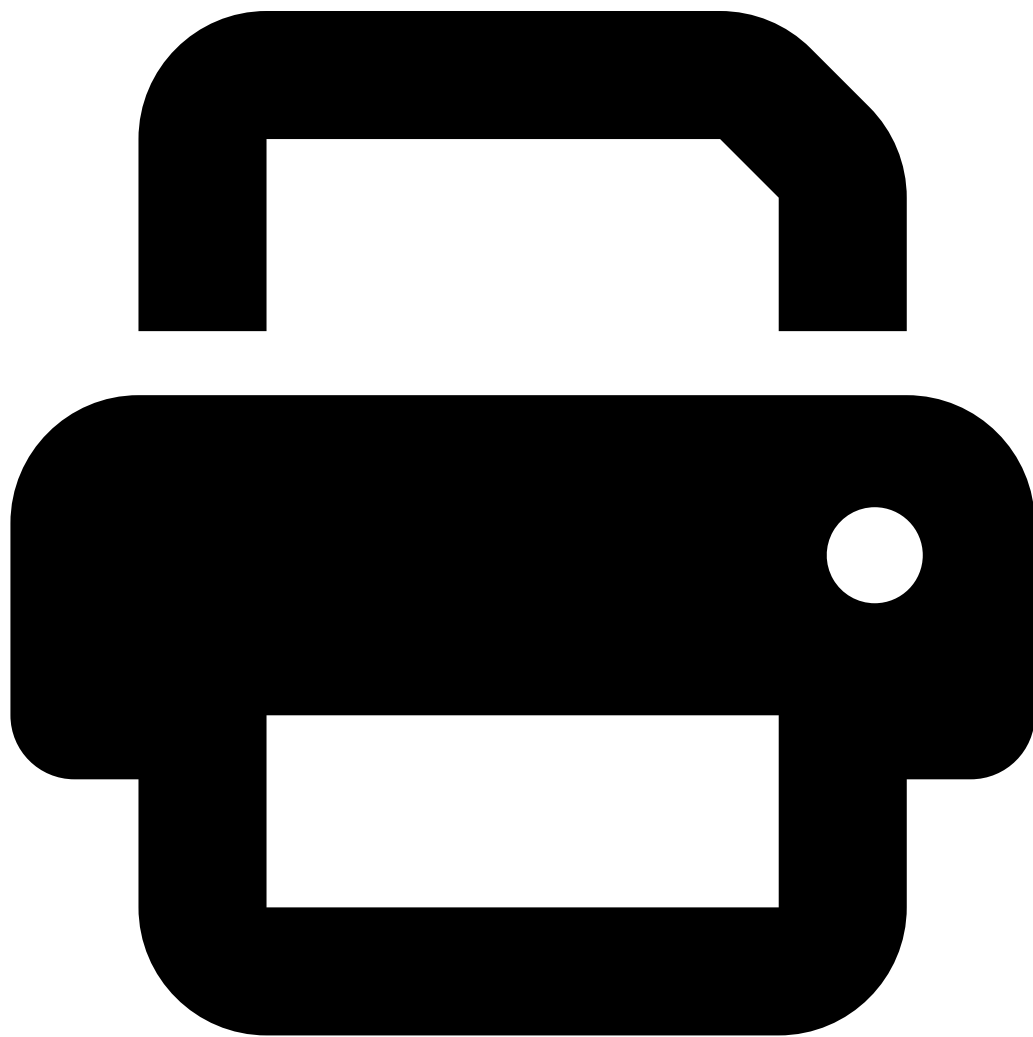
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In Italy, **Ciambelle** are the kind of simple pastry that never goes out of style. Long before elaborate glazes and over-the-top toppings, these golden ring donuts were made with basic pantry ingredients, lightly scented with lemon zest, fried until perfectly puffed, and rolled in sugar. Their name comes from the Italian word *ciambella*, meaning “ring,” and versions of these sweet breads have been part of Italian home baking for generations.

You’ll find them in neighborhood bakeries, at festivals, and on Sunday mornings alongside a strong espresso. They aren’t meant to be flashy – they’re meant to be comforting.

At our restaurant, we served them warm with espresso, just as they would in Italy. There’s something special about that pairing – the slight bitterness of the coffee against the soft, sweet dough. It’s simple, authentic, and unforgettable.

These Ciambelle are exactly that: traditional, unfussy, and rooted in real Italian baking.

Things to know about these Ciambelle (Unfilled Italian Donuts)

- Lemon zest is the signature Italian flavor – don't skip it.
- The dough should be soft and slightly tacky but not sticky.
- Fry at 350°F for even cooking and that golden exterior.
- These are best enjoyed fresh the same day.
- You can bake them, but frying gives the classic texture and flavor.

Storage

- Store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
- Reheat briefly in the microwave (8–10 seconds) to soften.
- They can be frozen (without the sugar coating) for up to 1 month. Thaw, warm slightly, then roll in fresh sugar before serving.
- If you love traditional Italian baking, be sure to check out my other classic recipes and bring even more authentic flavors into your kitchen.

Traditional Italian Esse cookies (5 cookies)

Classic favorite Italian Tiramisu recipe a real pick you

up dessert

Or my personal favorite Pureed Apple and walnut bundt

And if you make these Ciambelle, leave a comment and let me know – I love seeing your creations!

Ciambelle (Unfilled Italian Donuts)



- 3½ cups all-purpose flour ((440g))
- 2¼ tbsp active dry yeast ((1 packet))
- ¾ cup warm milk ((110°F))
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 pcs egg ((room temperature))
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter (softened)
- ½ tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 cup granulated sugar ((for coating))
- 4 cups frying oil (canola extra virgin olive oil blend)

1. **Activate the Yeast**

In a small bowl, combine warm milk, 1 tablespoon of the sugar, and yeast. Let sit 5–10 minutes until foamy.

2. **Make the Dough**

In a large bowl (or stand mixer):

- Combine flour, remaining sugar, and salt.
- Add eggs, vanilla, lemon zest, and yeast mixture.
- Mix until combined.
- Add softened butter and knead 8–10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
- The dough should be soft but not sticky.

3. **First Rise**

Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and let rise 1–1½ hours until doubled.

4. **Shape the Rings**

- Turn dough onto a floured surface.
- Roll to about ½-inch thickness.
- Cut circles using a 3-inch cutter.
- Cut a small hole in the center (or use your finger to stretch gently).
- Place on parchment squares.

Cover loosely and let rise again 30–45 minutes.

5. **Fry**

In a deep fry pan Heat oil to 350°F (175°C). Fry 1–2 at a time, about 1–2 minutes per side, until golden brown.

Do not overcrowd.

6. Coat

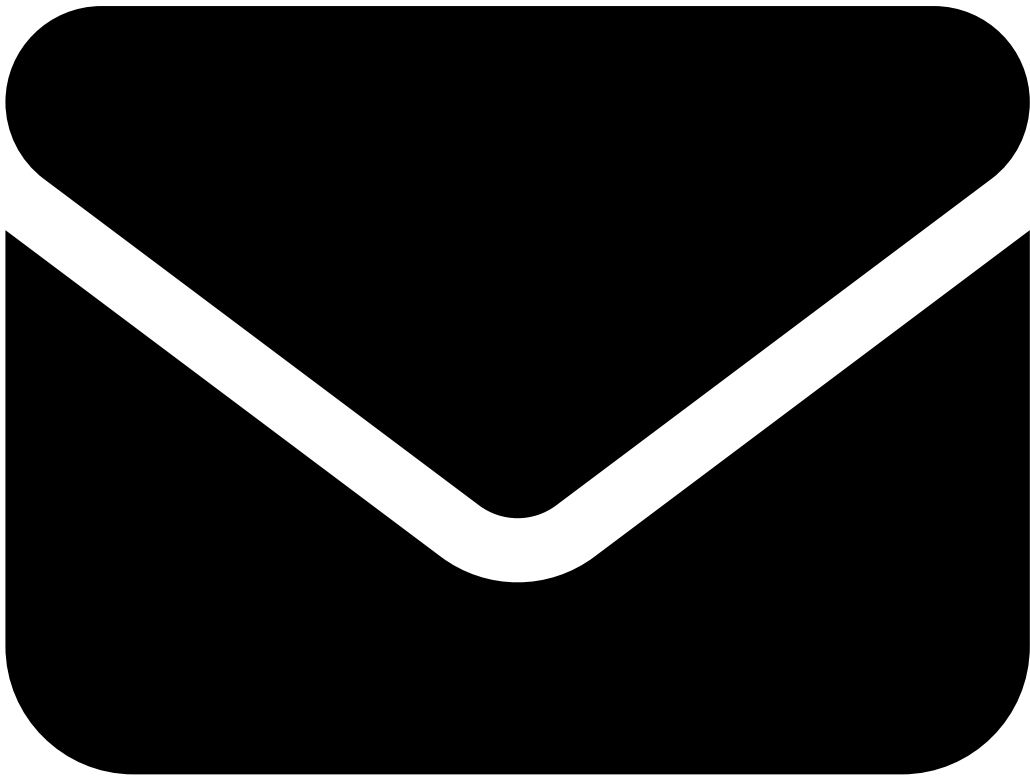
While still warm, roll in granulated sugar.

Traditional Italian S Cookies (Biscotti Esse)

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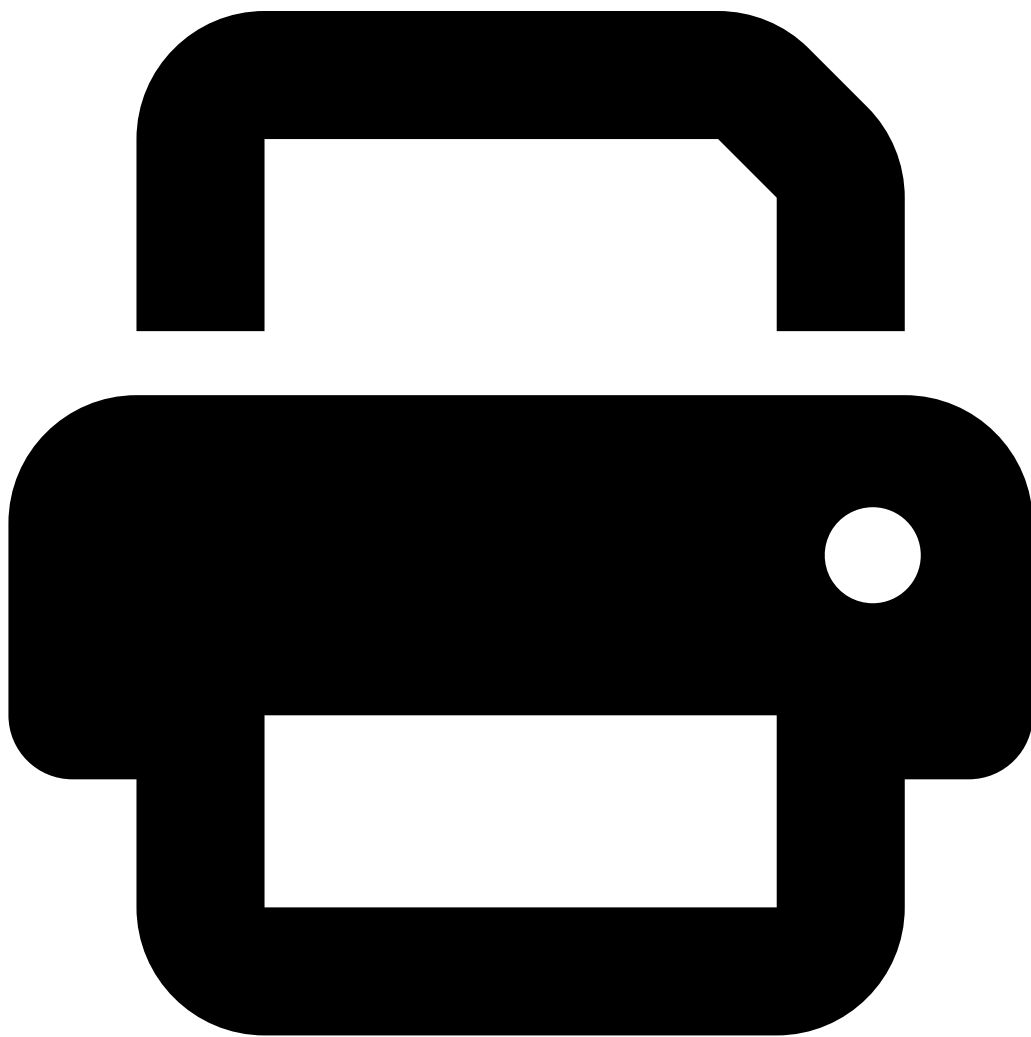
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These classic Italian S cookies, known as *Biscotti Esse*, are an old-school staple found in Italian bakeries and home kitchens across Italy. Their simple S shape comes from the Italian word *esse*—the letter S—and dates back to a time when cookies were made with basic pantry ingredients and mixed by hand.

Simple, unfussy, and timeless, these cookies are crisp on the outside, tender inside, and meant to be enjoyed with espresso, coffee, or tucked onto a holiday cookie tray.

Things to know about this Traditional Italian S Cookies (Biscotti Esse) recipe

- Esse cookies are traditionally pale; avoid overbaking so

they stay tender inside.

- Butter is rubbed into the flour first, creating a delicate, bakery-style crumb.
- Dough should be soft and smooth, not sticky—dust hands lightly with flour if needed.
- These cookies are lightly sweet and designed to be served with coffee or espresso.
- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to **5 days**.
- Baked cookies freeze well for up to **2 months**.
- If you love old-school Italian baking, don't miss my other classic recipes like *Italian Amaretti Cookies recipe*, *Authentic Italian Tiramisu*, *Traditional Italian Almond Biscotti*, and my collection of *Italian Christmas cookies*. Save this recipe, share it with a fellow cookie lover, and let me know in the comments if your Nonna made them this way too ☐

Traditional Italian S Cookies (Biscotti Esse)



Makes approximately 30–36 S cookies, depending on size.

- 3 cups 360 g all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup 113 g unsalted butter, cold and cubed
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 lemon

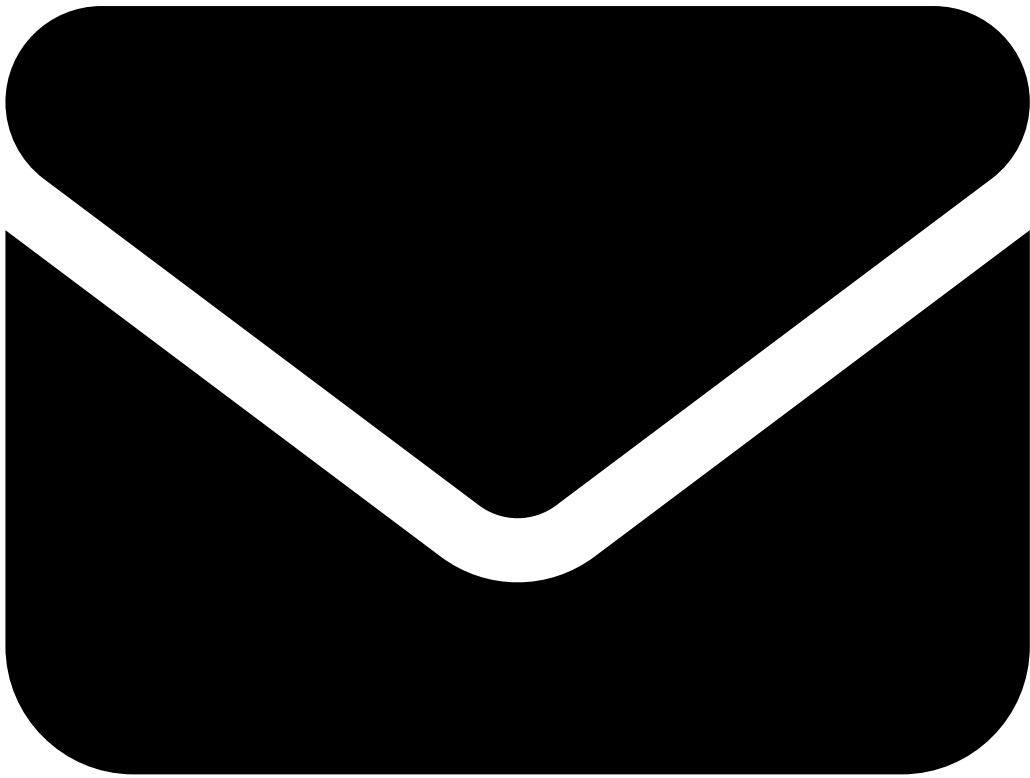
1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C) and line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
 2. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
 3. Add the cold butter and work it into the flour with your fingertips until the mixture is fine and crumbly.
 4. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture.
 5. Add the sugar, eggs, vanilla, and lemon zest into the well.
 6. Using a fork, beat the eggs gently and begin pulling the flour in from the sides.
 7. Once the dough starts to come together, use your hands to gently work it until smooth and soft. Do not overwork.
 8. Transfer the dough to a piping bag fitted with a large plain tip, or shape by hand.
 9. Pipe or form S-shaped (esse) cookies onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing slightly apart.
 10. Bake for 10–12 minutes, until set and lightly golden on the bottom. Tops should remain pale.
 11. Cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
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Classic Italian Tiramisu recipe

Classic Italian Tiramisu recipe

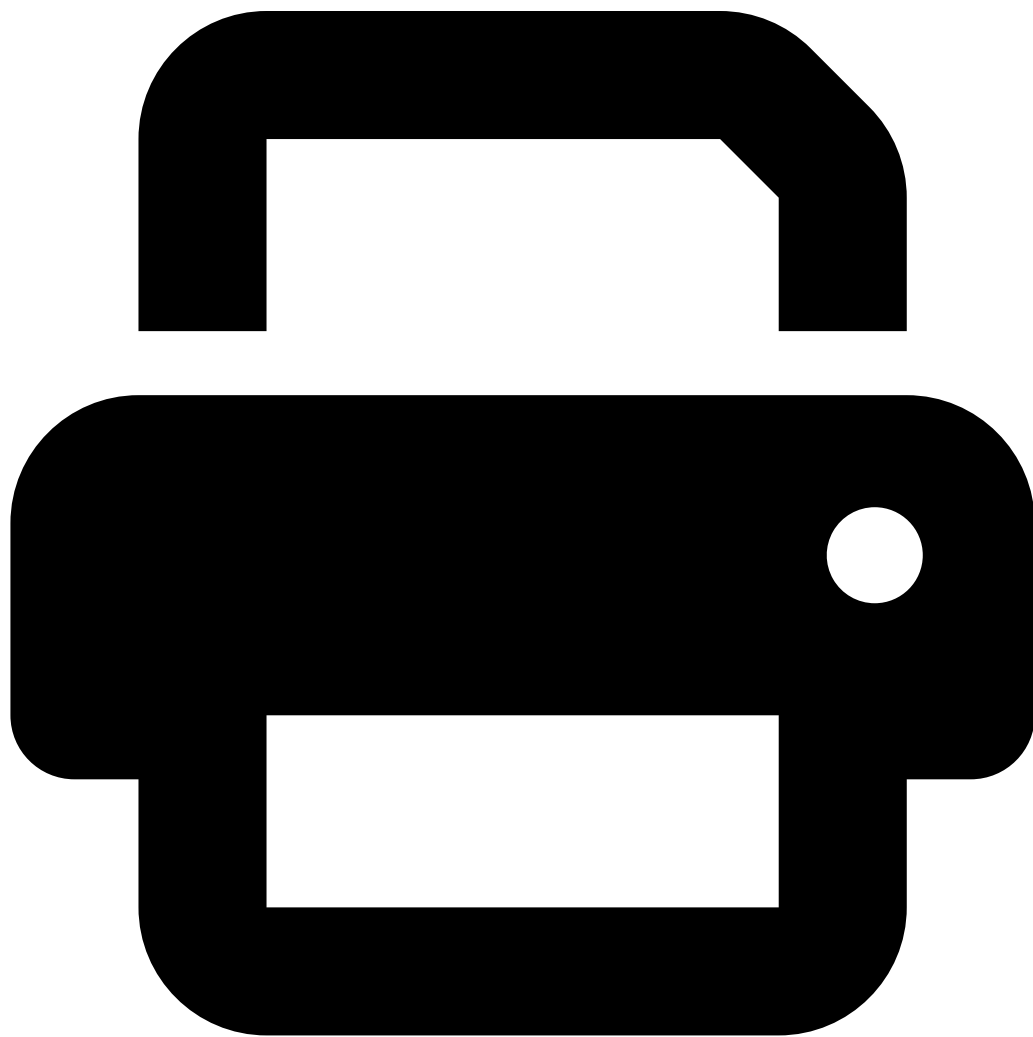
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Classic Italian Tiramisu is one of Italy's most iconic desserts, made with layers of espresso-soaked ladyfingers and a delicate mascarpone cream. The modern version is widely believed to have originated in the Veneto region, in the city of Treviso, and was popularized in the late 1960s at the renowned restaurant **Le Beccherie**. This dessert was also a staple in my own restaurant, where we prepared it using the traditional zabaglione water-bath method—simple ingredients, proper technique, and patience—just as it's meant to be served in Italian kitchens and classic trattorias.

Things to know about this Classic Italian Tiramisu recipe

- **Make it ahead:** Tiramisu improves with time. For best flavor and structure, make it **at least 6 hours ahead**, or ideally the day before serving.

- **No baking required:** The only cooking involved is gently tempering the egg yolks over a water bath (zabaglione method).
- **Food-safe eggs:** The water bath brings the yolks to a safe temperature while keeping the cream light and silky.
- **Mascarpone matters:** Use full-fat mascarpone and keep it cold until ready to fold in—this prevents a loose or grainy filling.
- **Cocoa timing:** Always dust the cocoa powder **just before serving** to keep it dry and vibrant.

Tips for Success

- **Whisk constantly over the water bath:** Gentle heat and steady whisking create a smooth, stable zabaglione—never rush this step.
- **Do not over-soak the ladyfingers:** A quick dip (1–2 seconds) is enough. Too much espresso will collapse the layers.
- **Fold, don't stir:** When combining whipped cream with the mascarpone mixture, fold gently to keep the tiramisu light.
- **Chill thoroughly:** Proper chilling allows the layers to set and flavors to meld—this is key to clean slices.
- **Use quality espresso:** Strong, freshly brewed espresso gives tiramisu its signature depth and balance.
- **Storage**

- **Refrigeration:** Store tiramisu covered in the refrigerator for up to **3 days**. The flavor actually improves after the first day.
- **Best container:** Keep it tightly wrapped or in an airtight container to prevent it from absorbing fridge odors.
- **Freezing:** While tiramisu *can* be frozen for up to **1 month**, the texture of the mascarpone cream is best when enjoyed fresh. If freezing, wrap well and thaw overnight in the refrigerator.
- **Serving after storage:** Always dust with fresh cocoa powder **right before serving**, especially if it has been refrigerated or frozen.

▪ If You Loved This Recipe...

If you enjoyed this **classic Italian tiramisu**, be sure to explore more traditional Italian desserts and restaurant-style recipes on the blog. You may also like:

- **Italian Amaretti Cookies**— soft, almond-rich, and perfect with espresso
- **Italian Wedding Cookies** — a holiday and bakery classic
- **Lemon Tiramisu**— a summer favorite with a lemon curd, elegant finish
- **Italian Crostata with Jam** — simple, rustic, and timeless

Classic Italian Tiramisu recipe



This **Classic Italian Tiramisu** is an authentic no-bake Italian dessert made with delicate layers of espresso-soaked ladyfingers, a rich and creamy mascarpone filling, and a generous dusting of cocoa powder. Light, silky, and perfectly balanced between sweet and bold coffee flavors, this timeless dessert is surprisingly easy to make and tastes even better after chilling overnight. Whether you're serving it for a holiday, dinner party, or special family meal, this traditional tiramisu is always a crowd favorite.

- 8 x 8-inch square dish, at least 2 inches deep
- 6 large egg yolks (room temperature)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup 8 oz mascarpone cheese, cold
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups heavy cream (cold)
- 2 cups strong espresso (cooled)
- 2 Tbsp Marsala wine or dark rum (optional but traditional)
- 30 savoiardi (ladyfingers)
- Unsweetened cocoa powder (for dusting)
- Dark chocolate shavings (optional)

1. **Make the Zabaglione (Water Bath Method)**

Bring a few inches of water to a gentle simmer in a saucepan.

In a heatproof bowl, whisk egg yolks and sugar until combined.

Place the bowl over the simmering water (do not let the bowl touch the water).

Whisk constantly for 5-6 **minutes**, until thick, pale, and warm to the touch (about 160°F / 71°C).

Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.

2. **Add Mascarpone**

Gently whisk mascarpone into the warm zabaglione until smooth and creamy.

Set aside.

3. **Whip the Cream**

In a separate bowl, whip cold heavy cream to **stiff peaks**.

Fold gently into the mascarpone mixture, keeping the cream light and airy.

4. **Prepare the Espresso**

Stir Marsala wine (or rum) into the cooled espresso.

5. **Assemble**

Quickly dip each ladyfinger into the espresso (1–2

seconds per side).

Arrange a single layer in an 8×8-inch dish.

Spread half of the mascarpone cream evenly over the cookies.

Repeat with another layer of dipped ladyfingers and finish with remaining cream.

6. **Chill**

Cover and refrigerate **at least 4–6 hours**, preferably overnight for best flavor and structure.

7. **Finish & Serve**

Dust generously with cocoa powder just before serving.

Add chocolate shavings if desired

Dessert

Italian

how to make authentic Italian tiramisu

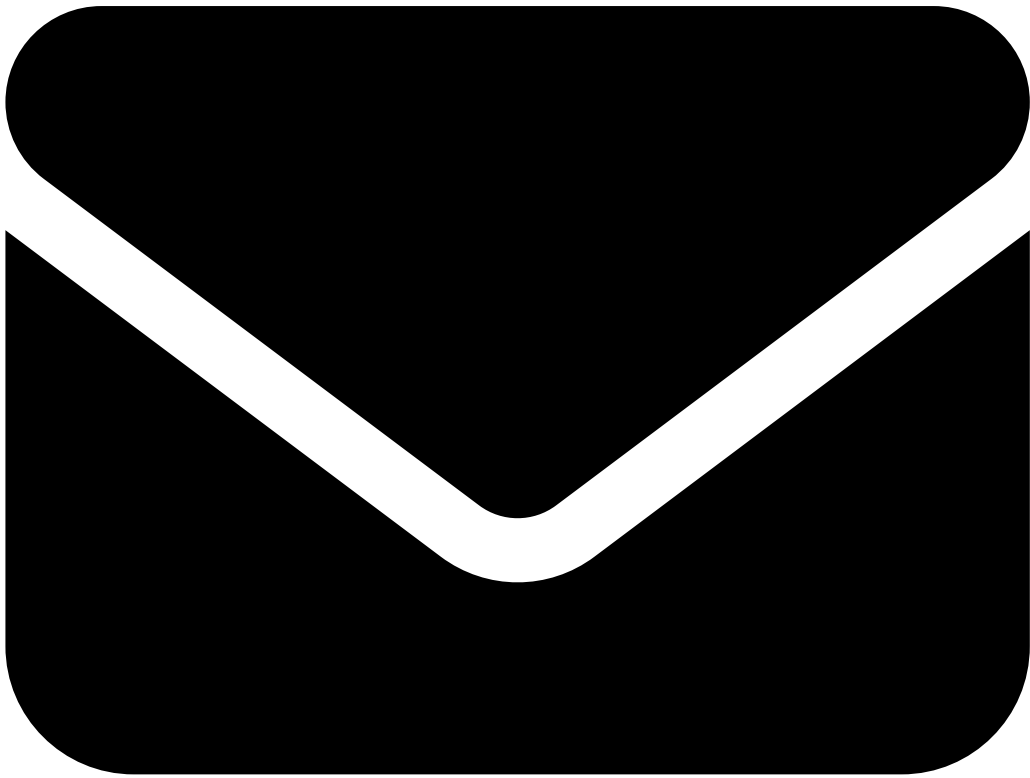
Healthy Italian Recipes to Start the New Year Right

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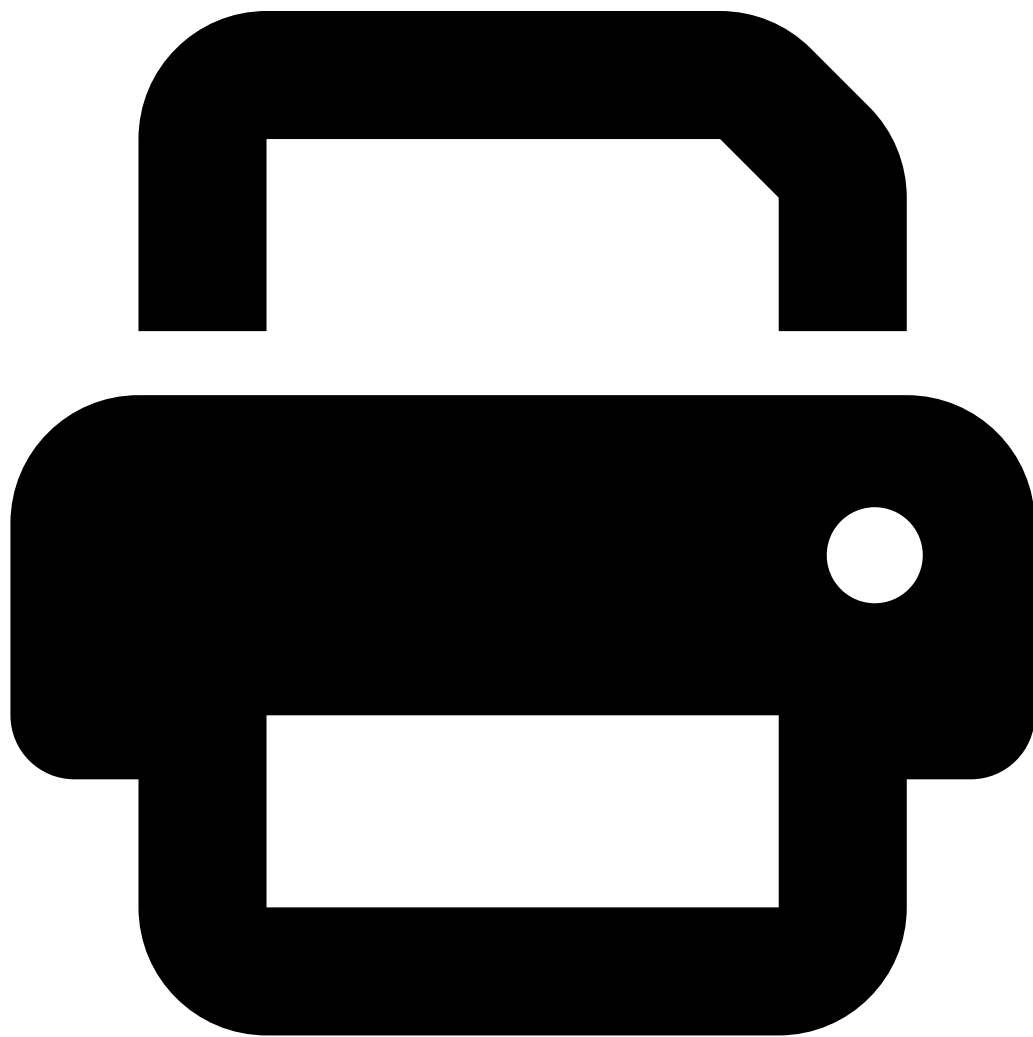
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The New Year always brings a renewed focus on feeling good—without giving up the foods we love. In Italian cooking, that balance has always existed. It's about fresh ingredients, simple preparations, and letting real food shine.

This year, instead of extremes, I'm leaning into **healthy Italian recipes** that feel nourishing, comforting, and realistic. Dishes built on vegetables, legumes, seafood, olive oil, and simple proteins—the way Italians have cooked for generations.

If you're looking to reset after the holidays while still enjoying flavorful, satisfying meals, these recipes are the perfect place to start.

What “Healthy Italian” Really Means

In my kitchen, healthy doesn’t mean bland or boring. It means:

- Fresh, seasonal ingredients
- Olive oil instead of heavy sauces
- Beans, vegetables, seafood, and lean proteins
- Recipes that leave you satisfied—not deprived

These dishes are proof that Italian food can be both comforting and nourishing.

Fresh & Light Starters

Perfect for lighter meals, lunch, or beginning a balanced dinner.

Rustic Italian Roasted pepper salad

Bright, refreshing, and naturally light, this classic salad is packed with citrus, crunch, and flavor.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Winter Persimmon Walnut Salad

   A beautiful balance of sweetness, crunch, and freshness—perfect during the colder months.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Italian Escarole and Beans

Simple, rustic, and protein-rich, this is a classic Italian dish that proves healthy food can still be deeply comforting.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Nourishing Soups

Soups are one of the easiest ways to eat well without sacrificing flavor.

Italian Wedding Soup

Light broth, greens, and tender meatballs come together for a soup that's filling yet balanced.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Vegetarian Italian Mushroom Soup

Earthy, satisfying, and naturally wholesome—perfect for a light lunch or dinner.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Tortellini in chicken Brodo

A timeless Italian classic that relies on good broth and simple ingredients rather than heavy additions.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Balanced Pasta & Mains

Italian food has always been about moderation—these dishes are flavorful without being heavy.

Shrimp Oreganata

· Baked shrimp with breadcrumbs, garlic, and lemon—light, protein-rich, and full of flavor.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Tomato piccata Alaskan cod

A fresh, tomato piccata- dish that feels indulgent while staying light and elegant.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Italian Stuffed Eggplant Bolognese

A perfect example of balance—vegetables, protein, and just enough richness to satisfy.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Pasta with Lentils and Italian Sausage

A balanced pasta dish rooted in tradition, combining lentils, a modest amount of sausage, and pantry staples for a hearty but nourishing meal.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Italian-Style Roast Chicken and Potatoes

A complete meal made with simple ingredients—olive oil, herbs, and perfectly roasted chicken and potatoes. This is everyday Italian cooking at its best.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Naturally Sweet Endings

Dessert doesn't have to disappear—just shift toward simpler, more traditional treats.

Italian olive oil Almond Cake

Light, not overly sweet, and perfect with coffee or espresso.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Italian Apple Cake

Made with fresh apples and simple ingredients, this cake is naturally moist and comforting without being heavy.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Baked Gorgonzola Stuffed Pears

Sweet fruit paired with savory cheese makes a satisfying, portion-friendly dessert.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

Starting the New Year the Italian Way

Italian cooking has never been about cutting things out—it's about balance, quality ingredients, and enjoying food with intention. These healthy Italian recipes are the ones I turn to when I want meals that feel good, taste great, and still honor tradition.

As you move into the New Year, I hope these dishes inspire you to cook simply, eat well, and gather often. Because the healthiest meals are the ones that bring comfort, nourishment, and a little joy to the table.

□ Let me know in the comments—which recipe will you start with?

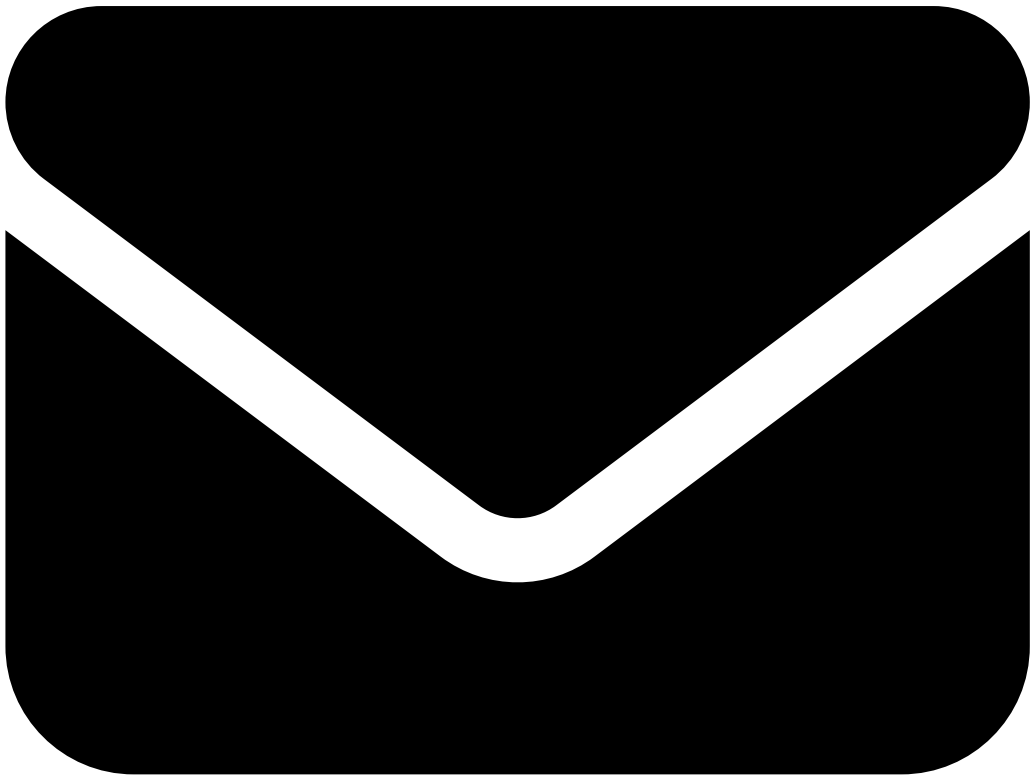
Italian Wedding Cookies (Classic Butterball Style)

Italian Wedding Cookies

(Classic Butterball Style)

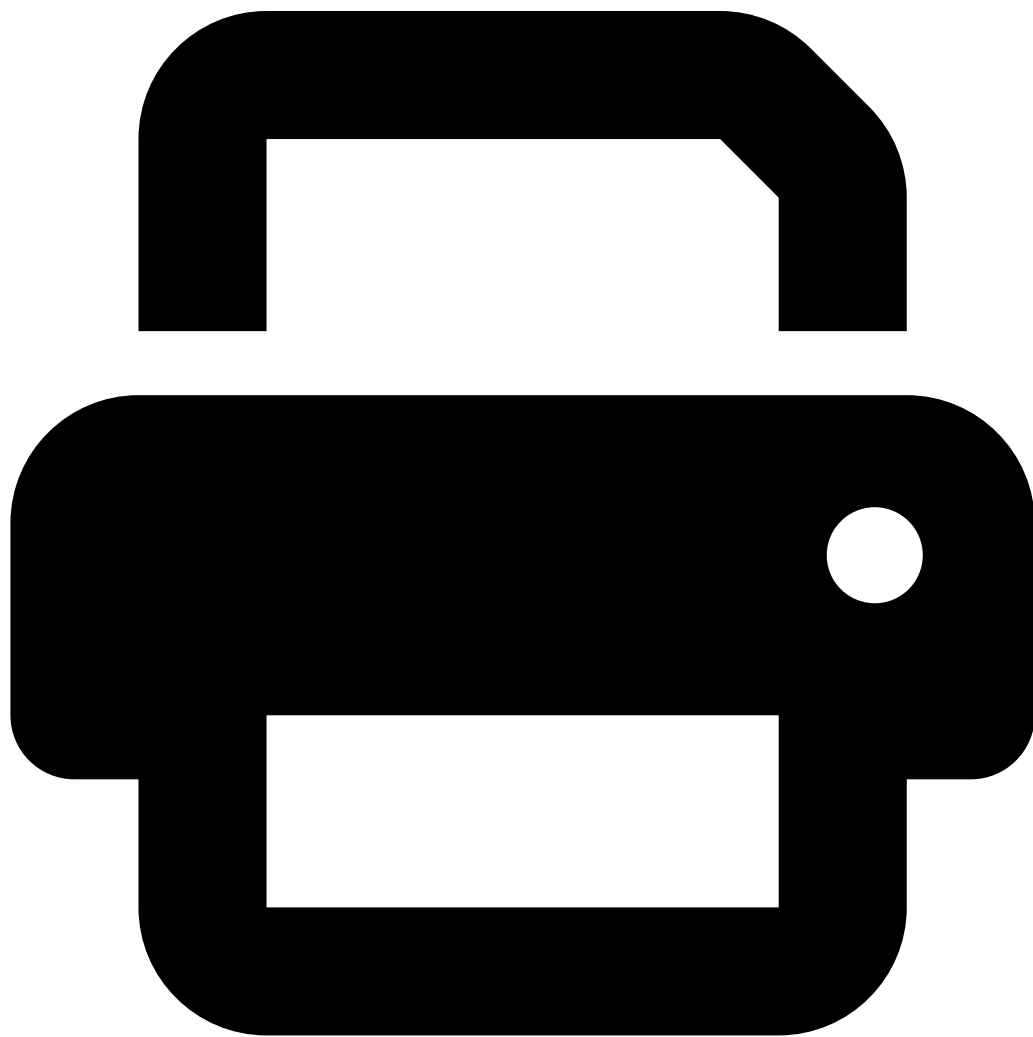
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These traditional **Italian Wedding Cookies** are the kind of cookie you'll find piled high on platters at weddings, holidays, and Sunday family gatherings. Simple, buttery, and dusted generously with powdered sugar, they practically melt the moment they hit your tongue.

They're not flashy cookies – and that's exactly the point. Made with just a handful of pantry ingredients, these cookies rely on good butter, proper balance, and gentle handling. This is the recipe I come back to year after year when I want something timeless and unmistakably Italian.

Things to know about Italian Wedding Cookies (Classic Butterball

Style)

- These cookies **should not brown** – pale equals tender.
 - Chilling the dough prevents spreading.
 - Rolling twice in powdered sugar gives that signature snowy finish.
-

Storage

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to **1 week**.
- They also **freeze beautifully** (uncoated). Roll in powdered sugar after thawing.

Final Note

Italian wedding cookies prove that the simplest recipes are often the most beloved. No nuts, no fuss – just buttery, delicate cookies that feel like a bite of celebration every time.

If you love classic Italian cookies like these, be sure to explore more of my favorites. From **Italian amaretti cookies** to **traditional almond cantucci cookies**, you'll find plenty of old-world treats perfect for holidays, celebrations, or everyday baking.

Browse all my Italian cookie recipes here.

Italian Wedding Cookies (Classic Butterball Style)



These Italian Wedding Cookies, also known as Butterballs or Snowball Cookies, are a classic holiday treat made with finely chopped nuts, butter, powdered sugar, and vanilla. The dough is rolled into delicate bite-sized balls, baked until just set, then generously coated in powdered sugar while still warm. Soft, buttery, and melt-in-your-mouth tender, they're a nostalgic cookie that shows up at weddings, Christmas, and family gatherings across Italian-American homes.

- 2 sticks (1 cup) **unsalted butter**, softened
- 1 cup **powdered sugar**, plus more for rolling after baking
- 1 tbsp **vanilla extract**
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ – $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups **all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup finely chopped walnuts
- Pinch of salt (*optional, but recommended if using unsalted butter*)

1. Cream the butter and sugar

In a large bowl, beat the softened butter with the powdered sugar until light, fluffy, and pale – about 3-4 minutes.

2. Add vanilla

Mix in the vanilla extract until fully incorporated.

3. Incorporate the flour

Gradually add the flour (starting with $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups) and salt, mixing just until a soft dough forms.

- The dough should be **tender and not sticky**.
- If it feels too soft, add flour 1 tablespoon at a time.

4. Mix in the walnuts until well combined

5. Chill the dough

Cover and refrigerate for **30–45 minutes**. This helps the cookies hold their shape.

6. Shape the cookies

Scoop about 1 tablespoon of dough and roll into small balls.

7. Bake

Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake at **350°F (175°C)** for **12–14 minutes**. The cookies should stay pale with just a hint of color on the bottom – do not overbake.

8. Finish with powdered sugar

Let cookies cool slightly, then roll generously in powdered sugar. For a classic look, roll them **again once fully cooled**

Dessert

Italian

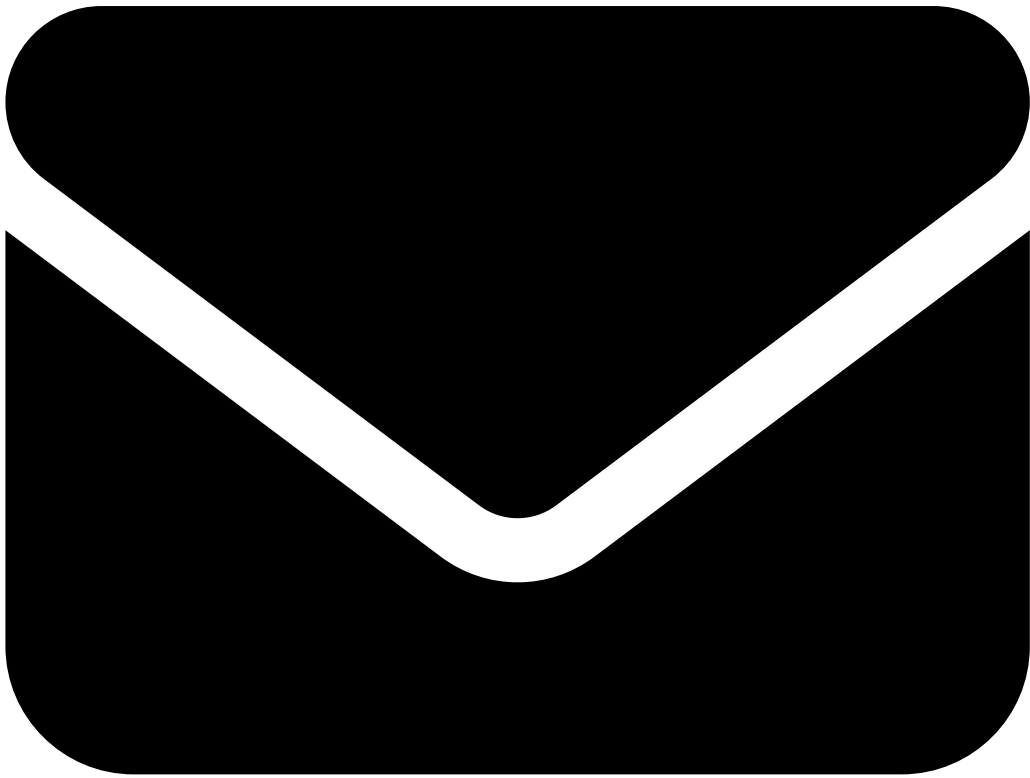
Italian wedding cookies

Ravioli Dolci di Ceci
(Italian Fried Chickpea
Pastries)

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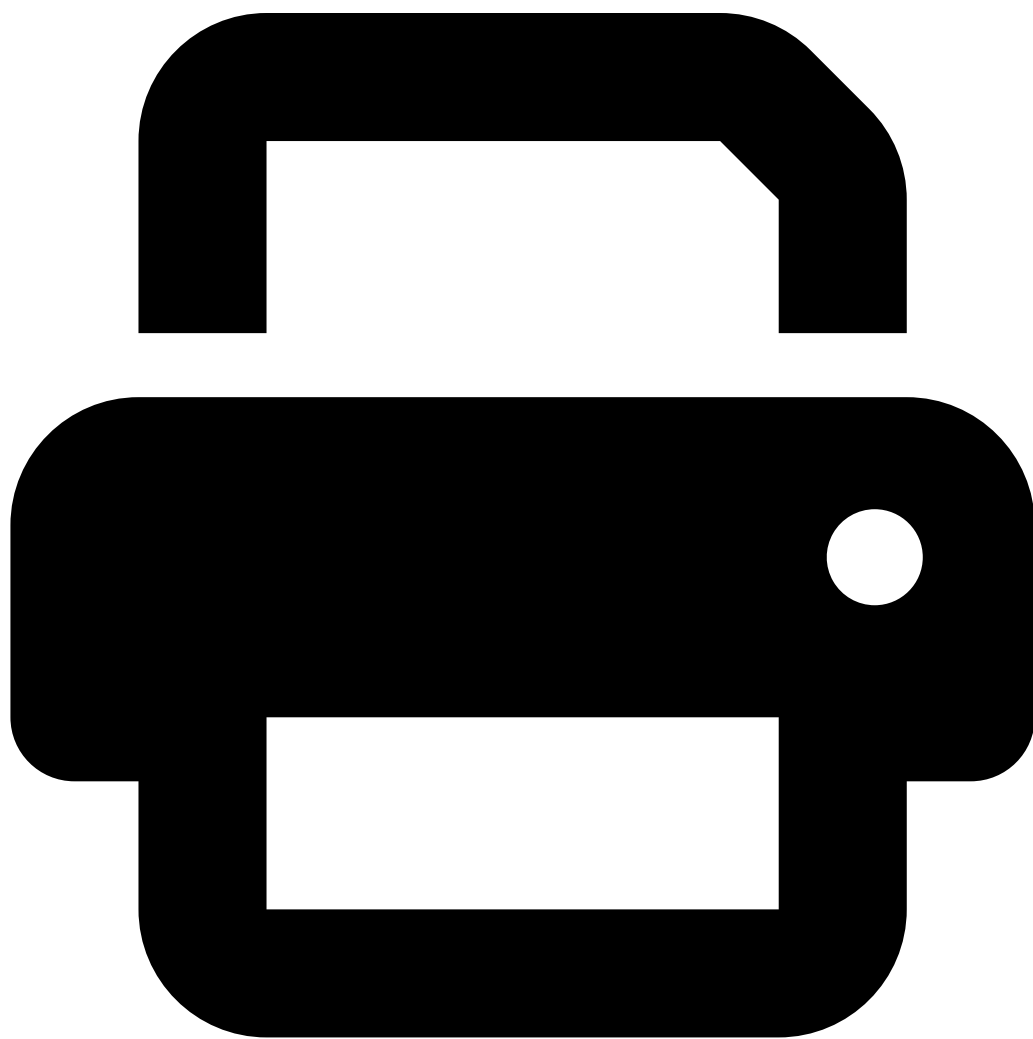
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There are some Italian recipes that were never written down because they never needed to be. These are one of them. Growing up, I didn't know what these were called – I don't think my family really did either. They were simply *i dolci di Natale*, the sweet fried pastries that appeared around the holidays, usually when the oil was already hot and the kitchen smelled like citrus, cocoa, and sugar.

Only later did I learn that many Italian families made some version of these: a simple **pasta frolla dough**, filled with a **sweet chickpea and cocoa mixture**, folded like little ravioli, and fried until golden. It's pure *cucina povera* ingenuity – turning humble pantry ingredients into something rich, comforting, and surprisingly elegant.

If chickpeas in dessert sound strange, trust me: you don't taste them. They create a creamy, almost chestnut-like base that carries chocolate and orange beautifully. These are crisp on the outside, soft in the center, and even better the next

day re crisped

Things to know about Ravioli Dolci di Ceci (Italian Fried Chickpea Pastry)

- You should **not taste the chickpeas** – they act as a creamy base, similar to chestnuts.
- If the filling feels loose, add 1 tablespoon ground almonds, crushed amaretti, or fine breadcrumbs.
- These keep well for **2–3 days**, lightly covered at room temperature.
- They're even better the next day once the flavors settle.

Why You'll Love This Recipe

- Simple pantry ingredients
- Deeply traditional and nostalgic
- Perfect for holidays and special occasions
- A beautiful example of Italian *cucina povera*

A Note From My Kitchen

This is one of those recipes that reminds me why I love Italian food so much. It's not about fancy ingredients – it's about memory, practicality, and making something special from what you already have. If your family made something similar, chances are it didn't have a name either – and that's exactly what makes it special.

If you try these, I'd love to hear what your family called them – or if they just appeared on the table like magic.

If you love traditional Italian holiday sweets, be sure to explore more of my favorites:

- **Italian Angel Wings (Cenci / Chiacchiere)** – light, crisp, and fried to perfection
- **Pizzicati Italian Pinch Cookies** – a classic nonna cookie for Christmas trays

Ravioli Dolci di Ceci (Italian Fried Chickpea Pastries)



Ravioli Dolci di Ceci are traditional Italian sweet fried pastries filled with a smooth, lightly sweetened chickpea filling flavored with citrus zest, vanilla, and sometimes a touch of honey or chocolate. The filling is enclosed in delicate pastry, then fried until golden and crisp, and often finished with a dusting of powdered sugar. A rustic Southern Italian treat, these pastries are especially popular during Carnevale and festive holidays, offering a unique balance of creamy, nutty filling and crisp exterior.

Pasta Frolla (Sweet Pastry Dough)

- 2½ cups (315 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (113 g) unsalted butter, cold and cubed
- 1 large egg
- 1 lemon zest or orange
- Pinch of salt

- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract (optional)

Chickpea Filling

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups cooked chickpeas, well-drained
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (25 g) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 orange zest
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 – 3 tbsp milk or espresso, added gradually
- Pinch of salt

For Frying & Finishing

- 3 cups Neutral oil (vegetable or sunflower)
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

1. Make the Pasta Frolla

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, and salt. Add the cold butter and rub it in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Add the egg, citrus zest, and vanilla. Gently bring the dough together just until it forms. Do not overwork.

Form into a disk, wrap tightly, and refrigerate for **at least 30 minutes**.

2. Prepare the Chickpea Filling

Dry the chickpeas very well with a kitchen towel. This is key to avoiding a loose filling.

Place the chickpeas in a **food processor** and process until very smooth, scraping down the sides as needed.

Add the sugar, cocoa powder, orange zest, cinnamon,

vanilla, salt, and 2 tablespoons of milk or espresso. Process until thick and creamy. Add the remaining tablespoon only if needed.

The filling should be **thick and spoonable**, not loose. Chill for 20–30 minutes if needed.

3. Roll and Fill

You can roll the dough **by hand with a rolling pin** or use a **pasta machine**, both of which are traditional.

Rolling pin method: Roll the chilled dough very thin on a lightly floured surface – almost like ravioli dough. You should be able to see a faint shadow of your hand through it.

Pasta machine method: Divide the dough into manageable pieces. Flatten slightly, then pass through the pasta machine starting at the widest setting. Fold and pass through once or twice, then continue rolling thinner until you reach about **setting 5–6**, or just thinner than fresh pasta sheets.

Cut the dough into rectangles or circles. Place about **1 teaspoon of filling** in the center of each.

Lightly moisten the edges with water, fold over, and press firmly to seal. Crimp with fingers or a fork. Trim edges neatly.

4. Fry

Heat oil to **350°F (175°C)**.

Fry pastries in batches, turning once, until golden brown – about **1–2 minutes per side**.

Transfer to paper towels to drain.

5. Finish

Dust generously with powdered sugar while still warm.

Dessert

Italian

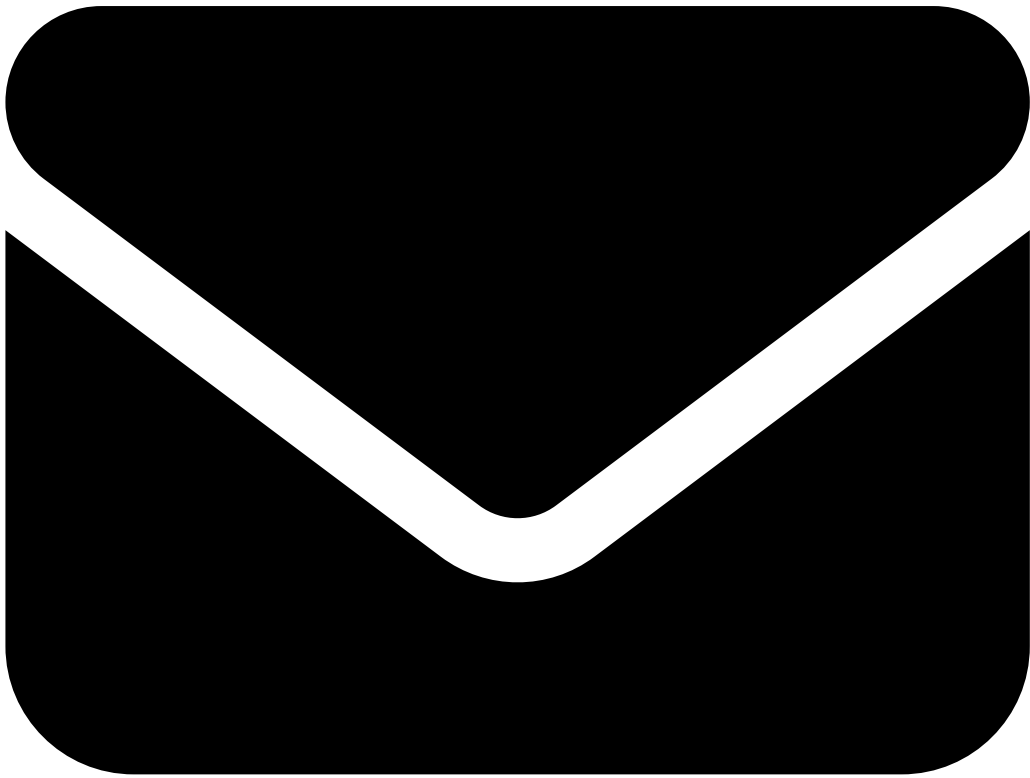
Italian chickpea pastries

**Italian Hot Chocolate
(Cioccolata Calda)**

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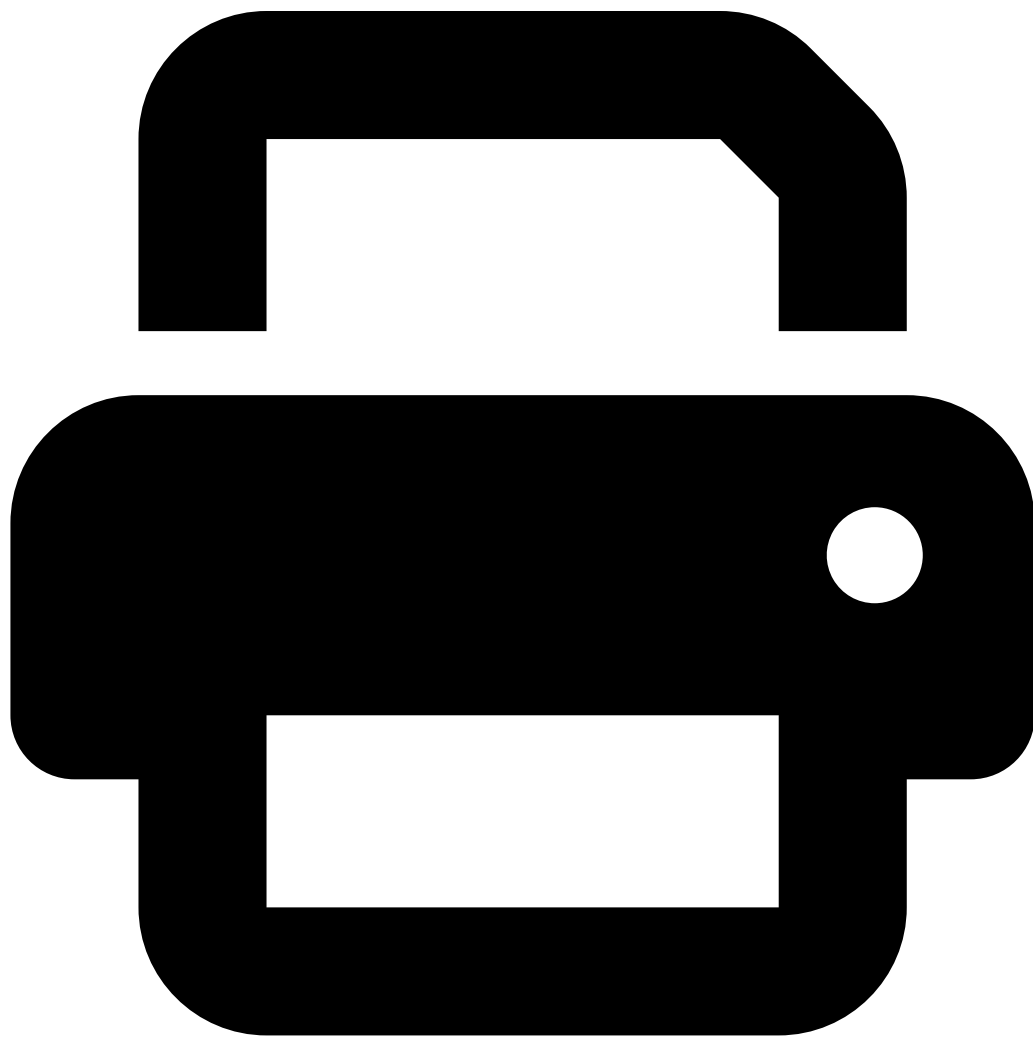
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Italian hot chocolate, or *cioccolata calda*, is rich, thick, and intensely chocolatey—nothing like the thin versions most of us grew up with. In Italy, it's meant to be slowly enjoyed, often served with a spoon, and savored on cold days at a café or at home. Made with just a handful of simple ingredients, this traditional recipe delivers a smooth, velvety texture and deep chocolate flavor that feels both comforting and indulgent.

Things to know about Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

- Italian hot chocolate is meant to be **thick and spoonable**, not thin like American-style hot chocolate.
- Using **high-quality dark chocolate** makes a noticeable difference in both flavor and texture.

- Always whisk the cornstarch with cold milk first to avoid lumps and ensure a silky finish.
- This recipe thickens quickly, so stir constantly and remove from heat as soon as it reaches the desired consistency.
- If you make this Italian hot chocolate, leave a comment below and let me know how you enjoyed it. For the perfect pairing, serve it with one of my classic Italian cookies—Angel wings, , or **Pizzicati Pinch Cookies**. The rich, thick chocolate is especially delicious alongside crisp or nutty cookies. Be sure to click through to those recipes and explore more traditional Italian cookie favorites here on the blog.

Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)



Italian Hot Chocolate, or *Cioccolata Calda*, is a rich, thick, spoonable hot chocolate that feels more like dessert than a drink. Made with whole milk, high-quality cocoa or dark chocolate, and a touch of sugar and cornstarch (or flour) for its signature velvety texture, it's luxuriously creamy and intensely chocolatey. Often served in small cups and topped with whipped cream or cocoa powder, this comforting Italian

classic is perfect for cold days and cozy evenings.

- 2 cups whole milk
- 3 ounces high-quality dark chocolate (70% cacao), finely chopped
- 2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- Pinch of salt

1. In a small bowl, whisk the **cornstarch with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the milk** until completely smooth, creating a slurry. Set aside.
2. In a small saucepan over medium heat, add the remaining milk, cocoa powder, sugar, and salt. Whisk well until fully combined.
3. Warm the mixture until steaming but **do not let it boil**.
4. Add the chopped dark chocolate and stir until melted and smooth.
5. Whisk in the cornstarch slurry and continue cooking, stirring constantly.
6. Cook for 4-7 **minutes**, until the hot chocolate thickens to a rich, velvety, spoon-coating consistency.
7. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla or citrus zest, if using.
8. Serve immediately in small cups, just as it's enjoyed in Italian cafés. Optional top with fresh whipped cream.

Dessert

Italian

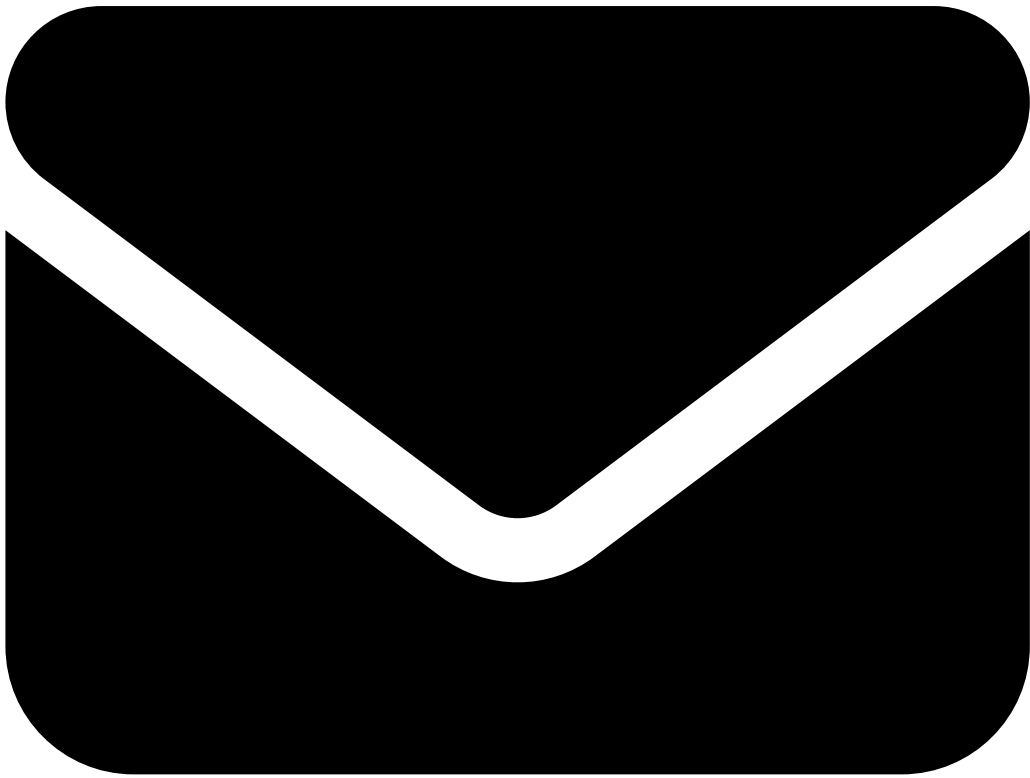
Italian hot chocolate

Angel Wing Cookies (Italian Fried Pastry)

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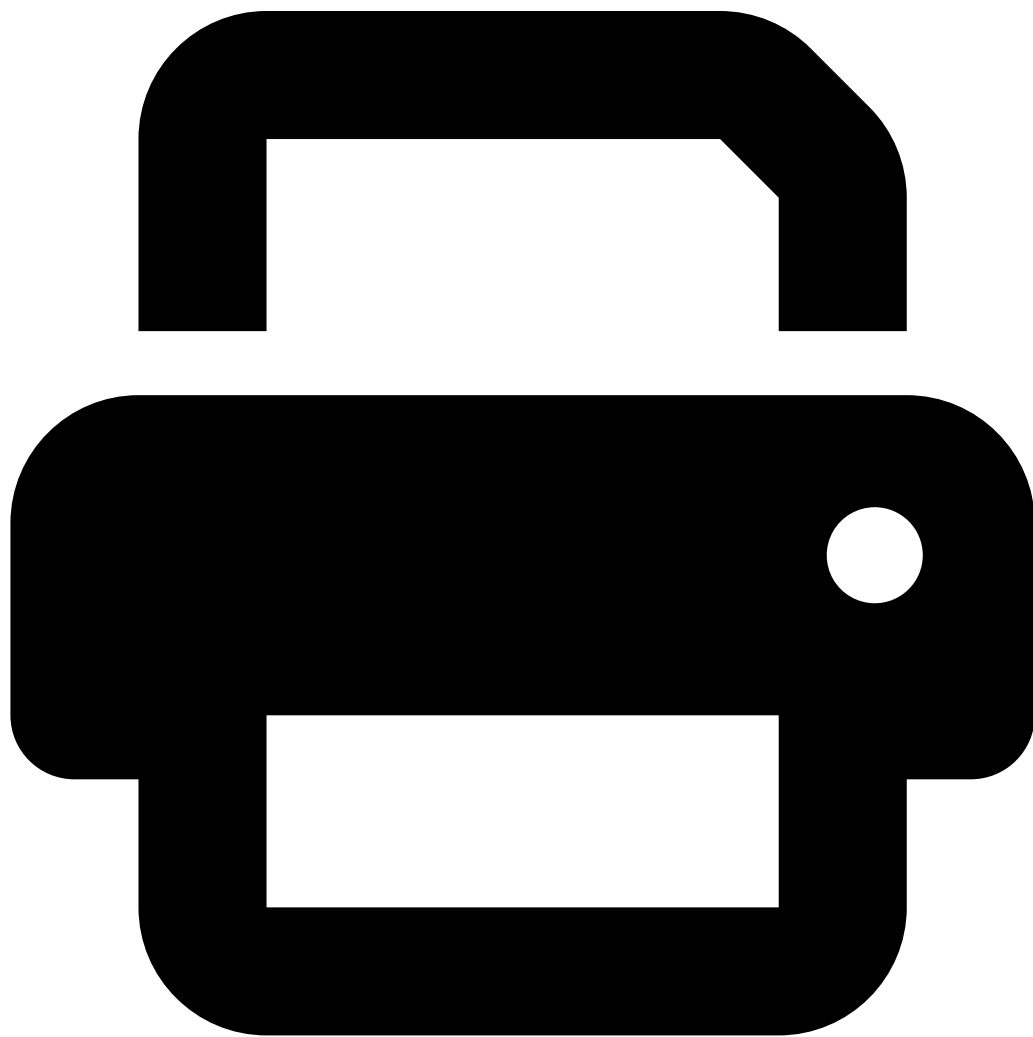
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Angel wing cookies are one of those recipes that show up on Italian tables year after year, especially around Christmas and Easter. Light, crisp, and dusted generously with powdered sugar, they're known by many names—**chiacchiere**, **crostoli**, **frappe**, **bugie**—depending on the region.

This version is made with a **classic Italian pasta frolla-style dough**, rolled paper-thin and fried until delicate and blistered. I like using my **pasta machine** to stretch the dough evenly, but a rolling pin works just as well—as long as you roll it *extra thin*. The thinner the dough, the lighter and crispier the cookies.

Things to know about this Angel Wing Cookies (Italian Fried Pastry)

- These cookies rely on **thin dough**, not sweetness, for their signature light and crisp texture.

- A pasta machine makes it easy to get the dough evenly thin, but a rolling pin works just as well if you take your time.
- The cookies puff and blister quickly in the oil—this is exactly what you want.
- They are best the day they're made but keep well for several days in an airtight container.
- Re-dust with powdered sugar just before serving for the prettiest finish.

Tips for Success

Roll thinner than you think: Thick dough will result in dense cookies. Thin dough gives you that light, shatteringly crisp texture.

Oil temperature matters: Too cool and the cookies absorb oil; too hot and they brown too quickly.

Storage & Freezing

Room Temperature: Store completely cooled angel wing cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to **5–7 days**.

Do Not Refrigerate: Refrigeration introduces moisture and will soften the cookies.

Freezing Fried Cookies: These cookies are best enjoyed fresh and **do not freeze well once fried**, as they tend to lose their crisp texture after thawing.

Freezing the Dough: You *can* freeze the raw dough. Wrap it tightly in plastic wrap, then place in a freezer-safe bag for up to **2 months**. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator, then bring to room temperature before rolling and frying.

If you try these angel wing cookies, I'd love to hear about

it. Leave a comment below, rate the recipe, or tag me on Instagram so I can see your cookie tray. Be sure to explore the blog for more classic 10 Italian cookies you must make this holiday , perfect for sharing with family and friends.

Angel Wing Cookies (Italian Fried Pastry)



Angel Wing Cookies, also known as *Frappe* or *Crostoli*, are delicate Italian fried pastries made from a thin, sweet dough that's twisted or cut into ribbons, then fried until light, golden, and crisp. Finished with a generous dusting of powdered sugar, these airy, crunchy cookies are a classic Carnevale treat enjoyed throughout Italy and Italian-American kitchens. They're light, not overly sweet, and have a shatteringly crisp texture that makes them irresistible.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup white wine or grappa
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

- 4 cups Vegetable or neutral oil, for frying
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

1. Make the Dough

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Add the butter and rub it into the flour mixture with your fingertips until it resembles coarse crumbs.

Add the eggs, lemon zest, and vanilla. Mix until a dough forms, then knead briefly until smooth and supple, about 3–4 minutes. The dough should be firm but not sticky. If it feels dry, add a few drops of water; if sticky, dust lightly with flour.

Form into a disk, wrap tightly, and let rest at room temperature for **30 minutes**.

2. Roll the Dough

Divide the dough into 4 pieces, keeping the portions you're not working with covered.

Using a pasta machine:

Flatten one piece slightly and run it through the widest setting. Continue passing it through the machine, reducing the thickness one notch at a time, until you reach **setting 6 or 7** (very thin, almost translucent).

Using a rolling pin:

Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface until it is **paper-thin**. You should almost be able to see through it.

3. Cut the Cookies

Using a fluted pastry wheel, cut the dough into rectangles or diamond shapes, about 2 x 4 inches. Cut a small slit in the center of each piece if desired (traditional but optional).

Place the cut dough on a lightly floured surface and repeat with remaining dough.

4. Fry

Heat about 2 inches of oil in a deep skillet or Dutch oven to **350°F (175°C)**.

Fry the cookies in batches, turning once, until puffed and lightly golden, about **30–45 seconds per side**. Do not overcrowd the pan.

Transfer to a paper towel-lined tray to drain.

5. Finish

Once completely cool, dust generously with powdered sugar.

Dessert

Italian

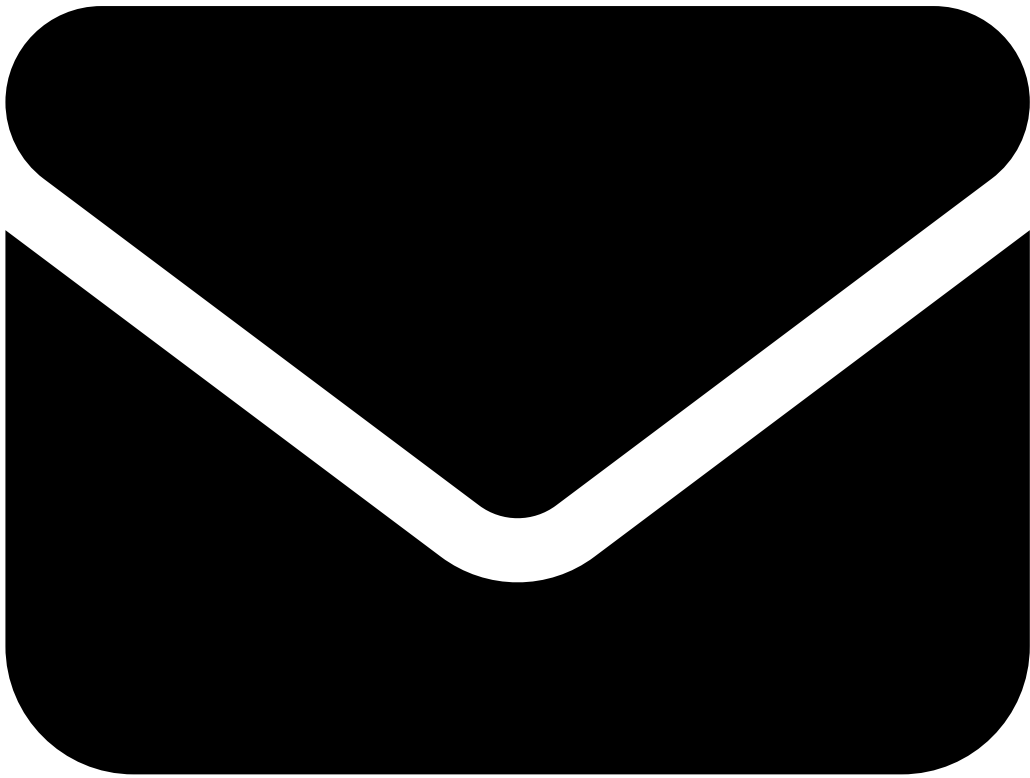
Italian Carnival cookies

Traditional Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring

Buccellato Siciliano – Traditional Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring

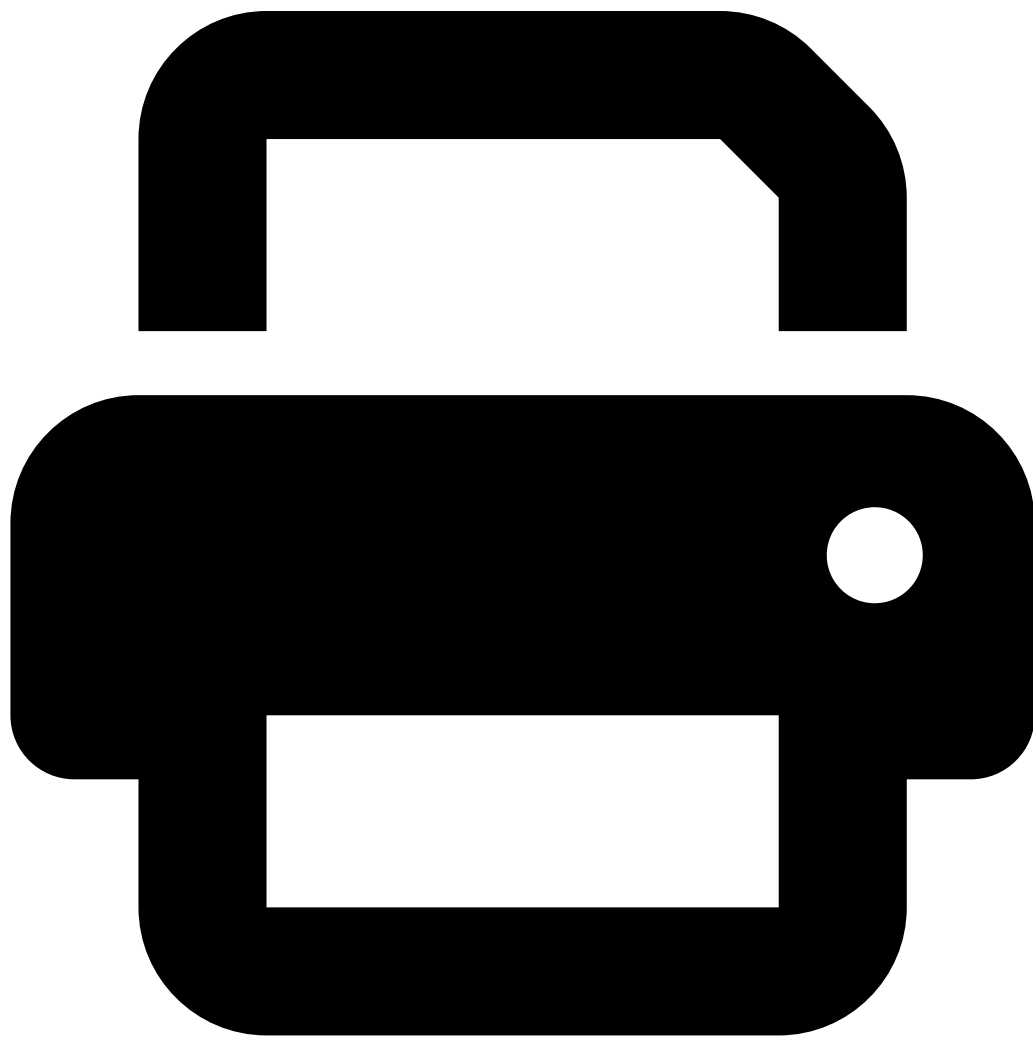
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Even though I'm from Northern Italy, I've grown to love and appreciate the beautiful traditions of the South—especially thanks to my Sicilian sister-in-law. Every Christmas, she brings a gorgeous **Buccellato Siciliano**, a stunning fig and nut pastry ring that fills the whole house with the aromas of honey, citrus, and warm spices. Watching her make it over the years inspired me to create my own version, honoring her family's recipe while adding a touch of my northern Italian style. This festive pastry is rustic, impressive, and truly one of the most special holiday desserts to come out of Sicily.

Things to know about Buccellato Siciliano – Traditional Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring

Buccellato is truly a *labor of love*—from soaking the figs to

chopping the nuts and carefully mixing the sweet, spiced filling. Rolling out the dough, spreading the filling evenly, and shaping it into the signature ring takes patience, but every step adds to its incredible flavor and charm. This isn't a recipe for rushing—it's a holiday tradition, meant to be savored, shared, and enjoyed with family.

How to Cut for the Classic Look:

Once the ring is shaped and brushed with egg wash, use a sharp paring knife to create the traditional open slits. Start with **long diagonal cuts** evenly spaced around the ring, then add **shorter slashes** in between for a feathered effect. These cuts let the filling peek through during baking and give the Buccellato its iconic rustic, bakery-style appearance. Don't worry about perfection—the charm is in its handmade look.

Making Buccellato is more than just baking; it's a way to bring a little Sicilian holiday magic into your home.

Ready to bring a taste of Sicily to your holiday table? If you make this Buccellato Siciliano, be sure to **leave a comment** and **rate the recipe** – I love hearing how my readers bring these Italian traditions to life!

Share your beautiful pastry with me on Instagram by tagging **@lorianasheacooks** and don't forget to check out my other festive Italian Christmas recipes here:

- 10 Italian Christmas cookies you must make

Buccellato Siciliano Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring



Buccellato Siciliano is a traditional Sicilian Christmas pastry ring filled with a rich mixture of dried figs, nuts, raisins, honey, candied orange peel, and warm spices, all wrapped in a tender, buttery pastry. Baked until golden and beautifully decorated with its signature slits, this festive dessert is a cherished holiday tradition that brings family and friends together. While it takes a little extra time to prepare, every bite is filled with authentic Sicilian flavor, making it a truly memorable centerpiece for your Christmas table.

PASTRY DOUGH

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 orange zest
- Pinch of salt
- 1 – 2 tbsp cold water (only if needed)

FIG & NUT FILLING

- 2 cups **dried figs**, chopped (soaked in Marsala 20–30 min, drained)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raisins

- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 cup pistachios, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup almonds, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup candied orange peel (cedro), chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar
- 1 orange zest
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp clove
- 2 – 4 tbsp Marsala or the soaking liquid (optional, only if the mixture is too thick)

Make the Dough

1. Mix flour + sugar + salt + orange zest.
2. Cut in the cold butter until crumbly.
3. Add eggs + vanilla.
4. Knead just until smooth.
5. Wrap and chill **30 minutes**.

Make the filling:

1. Combine the soaked figs, raisins, nuts, candied orange peel.
2. Add honey, sugar, cinnamon, clove, and orange zest.
3. Pulse a few times in a food processor OR mix by hand for a chunkier filling.
4. Add a spoonful of the Marsala soaking liquid only if you need to loosen it.
5. Filling should be thick, sticky, and spreadable – not wet.

Assemble:

1. Roll chilled dough into a large rectangle (about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick).
2. Spread the filling evenly, leaving a border.
3. Roll the dough up like a jelly roll.
4. Form into a ring and pinch ends to seal.
5. Make small decorative cuts on top (the traditional "Sicilian feathering").
6. Brush with egg wash.

Bake:

1. **350°F (175°C)**
35–45 minutes, until deeply golden.

Decorate (Optional)

1. Warm apricot jam + a splash of water and brush over the top

Add candied fruit or pistachios

Dust with powdered sugar

Dessert

Italian

Italian pastry recipe