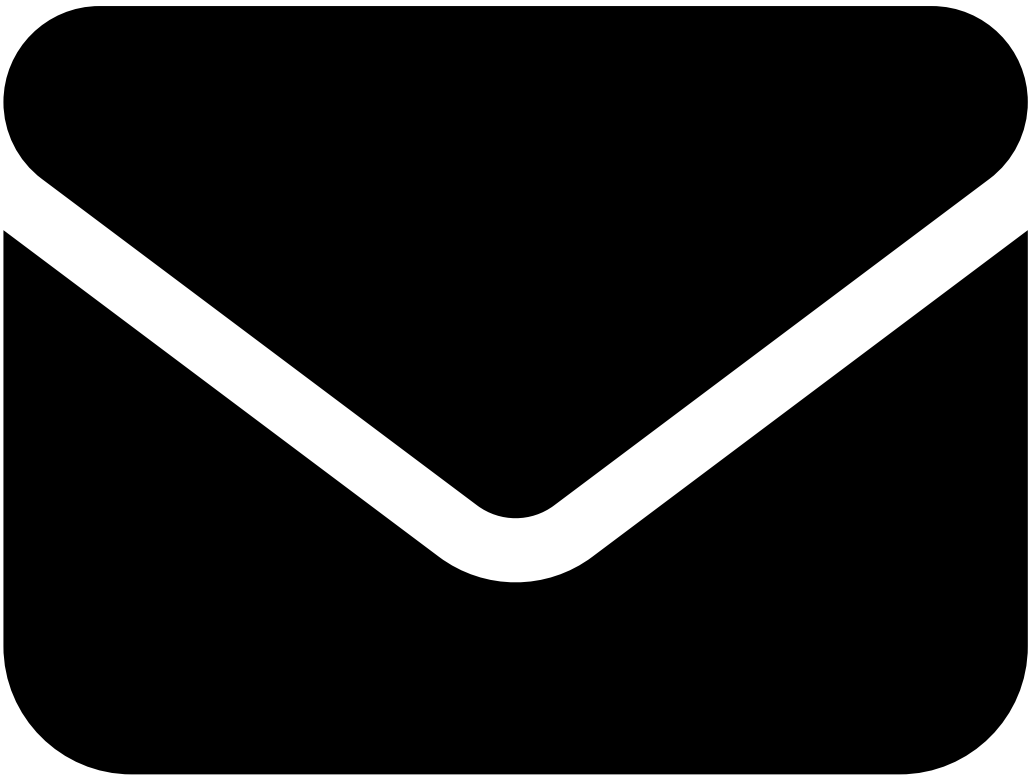
Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

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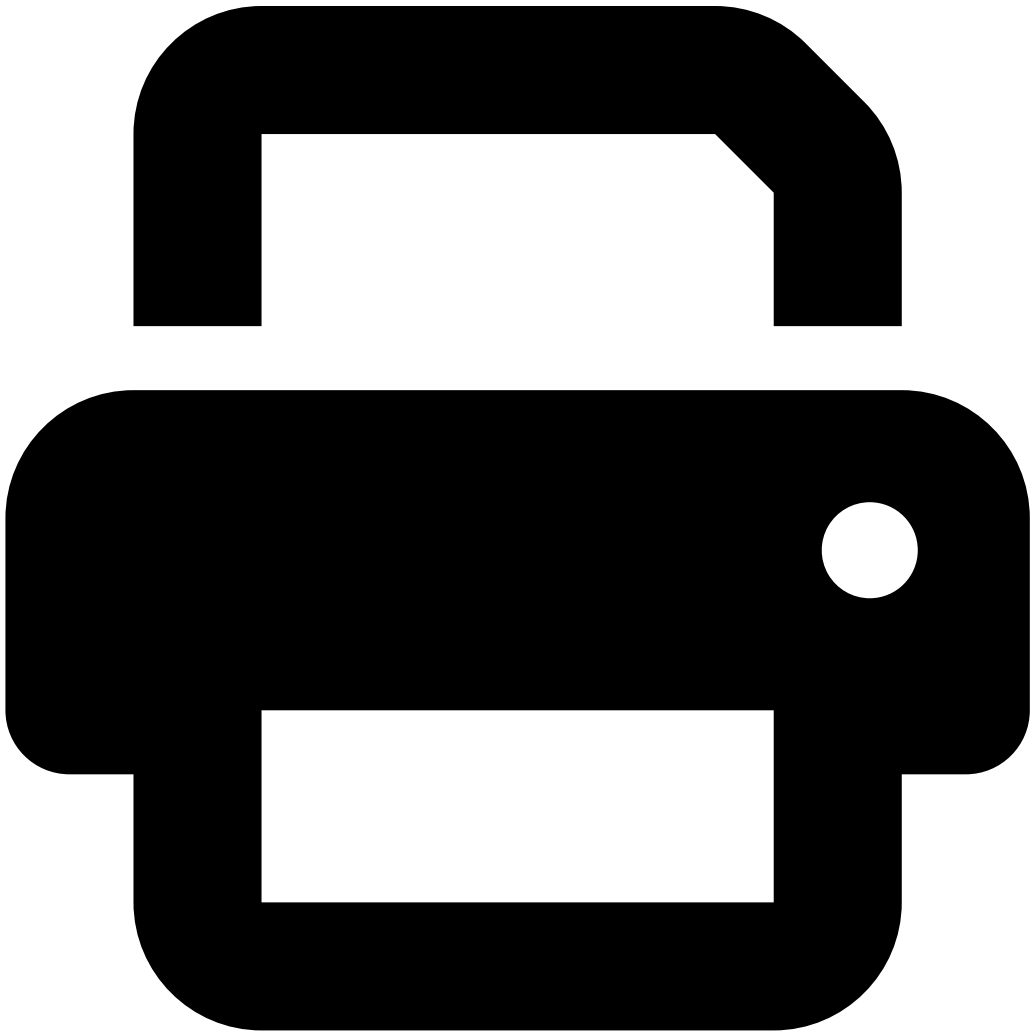









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Italian hot chocolate, or *cioccolata calda*, is rich, thick, and intensely chocolatey—nothing like the thin versions most of us grew up with. In Italy, it’s meant to be slowly enjoyed, often served with a spoon, and savored on cold days at a café 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 ¼ 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.

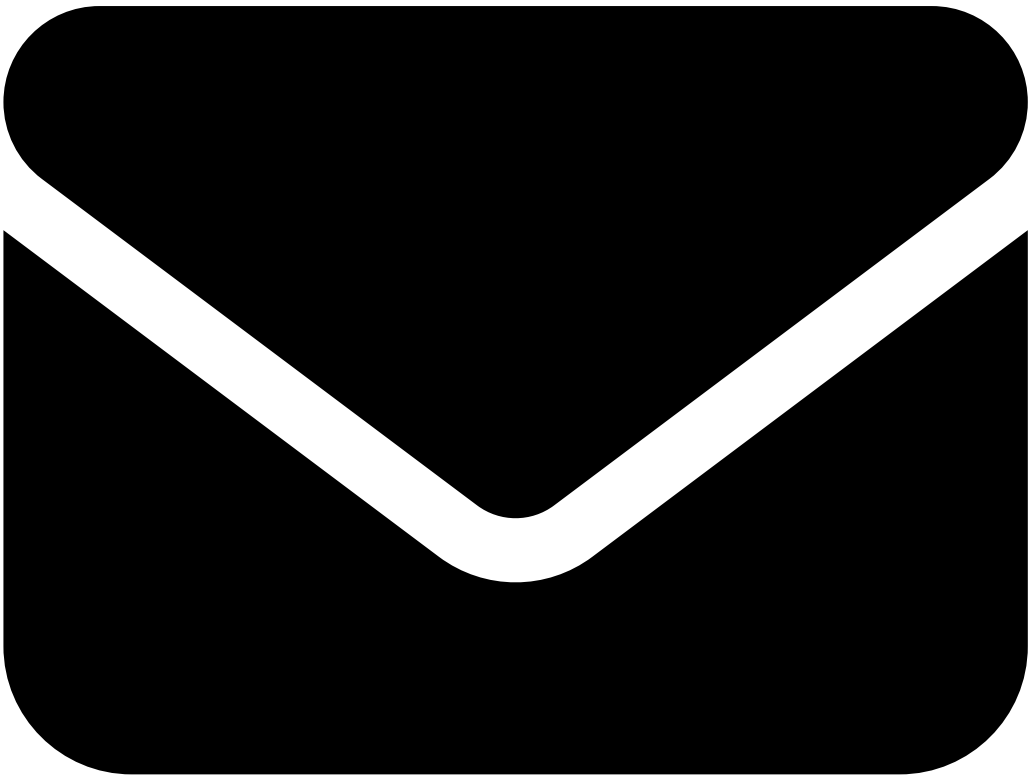
Dessert
Italian
Italian hot chocolate

Angel Wing Cookies (Italian Fried Pastry)

Angel Wing Cookies (Italian Fried Pastry)

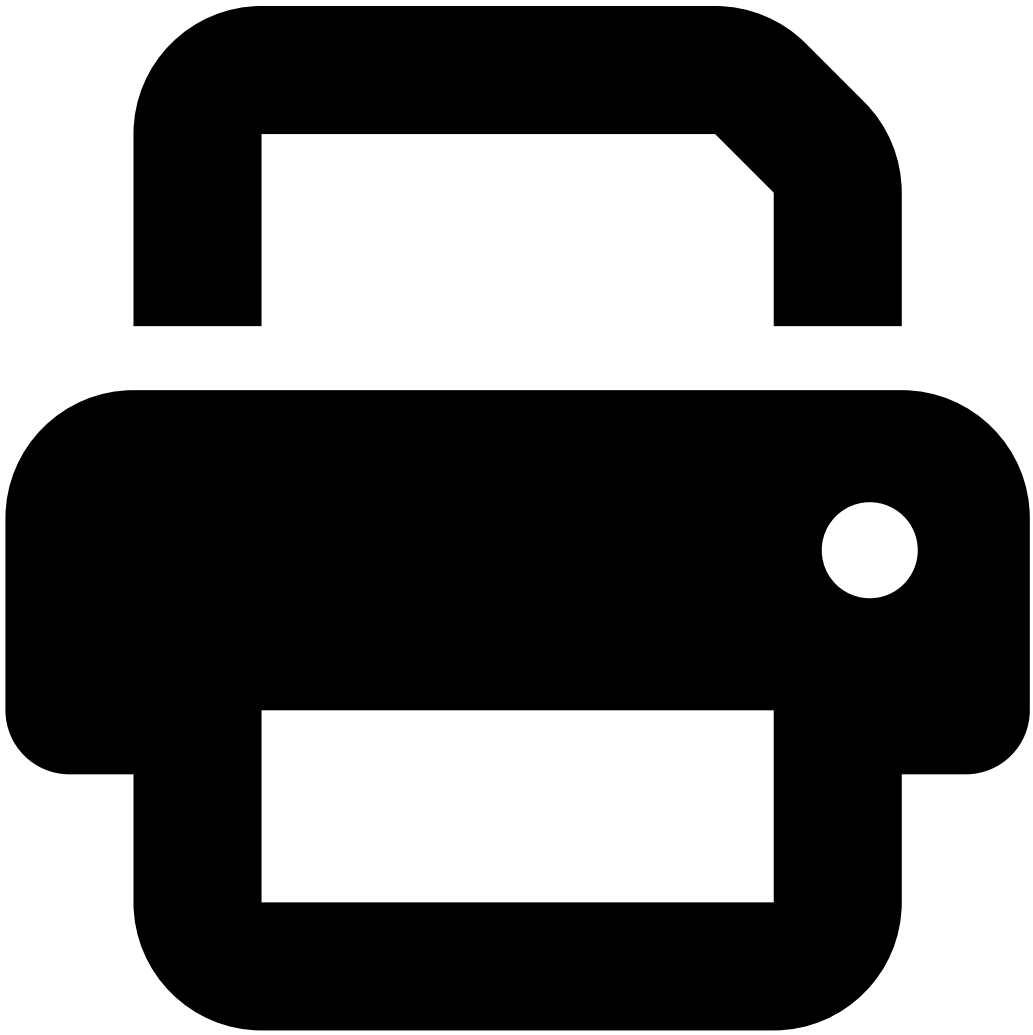
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Angel wing cookies are one of those recipes that show up on Italian tables year after year, especially around Christmas and Easter. Light, crisp, and dusted generously with powdered sugar, they’re known by many names—**chiacchiere, crostoli, frappe, 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
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 2 large eggs
- ⅓ cup white wine or grappa
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ 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

Buccellato Siciliano –

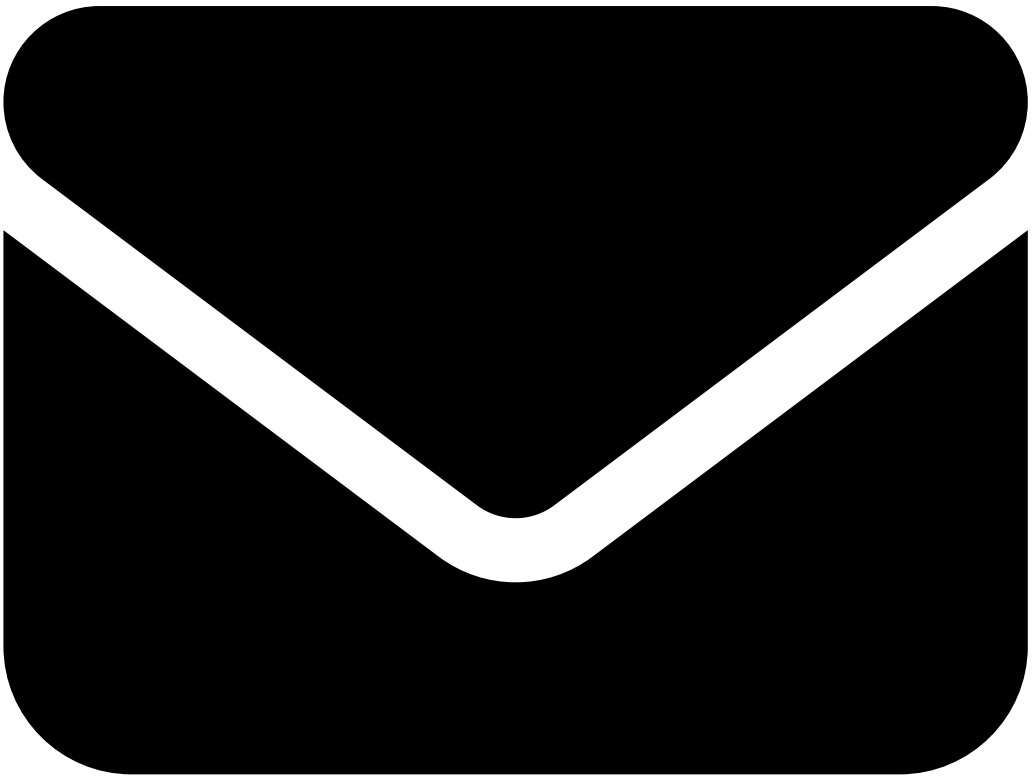
Traditional Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring

Buccellato Siciliano – Traditional Christmas Fig & Nut Pastry Ring

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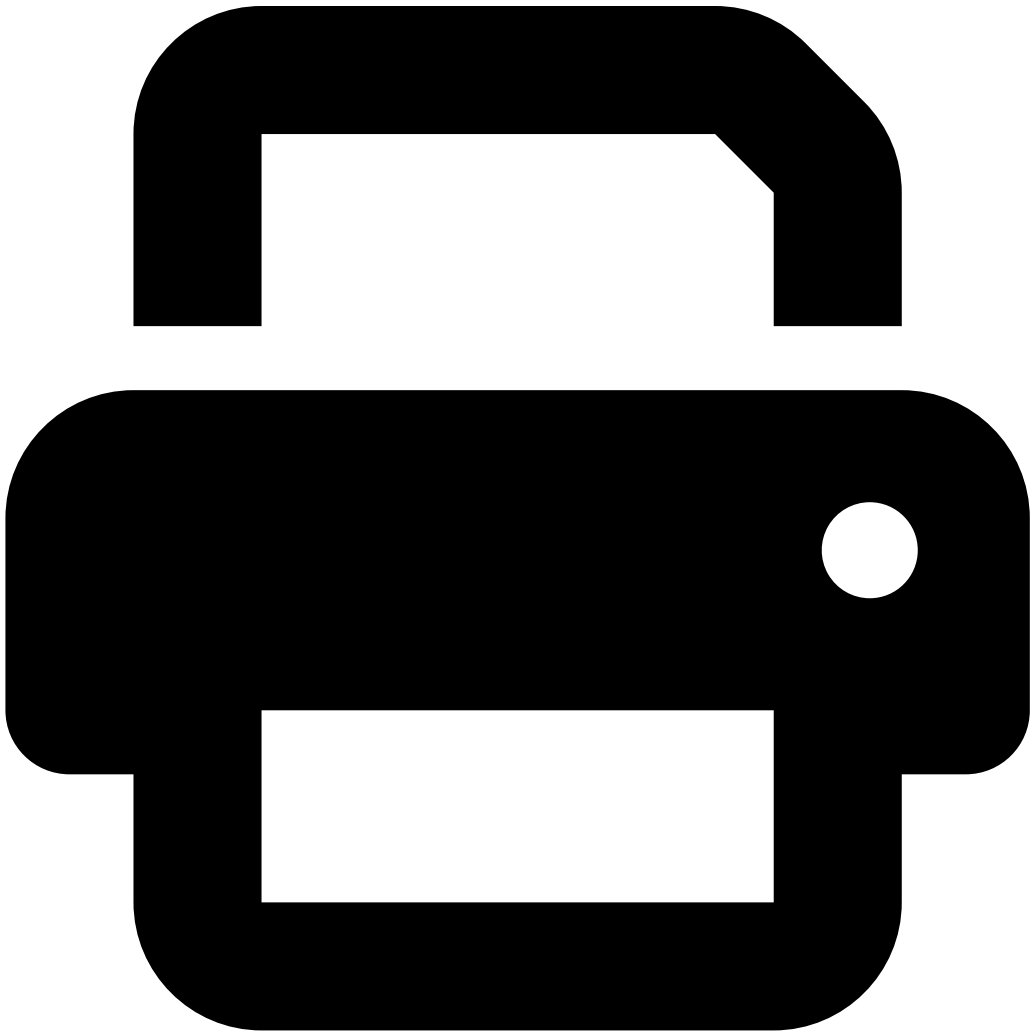









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Even though I’m from Northern Italy, I’ve grown to love and appreciate the beautiful traditions of the South—especially thanks to my Sicilian sister-in-law. Every Christmas, she brings a gorgeous **Buccellato Siciliano**, a stunning fig and nut pastry 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
- ½ 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)
- ¾ cup raisins

- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 cup pistachios, chopped
- ½ cup almonds, chopped
- ½ cup candied orange peel (cedro), chopped
- ½ cup honey
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 1 orange zest
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ 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 ¼-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

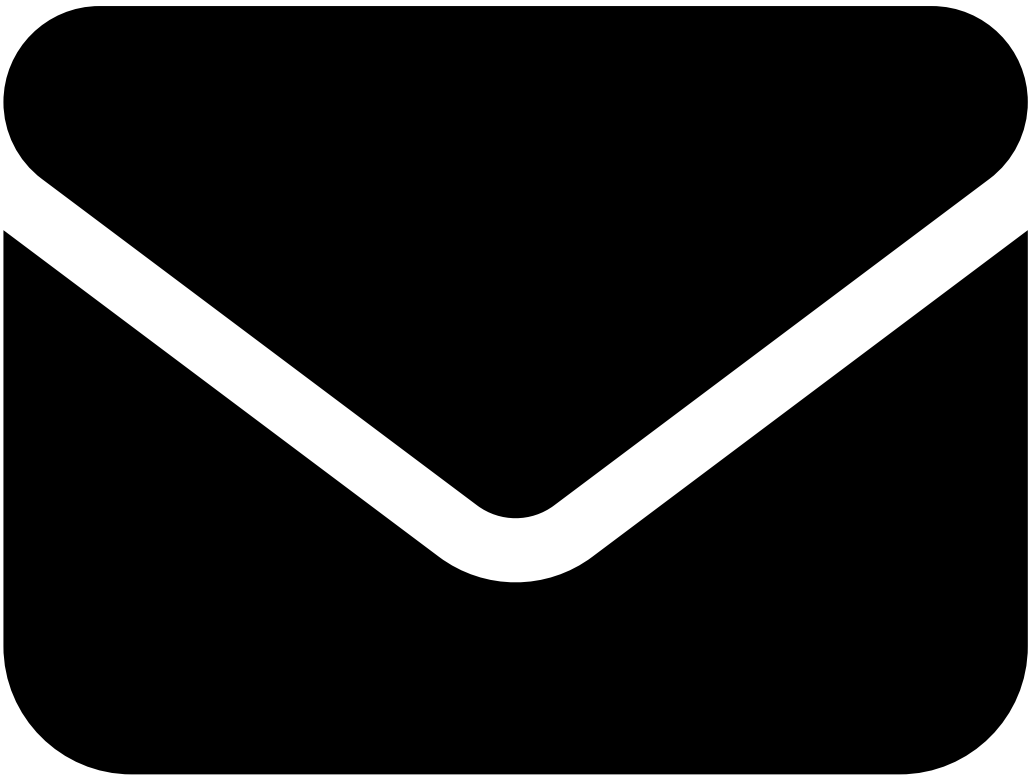
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10 Italian Christmas Cookies You Must Bake

10 Italian Christmas Cookies You Must Bake

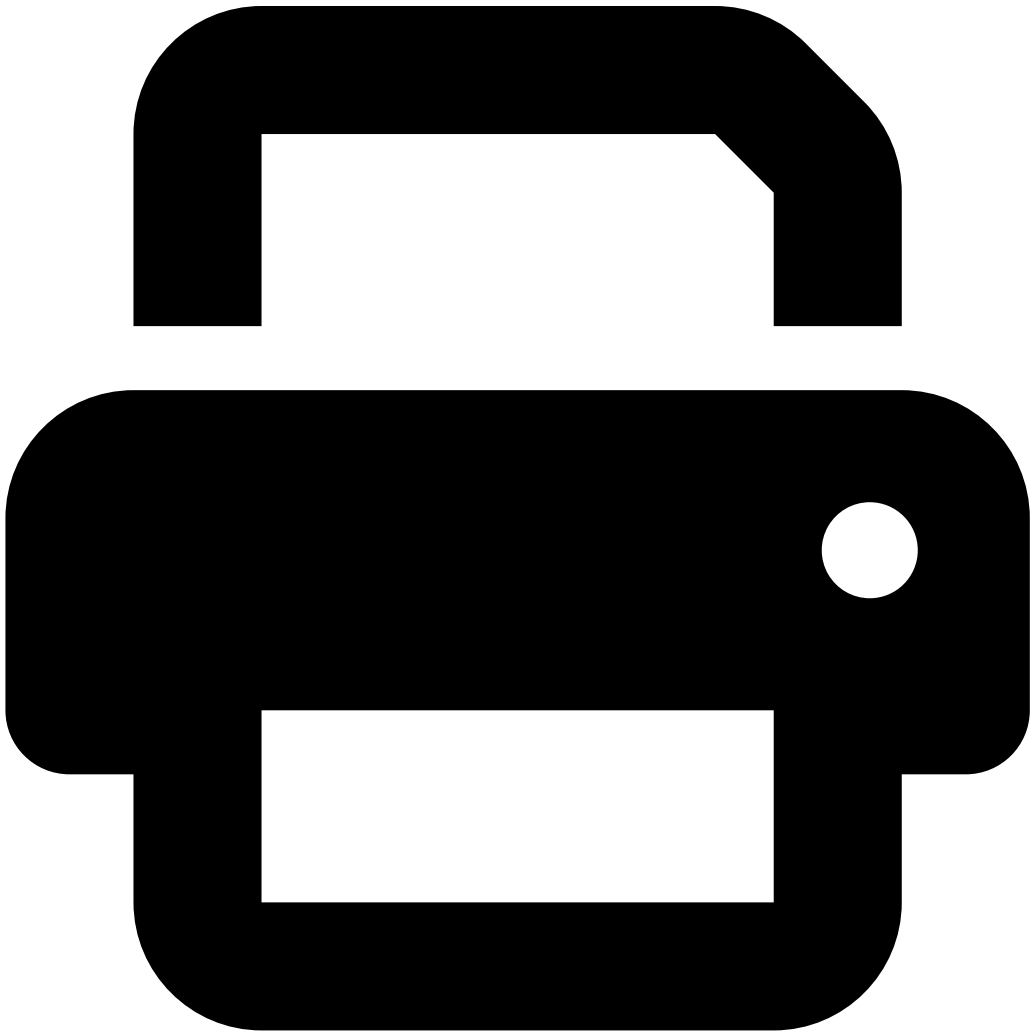
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Celebrate the season with these classic Italian cookies that bring warmth, tradition, and a touch of sweetness to your table.

Christmas in Italy isn’t complete without cookies – each bite carries memories, traditions, and a little magic. Over the years, I’ve shared many of my favorite Italian cookies on the blog, and today I’m rounding up **10 must-bake Italian Christmas cookies** that are perfect for gifting, freezing, or enjoying with a cup of espresso.

Italian Amaretti cookies

Crispy on the outside, soft and chewy inside, these almond-flavored cookies are a classic. Perfect with coffee or a glass of Vin Santo. · · GO TO RECIPE

Italian lemon knot cookies

These soft and zesty Italian lemon knot cookies are one of my favorites. Bright with fresh lemon, dipped in a sweet lemon glaze and full of delicious flavor.

GO TO RECIPE

Pizzicati Pinch Cookies

Jam-filled, tender cookies with a perfect pinch of sweetness. They’re fun to make and look adorable on a holiday platter.

GO TO RECIPE

Chocolate Walnut Holiday Cookies

Rich, spiced, and studded with walnuts, these cookies are deeply chocolatey and festive – a crowd favorite.

GO TO RECIPE

Lemon Ricotta Cookies

Soft, lightly sweet, and aromatic with lemon zest, these cookies are perfect for a winter morning treat or gift tins.

GO TO RECIPE

Tuscan Bullseye Cookies

Named for their beautiful round design with jam in the center, these cookies are as charming as they are delicious.

GO TO RECIPE

Italian Almond Cantucci Cookies

A simple, classic cookie that’s nutty, slightly chewy, and perfect for dipping into coffee or dessert wine.

GO TO RECIPE

Italian Pizzelle cookies

No Italian Holiday is without these crisp, thin, buttery Italian Pizzelle Cookies. Delicate, thin, wafer like this recognizable Italian cookies aren’t baked in the oven, they get their shape by pressing the batter between the hot Pizzella Iron.GO TO RECIPE

Italian Rainbow Christmas Cookies

Italian rainbow Christmas cookies , also known as tricolor cookies, are a delicious festive cookie that blends flavor, color and tradition. These iconic treats, often associated with Italian – American bakeries, are not actually cookies in the traditional sense but rather delicate almond sponge cakes layered with sweet jam.

GO TO RECIPE

Gluten-free Italian Walnut Cookies

I didn’t think gluten free and Italian cookies could be in the same sentence. Not only are these Italian walnut cookies gluten free, there is no flour or butter in these nutty cookies.

GO TO RECIPE

Tips for a Successful Italian Christmas Cookie Season

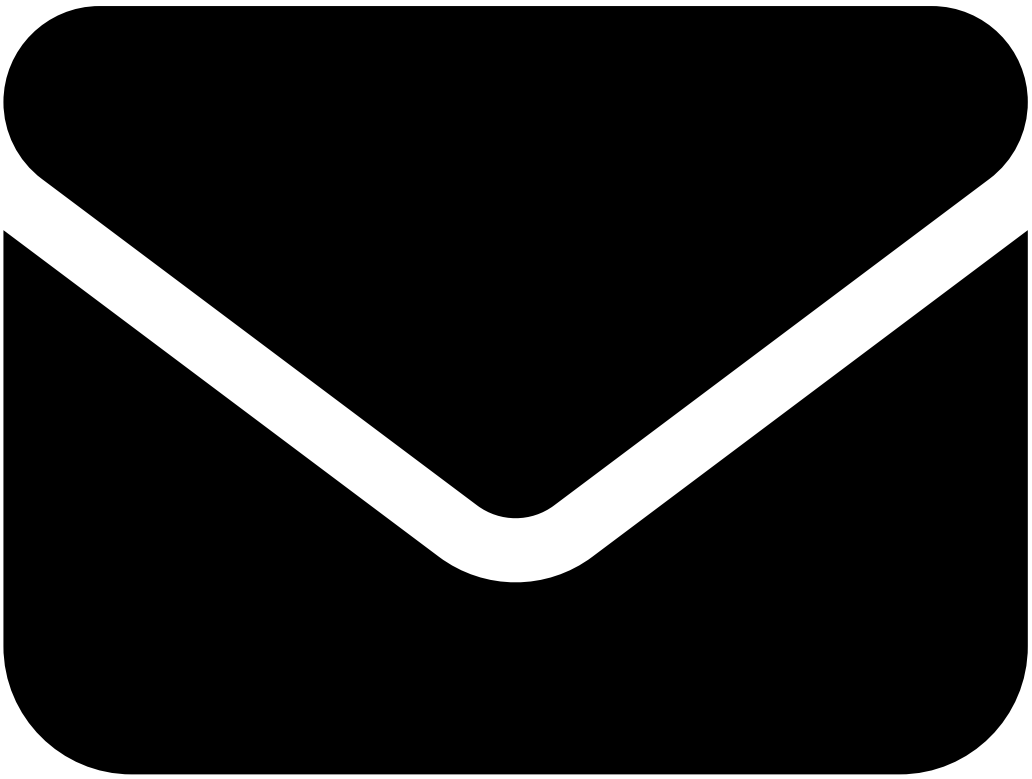
- **Bake in batches and freeze:** Many Italian cookies freeze beautifully for up to 3 months.
- **Mix flavors and textures:** Include chewy, crisp, nutty, and chocolatey cookies for variety.
- **Gift with love:** Wrap cookies in parchment and tins for a beautiful homemade present.
- **Start early:** December flies by — freezing cookies allows you to enjoy the month without stress.

Crema Pasticcera – Italian Pastry Cream Recipe

Crema Pasticcera – Italian Pastry Cream Recipe

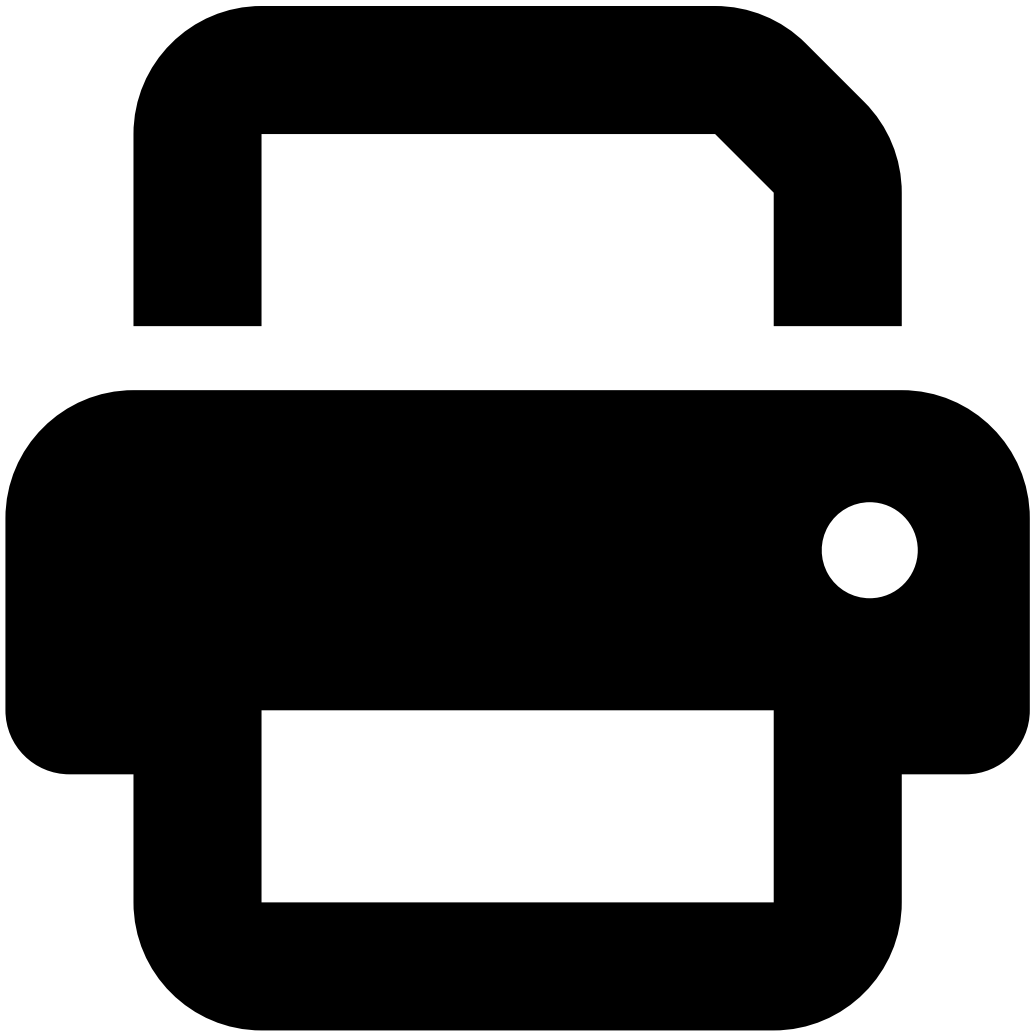
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Crema pasticcera Italian pastry cream is the heart of so many beloved Italian desserts — a smooth, glossy custard that’s rich but never heavy, sweet but not overly so, and endlessly versatile. Growing up around Italian kitchens and bakeries, this was the first “fancy” cream I learned to make, even before mastering pie dough. It shows up everywhere: layered in cakes, tucked inside pastries, dolloped into fruit tarts, and folded into whipped cream for a dreamy diplomat filling.

This recipe is simple, deeply traditional, and the one I return to every single time. It’s made with just a handful of staples you probably already have in your kitchen, and when cooked low and slow, it becomes the silkiest custard imaginable. Perfect for everyday desserts or any special occasion.

Things to know about this Crema Pasticcera Italian Pastry Cream Recipe

Tips for Perfect Crema Pasticcera

- **Low heat is everything** — slow and steady prevents lumps.
- **Whisk constantly** to keep the texture smooth.
- **Strain it** if you see even a hint of curdling.
- **Use whole milk** for richness and stability.
- **Chill it properly** before using in filled pastries.

Serving & Variations

- Fill cornetti, bomboloni, or cream puffs
- Layer inside sponge cakes
- Spoon into fruit tarts
- Fold with whipped cream for *crema diplomatica*
- Add cocoa powder to make *crema al cioccolato*
- Add espresso for a mocha version

Storage

- Store in an airtight container with plastic wrap pressed on the surface.
- Keeps **3–4 days** in the refrigerator.

- Do not freeze – the texture will separate.
- Ready to use your **crema pasticcera**? Try filling some of my favorite Italian desserts: classic Zeppole fried Italian doughnuts or my Christmas cream puffs and it’s delicious in my Lemon Italian sponge cake

Crema Pasticcera Italian Pastry Cream recipe



Silky, rich, and infused with vanilla and citrus, this authentic Italian Crema Pasticcera is the classic pastry cream used to fill cakes, tarts, cream puffs, cannoli, and pastries throughout Italy. Made with simple pantry ingredients, it comes together into a smooth, luscious custard that's perfect for countless Italian desserts.

- 2 cups **(480 ml) whole milk**
- 1 Lemon zest (remove in wide strips for easy removal)
- ½ **vanilla bean, split** *or*
- 1 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 4 **large egg yolks**
- ½ cup **(100 g) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup **(30 g) cornstarch**
- 2 tbsp **(28 g) unsalted butter**, cut into pieces

1. **Warm the milk**

   In a saucepan, heat the milk with the lemon zest until just steaming. Remove from heat and let it infuse.

2. **Whisk the base**

   In a bowl, whisk egg yolks and sugar until pale and thick. Add the cornstarch and whisk until smooth.

3. **Temper**

   Slowly pour the warm milk into the yolk mixture, whisking constantly to prevent scrambling.

4. **Cook to thicken**

   Return everything to the saucepan and cook over medium-low heat, stirring nonstop, until thick, glossy, and creamy.

5. **Finish**

   Off the heat, strain if needed, then stir in the butter and vanilla.

6. **Chill**

   Cover with plastic wrap touching the surface and chill until fully cooled.

Dessert
Italian
crema pasticcera, Italian pastry cream, authentic Italian custard, pastry

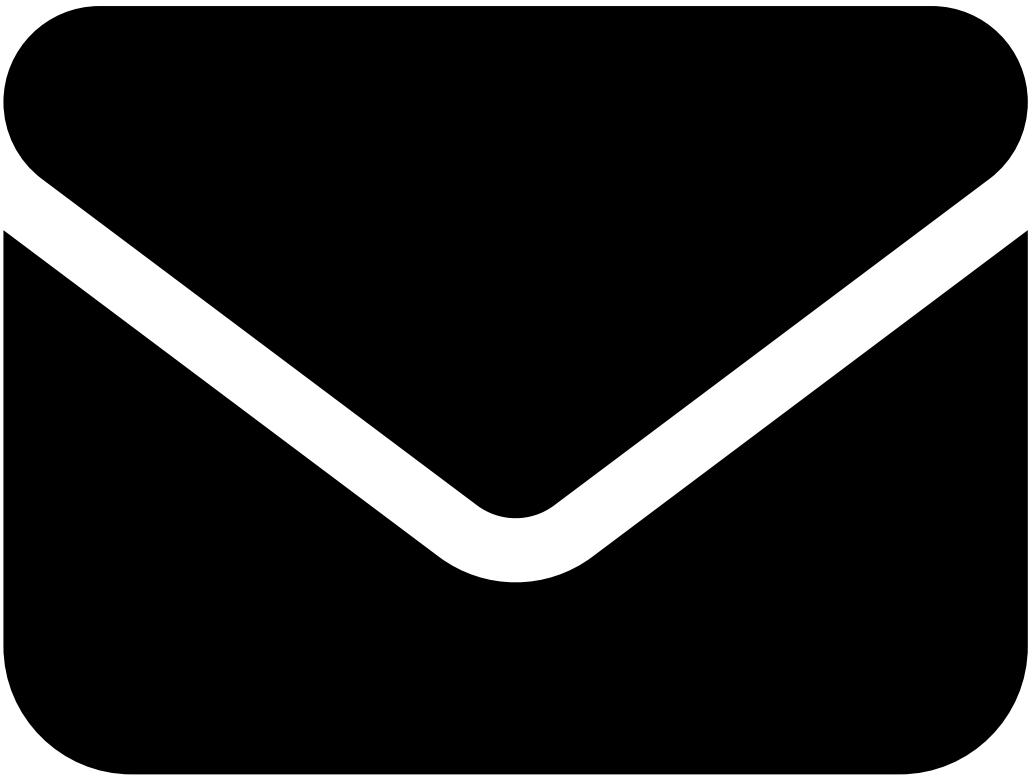
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Classic Zeppole Italian Fried Doughnuts

Classic Zeppole Italian Fried Doughnuts

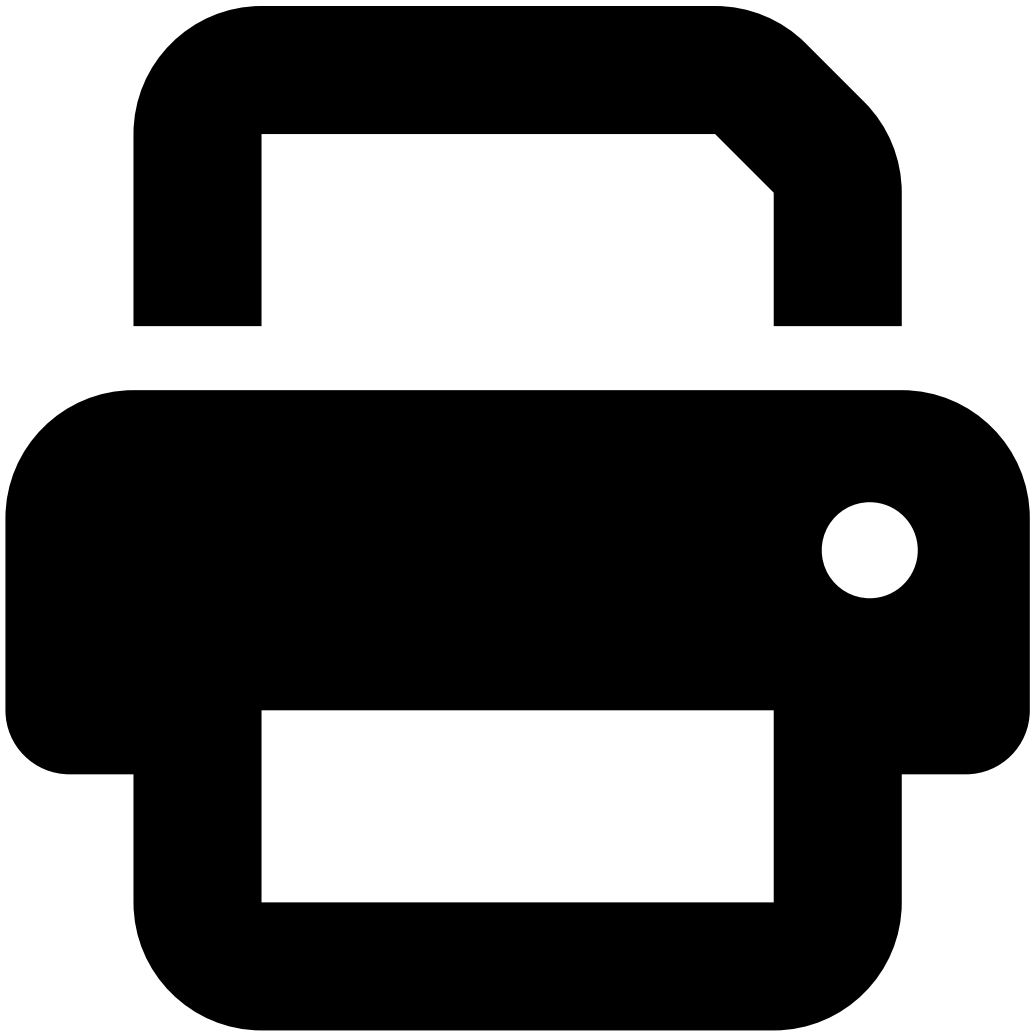
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These **classic zeppole** are the ultimate Italian fried doughnuts – light, airy, and golden, with a delicate crisp outside and a soft, pillowy inside. Made from a choux-style dough (similar to cream puffs), they’re simple to make yet irresistibly nostalgic. Dusted with powdered sugar, they bring a taste of Italian celebrations and street fairs right to your kitchen. Perfect for dessert, breakfast, or anytime you crave something sweet and comforting.

Things to know about this Classic Zeppole Italian Fried Doughnut recipe

- Zeppole are best served **fresh and warm**, straight from the fryer.

- The dough is **choux-style**, similar to cream puffs, so it’s light and airy.
- You can shape them as **round balls** or **classic rings** using a piping bag.
- **Oil temperature matters**: keep it around 350°F (175°C) to ensure they puff up and cook evenly.
- Zeppole are **delicious on their own** with powdered sugar, or you can **fill them with pastry cream, custard, or ricotta** for a special treat.
- Leftovers can be **reheated in a 350°F oven** for a few minutes, but they’re always best fresh.

Love Italian desserts? Try more sweet treats from the blog like Lemon Ricotta cookies or Italian lemon knot cookies – your next homemade Italian indulgence is just a click away!

Classic Zeppole Italian Fried Doughnuts



Classic Zeppole are a beloved Italian fried doughnut, known for their light, airy texture and irresistible golden crust. These traditional Italian treats are made from a simple dough that fries up beautifully, then finished with a dusting of

powdered sugar or a touch of cinnamon sugar. Whether enjoyed for a holiday, family celebration, or a special Sunday treat, homemade zeppole bring the warmth and nostalgia of Italian pastry shops right to your kitchen.

- 1 cup **water**
- ½ cup milk
- 4 tbsp **unsalted butter**
- 2 tbsp **sugar**
- 1 lemon zest
- ¼ **teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup **all-purpose flour**
- 4 **large eggs**
- **Oil for frying** (vegetable or peanut)
- **Powdered sugar**, for dusting

1. **Heat the liquid**

   In a medium saucepan, combine **water, butter, sugar, lemon zest and salt**.Bring to a simmer over medium heat until the butter is fully melt

2. **Add the flour**

   Add the **flour all at once** and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon.Cook for **1–2 minutes**, until the dough pulls away from the sides and forms a smooth ball.(This cooks out the raw flour taste.)

3. **Cool the dough slightly**

   Transfer the dough to a mixing bowl and let it cool for **5 minutes** so it doesn’t cook the eggs.

4. **Add the eggs**

   Add the **eggs one at a time**, mixing well after each addition.The dough should become smooth, glossy, and pipeable – similar to cream puff dough.

5. **Heat the oil**

   In a deep pot, heat oil to **350°F (175°C)**.

6. **Form the zeppole**

   For round zeppole: Drop spoonful’s of dough directly into the oil.

   For ring-shaped zeppole: Pipe dough onto small parchment squares, then lower into the oil and peel off the paper.

7. **Fry until puffed and golden**

   Fry in batches for **3–4 minutes per side**, or until deeply golden and fully puffed.Make sure not to overcrowd the pan.

8. **Drain**

   Remove to a paper towel–lined tray to drain excess oil.

9. **Finish**

   Dust generously with **powdered sugar** and serve warm.

Dessert
Italian
Italian zeppole, fried Italian doughnuts,

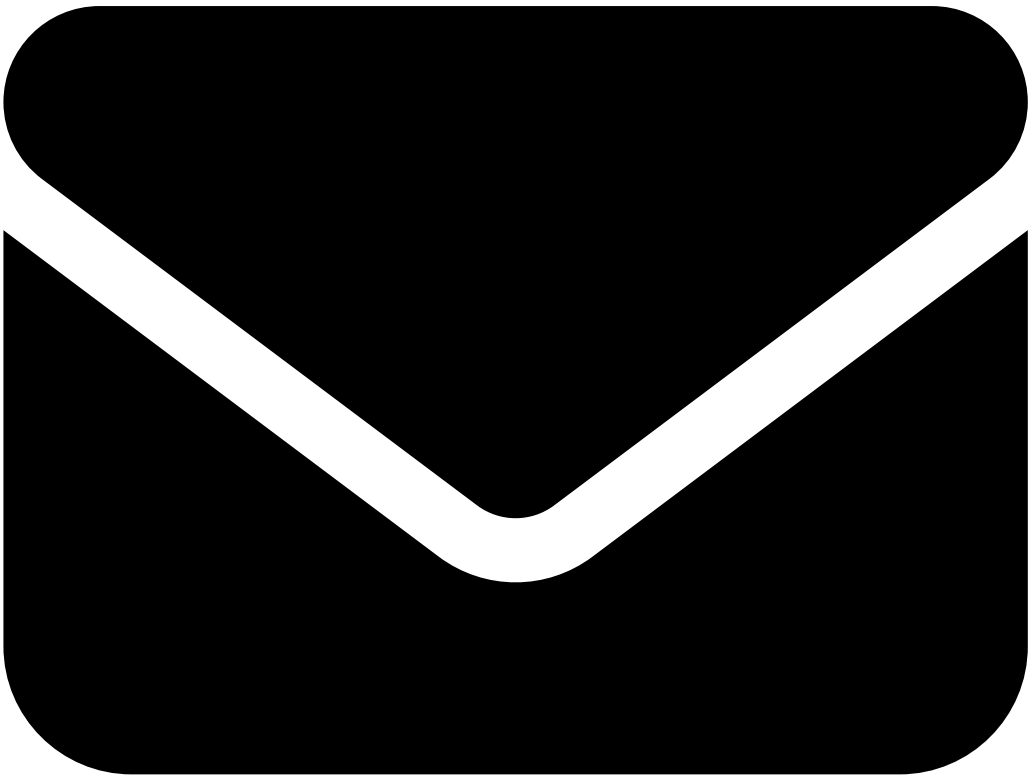
Easy Cannoli Cake with Ricotta Mascarpone Frosting

Easy Cannoli Cake with Ricotta Mascarpone Frosting

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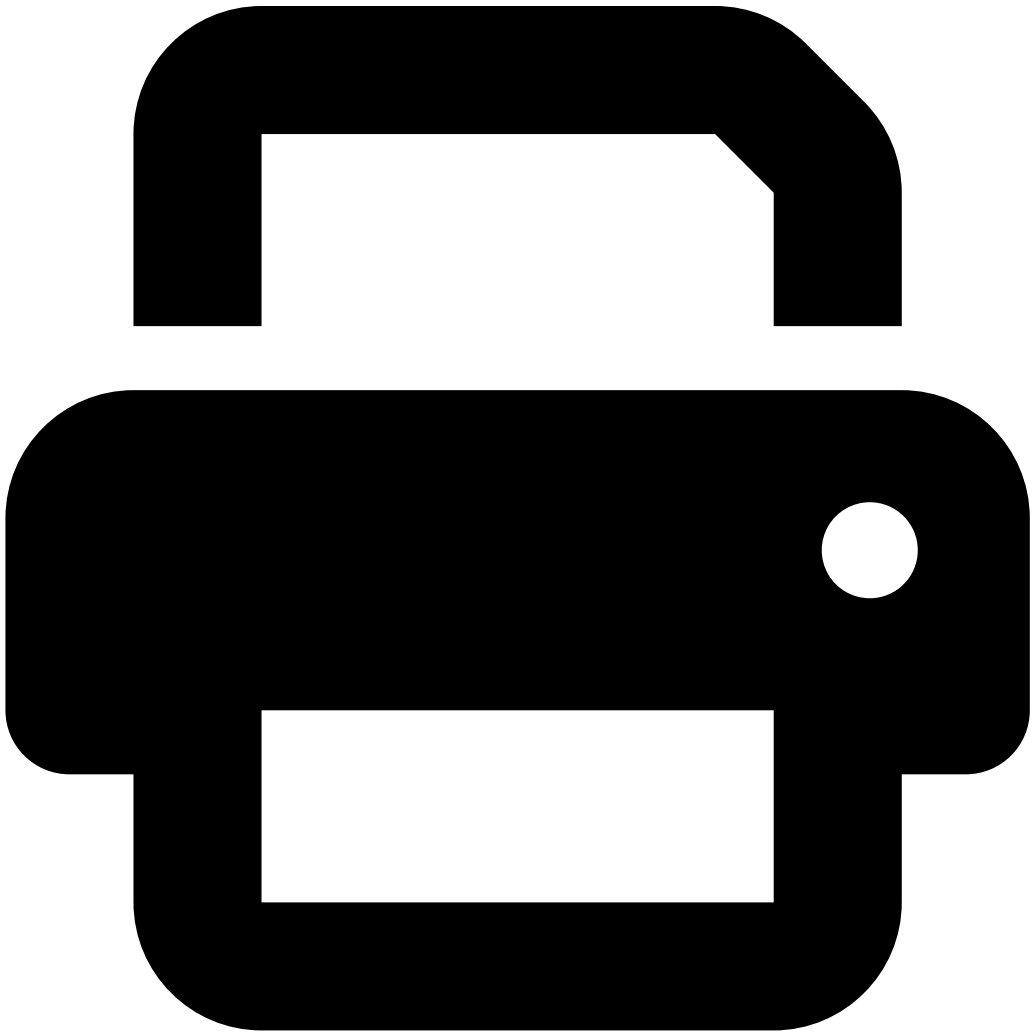









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This Cannoli Cake started as a little kitchen experiment inspired by one of my favorite Italian desserts – the classic Sicilian cannoli. I wanted all that creamy ricotta flavor, a hint of cinnamon, and those sweet little chocolate chips, but in a simple, homemade cake that didn’t require frying shells or piping filling. So I baked a basic yellow cake – soft, buttery, and lightly sweet – and layered it with a rich ricotta mascarpone frosting that doubles as the filling.

The idea comes straight from Sicily, where cannoli were first created centuries ago as a special treat during Carnevale – a time of celebration and abundance before Lent. The traditional version uses crispy pastry shells filled with sweet ricotta cream, often flavored with orange zest, cinnamon, and chocolate. When Italian immigrants brought their beloved cannoli to America, bakers started finding new ways to enjoy those same flavors – and that’s how Cannoli Cake was born.

It’s a modern Italian-American twist on a Sicilian classic, combining all the familiar flavors of the original dessert in a soft, moist layer cake that’s perfect for birthdays, holidays, or Sunday dinners. Each bite tastes like home — creamy, comforting, and unmistakably Italian.

Things to know about this Easy Cannoli Cake with Ricotta Mascarpone Frosting

This Cannoli Cake is best made with **well-drained ricotta** — if your ricotta is watery, place it in a fine mesh sieve or cheesecloth overnight to remove excess liquid. This ensures the frosting stays thick, creamy, and easy to spread between the cake layers.

For the most authentic texture, **sprinkle the mini chocolate chips** between the layers and on top of the frosting instead of mixing them into the filling. This gives every bite a little crunch without weighing down the creamy filling.

Chilling the cake for at least **1 hour** after assembling helps the frosting set and makes slicing cleaner, especially if you want neat, even layers. The cake keeps beautifully in the refrigerator for up to **3 days**, making it a perfect make-ahead dessert for parties or holiday gatherings. Bring it to **room temperature for 15–20 minutes** before serving to enjoy the full creamy texture and flavor.

For a little extra flair, try **sprinkling chopped pistachios** on top or a **light drizzle of chocolate sauce** just before serving — it makes the cake look bakery-perfect without any extra effort.

If you love classic Italian desserts with a modern twist, be sure to try my Crostata Italian jam tart or Amaretti Cookies next — both pair perfectly with a slice of this Cannoli Cake

and a cup of espresso!

Easy Cannoli Cake with Ricotta Mascarpone Frosting



This Easy Cannoli Cake with Ricotta Mascarpone Frosting captures all the beloved flavors of a classic Italian cannoli in a beautiful, simple layer cake. Moist vanilla cake is paired with a creamy frosting made with sweet ricotta, mascarpone, and hints of citrus and chocolate for an elegant dessert that feels special without being complicated. Perfect for birthdays, holidays, or any occasion where you want to bring the flavors of an Italian pastry shop to your table.

For the Yellow Cake

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 11/3 cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup whole milk, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract

For the Cannoli Frosting (used for both filling and topping)

- 1½ cups whole milk ricotta, drained overnight if watery
- 1 cup mascarpone cheese (or cream cheese for a firmer texture)
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips (plus extra for garnish)

1. ## Baking Tip: How to Get a Tall, Sliceable Cake

   For that beautiful bakery-style Cannoli Cake with two thick layers, bake the batter in **one 9-inch round cake pan with high sides (at least 2½–3 inches deep)**. You can also use an **8-inch round pan that's 3 inches deep** for an even taller result – just extend the baking time to about **45–50 minutes**, checking with a toothpick at 40 minutes.

   Once baked, **cool the cake completely**, then **chill it for 30 minutes** before slicing it horizontally. This helps the cake stay firm and gives you a clean, even cut for layering with the creamy cannoli filling.

2. **Preheat oven:**

   Set oven to **350°F (175°C)**. Grease and flour one 9-inch round cake pan (or two 8-inch if you prefer thinner layers).

3. **Make the yellow cake:**

   In a bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.

Beat in eggs one at a time, then stir in vanilla.Add the dry ingredients alternately with the milk, beginning and ending with the dry mixture.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for **35–40 minutes**, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Cool completely, then **slice the cake horizontally in half** to create two layers.

4. **Make the cannoli frosting:**

   In a mixing bowl, beat ricotta, mascarpone, powdered sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon until smooth and creamy.

5. **Assemble the cake:**

   Place the bottom half of the cake on a serving plate and spread a thick layer of the frosting.

   Sprinkle haft the chocolate chips over the filling.Add the top cake layer and spread the remaining frosting all over the top and sides.

   Decorate with the remaining mini chocolate chips (and chopped pistachios for color optional)

6. **Chill before serving:**

   Refrigerate for at least **1 hour** before slicing to help the frosting set

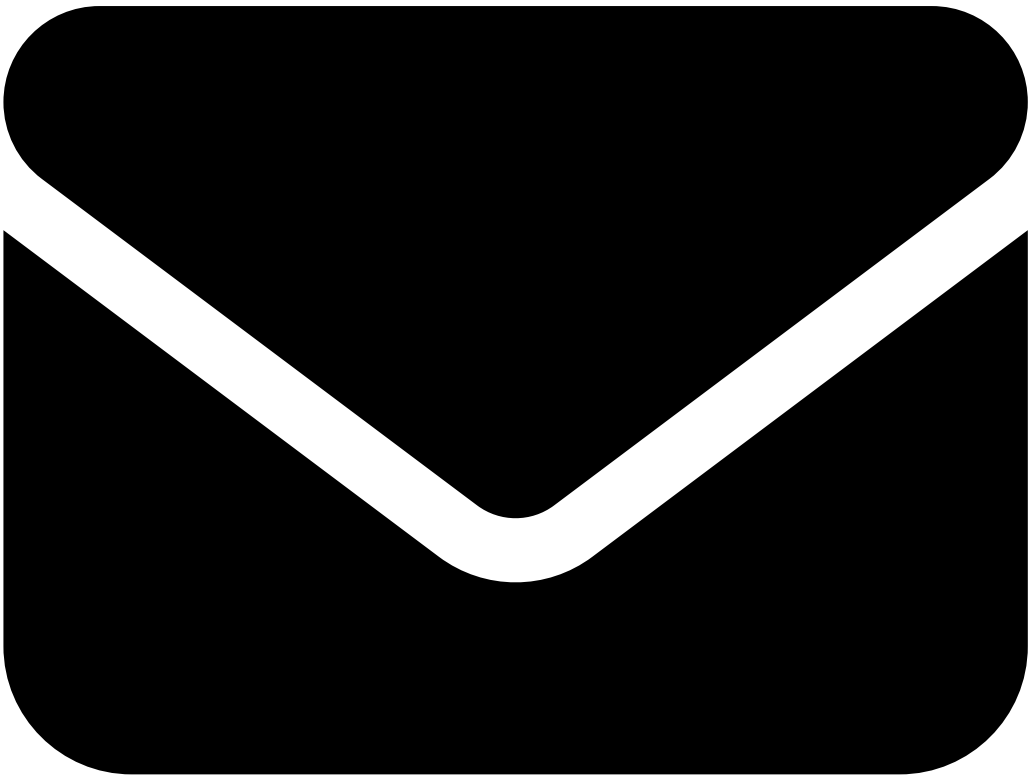
Dessert
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Peach Tart with Lattice Crust – Italian Crostata

Peach Tart with Lattice Crust – Italian Crostata

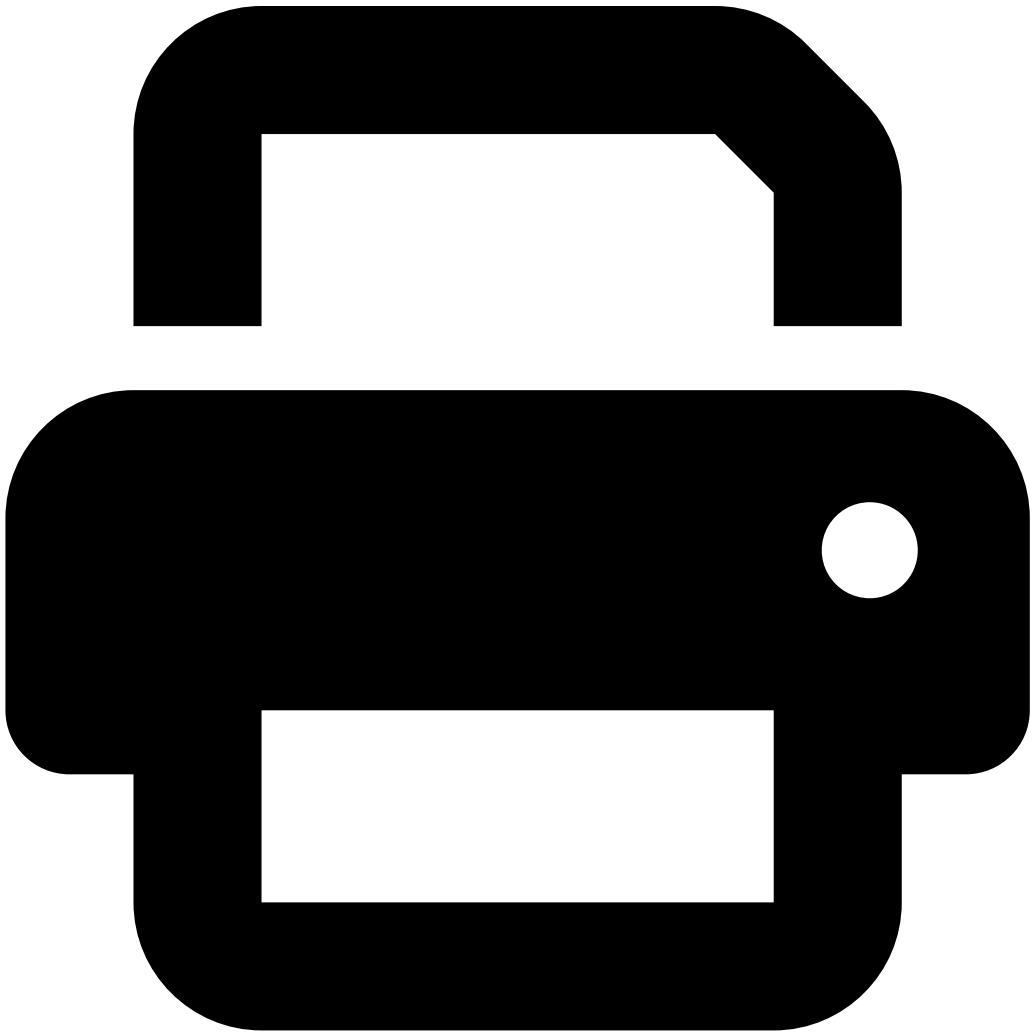
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If you saw my Instagram recently, you caught a glimpse of this golden, lattice-topped **peach crostata**—and now I’m sharing the full recipe! This rustic Italian jam tart, baked in a 9-inch tart pan, pairs **juicy fresh peaches** with sweet **peach jam** for a dessert that’s as delicious as it is beautiful. The lattice top adds a touch of classic charm, making it perfect for summer gatherings, brunch, or any special occasion. Follow along to learn how to make this simple yet stunning **homemade peach tart** from scratch.

Things to know about this Peach Tart with Lattice Crust – Italian Crostata

- **Rustic & Elegant:** The lattice top gives it a charming, rustic look while still looking impressive for guests.

- **Fresh & Jammy:** Combines fresh peach slices with sweet peach jam for a layered, flavorful filling.
- **Easy to Make:** No special equipment needed—just a 9-inch tart pan and basic kitchen tools.
- **Perfect for Any Occasion:** Great for summer desserts, brunch, or as a sweet centerpiece for gatherings.
- **Make Ahead Friendly:** Can be baked in advance and served at room temperature; keeps well for 1–2 days.
- **Customizable:** Swap peaches for seasonal fruits like plums, apricots, or berries.
- **Italian-Inspired:** A classic rustic crostata style that's simple yet authentically Italian.
- "If you enjoy this peach crostata, you'll love my other rustic desserts too—don't miss the Italian Crostata jam tart and Plum Cake recipes for more homemade Italian sweetness!"

Traditional Peach Crostata with Lattice Top



Traditional peach crostata with a buttery homemade pastry crust, sweet peach filling, and a classic lattice top. A

rustic Italian dessert that highlights fresh seasonal peaches and is perfect served with coffee, tea, or a scoop of gelato.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour (plus more for work surface)
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 stick (½ cup unsalted butter, softened)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 2 cups peach jam
- 2 fresh peaches (thinly sliced)

1. **Preheat oven** to 350°F (175°C). Grease or line a 9-inch tart pan with parchment paper.
2. **Make the dough:**

   In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and sugar.

   Cut in the cold butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

   Make a well in the center, add eggs, vanilla, lemon juice, and zest and whisk. Start to incorporate in the dry ingredients. Then transfer to a lightly floured smooth surface and knead the dough to a smooth consistency (3-4 minutes) cover the dough and let it rest for 30 minutes for easier rolling.
3. **Roll out dough for base:**

   Roll out 2/3 of the dough into a circle slightly larger than 9 inches.

   Carefully press into the tart pan, letting the edges hang slightly over the rim.

4. **Add the filling:**

   Spread peach jam evenly over the dough, leaving a 1-inch border.

   Arrange fresh peach slices on top of the jam.

5. **Create the lattice top:**

   Roll out the remaining 1/3 of dough into 10 thin strips.

   Lay strips over the filling in a crisscross pattern.

   Fold the edges of the base dough over the lattice strips, pressing gently.

6. **Bake:**

   Brush the dough edges and lattice with a little beaten egg for a golden finish.

   Bake 35–40 minutes, or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly.

7. **Cool & serve:**

   Let the crostata cool in the tart pan for 15–20 minutes before slicing.

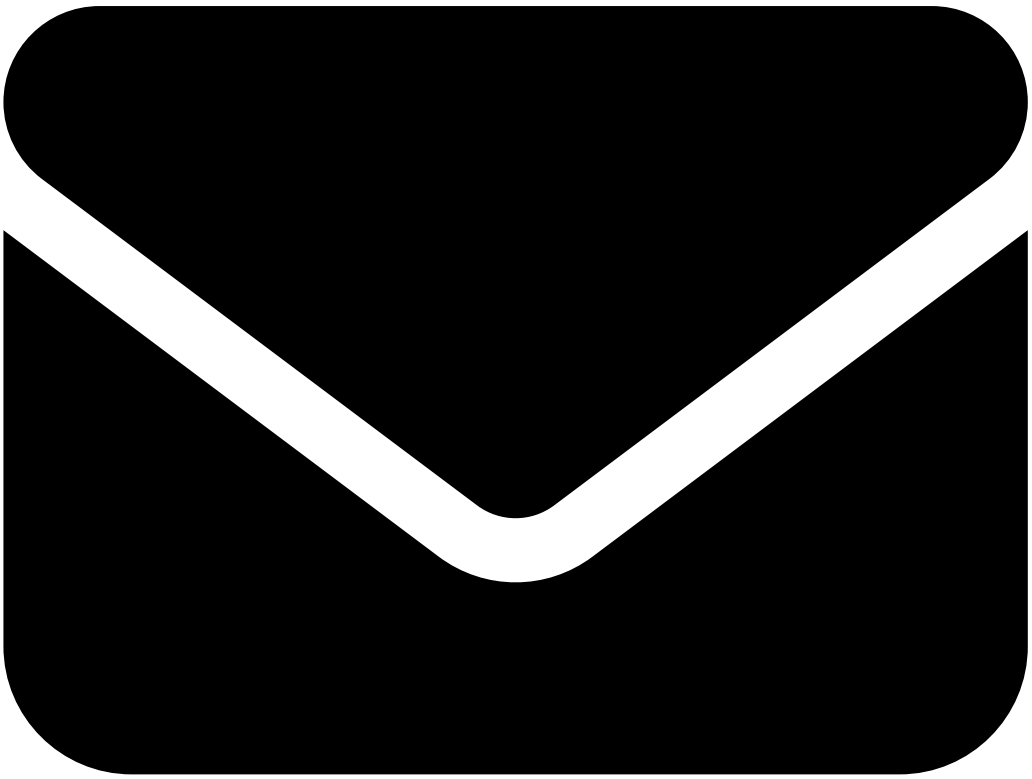
   Serve warm or at room temperature, optionally with vanilla gelato or whipped cream.

Dessert
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Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake – Moist & Fluffy

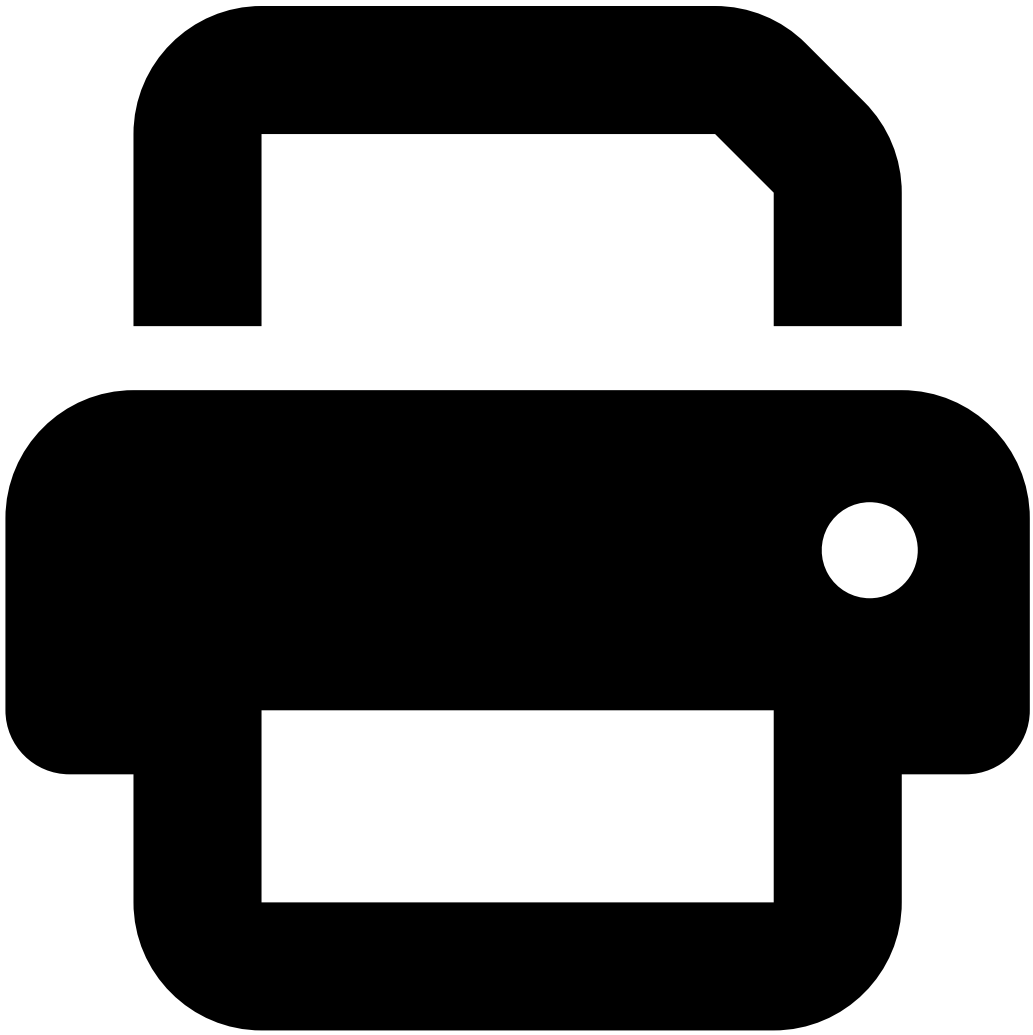
Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake – Moist & Fluffy

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This Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake is a family recipe close to my heart, made with creamy ricotta for a moist, tender crumb and brightened with fresh lemon zest and juice. My love for ricotta goes back to my roots – when our family came from Italy, both my father and mother were cheesemakers. I grew up watching them craft fresh ricotta by hand, and its rich, delicate flavor has been part of our table for as long as I can remember. This cake is a simple, beautiful way to showcase that tradition, perfect for enjoying with coffee in the morning or as a light, sweet finish to any meal.

Baking this cake fills my kitchen with the same comforting aroma I remember from childhood. It’s a simple yet elegant dessert that feels like a warm hug from home, and the best part is how incredibly easy it is to make – just mix, bake, and enjoy.

Things to Know About Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake

The ricotta is the secret: Whole-milk ricotta gives this cake its signature soft, moist texture. Be sure to drain it well before adding it to the batter. Excess liquid can make the cake too dense or wet.

Use fresh lemons: This recipe relies on fresh lemon zest and juice for its bright, natural lemon flavor. Zest the lemons before juicing them so you get the most flavor from the peel.

Don’t skip draining the ricotta: Place the ricotta in a fine-mesh sieve lined with cheesecloth or a coffee filter and let it drain for at least 30 minutes. If your ricotta is particularly wet, you can drain it longer.

A springform pan works best: This is a soft, delicate cake, so a 9-inch springform pan makes it much easier to remove without damaging the edges. Lining the bottom with parchment also helps.

Let the cake cool completely: Resist the temptation to slice it while it’s warm. The cake continues to set as it cools, giving you cleaner slices and the best texture.

Even better the next day: Once cooled, the cake can be covered and kept at room temperature for a day or refrigerated for longer storage. The lemon flavor becomes even more pronounced after it rests.

Craving more sweet inspiration?
If you loved this **Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake – Moist & Fluffy**, you’ll want to try my **Ricotta Lemon Blueberry Cake** for a fruity twist, or my pureed apple walnut cake, for a delicious fall treat.

Italian Ricotta Lemon Cake – Moist & Fluffy



Italian ricotta lemon cake is a moist and fluffy dessert made with creamy ricotta cheese and fresh lemon flavor. This light Italian cake has a delicate texture and is perfect for breakfast, afternoon coffee, or a simple elegant dessert.

- 1 LB. whole milk ricotta cheese (well-drained)
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 1/2 sticks of butter at room temperature
- 2 lemons (zest and juice (about 2–3 tbsp juice and 2 tbsp zest))
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp salt
- Powdered sugar (for dusting (optional))

1. Prep the pan & oven – Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease and lightly flour a 9-inch springform pan, or line the bottom with parchment paper.
2. Mix dry ingredients – In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.
3. Beat wet ingredients – In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter, ricotta and sugar together until smooth and

creamy, about 2 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each.
4. Add flavor – Mix in lemon zest, lemon juice, and vanilla until fully combined.
5. Combine – Gently fold the dry ingredients into the wet mixture until just incorporated. Do not overmix.
6. Bake – Pour batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Bake for 40–45 minutes, or until the cake is golden on top and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Cool & finish – Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then release the springform sides. Cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with powdered sugar before serving.

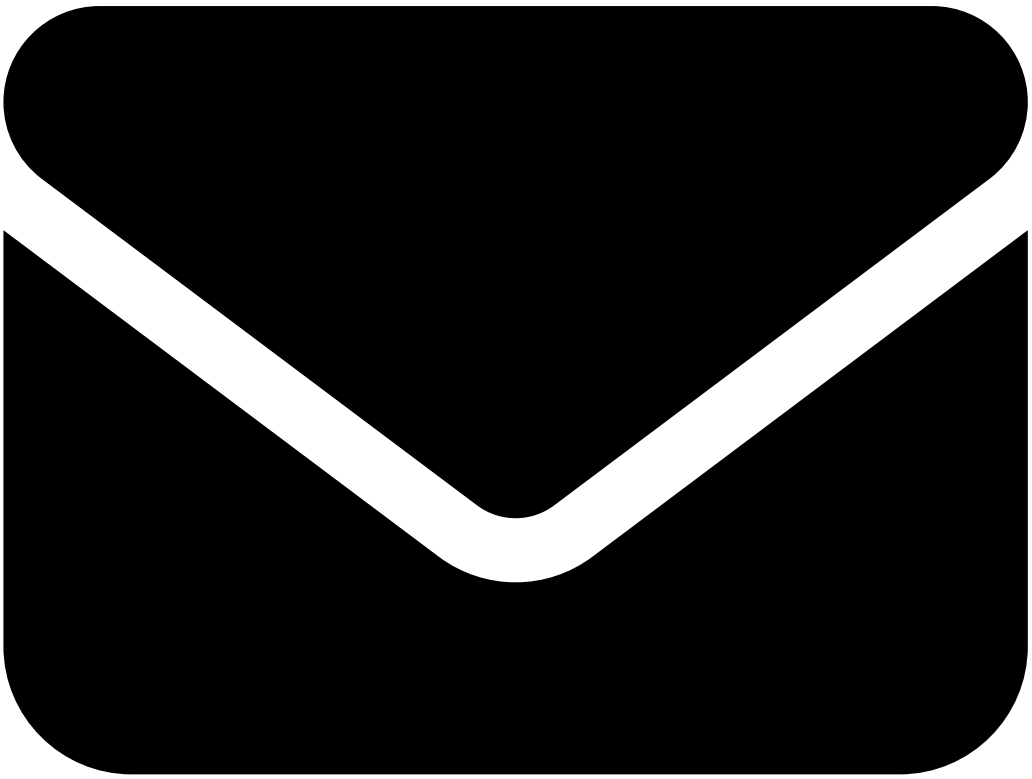
Dessert
Italian
Italian ricotta lemon cake

Italian Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches

Italian Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches

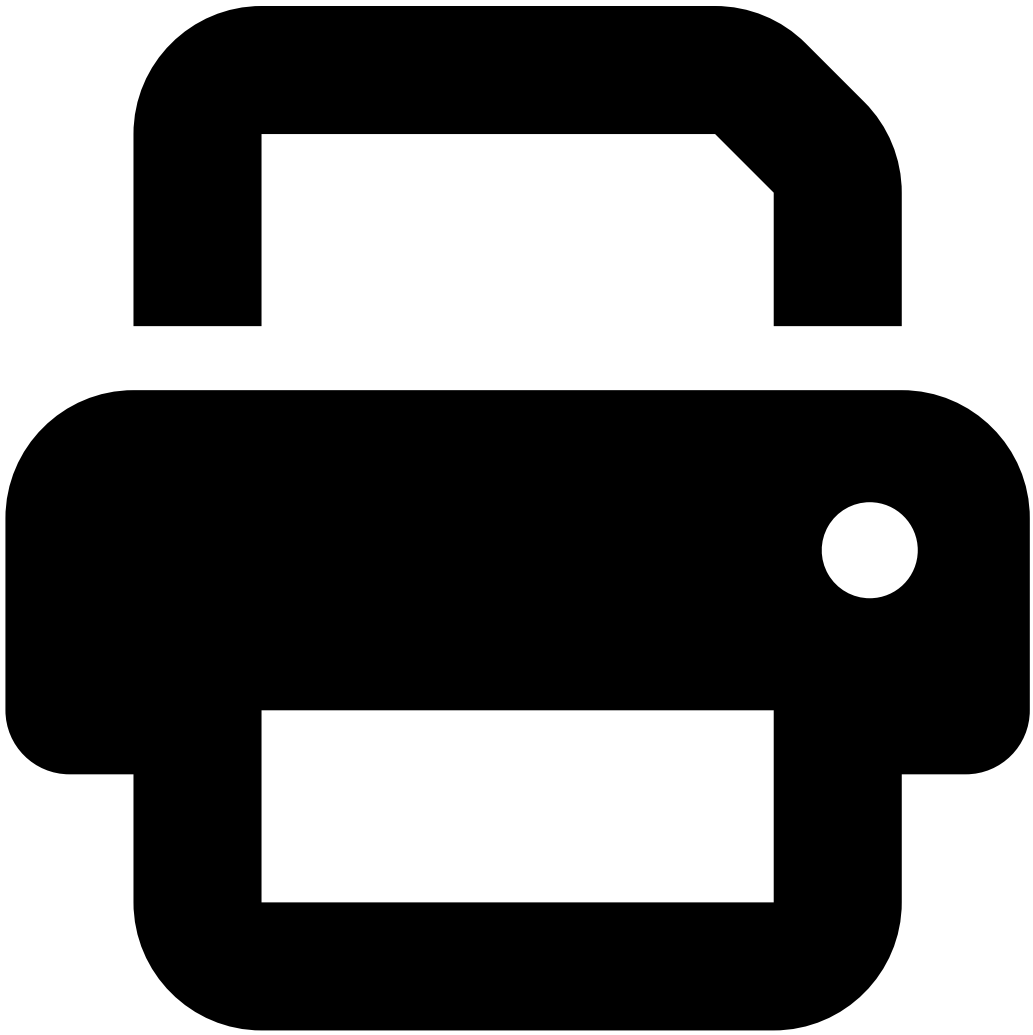
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One of my favorite ways to celebrate ripe summer peaches is by baking them the Italian way—stuffed with crushed amaretti cookies and just a touch of liqueur. Baked peaches like these remind me of the simple yet elegant desserts my family would enjoy after a long summer dinner. The warm aroma of bubbling peaches and toasted almonds fills the kitchen—with Italian sweetness that doesn’t need much fuss to shine.

I’m using just four peaches here, perfect for a cozy gathering or an effortless dinner finale. The amaretti bring a delicate crunch and deep almond flavor, enriched with a splash of liqueur and a bit of butter. Whether you serve them warm with gelato or enjoy them at room temperature with a spoonful of whipped cream, they feel both nostalgic and just a little indulgent.

Things to Know About Italian Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches

1. Choose ripe but firm peaches:
You want peaches that are sweet and juicy, but not overly soft—so they hold their shape during baking.

2. Amaretti cookies bring classic Italian flavor:
These crisp almond cookies are key to the flavor. They add crunch, sweetness, and that signature almond taste. You can use store-bought or homemade.

3. A splash of liqueur adds depth:
Traditional recipes often include Amaretto, Marsala, or even a bit of rum or vin santo. It enhances the almond flavor and gives the filling a little richness.

4. A Northern Italian favorite:
This dessert is popular in regions like Piedmont and Lombardy, where both peaches and almonds grow abundantly.

5. Cocoa powder or chopped chocolate is optional—but authentic:
Some Italian Nona's add a teaspoon of cocoa or chocolate to the filling for a subtle bittersweet note. Try it if you like a hint of chocolate. I always do.

6. Perfect warm or room temp:
These peaches are lovely right out of the oven with gelato, but just as delicious cooled down as a rustic midday treat.

7. Easily doubled for a crowd:
Got more peaches? This recipe scales beautifully. You can make a whole trayful for a summer party or family dinner.

Ready to bring a little rustic Italian magic to your summer table?
Give these Italian amaretti stuffed summer peaches a try.

When you make them, tag me on Instagram or leave a comment below—I love seeing your creations!

And if you're looking for more ways to celebrate peach season (or summer fruit in general), don't miss my Fresh Italian Summer Plum Cake or Rustic Roasted Pepper Salad—they're both perfect for warm-weather meals.

Recipe: Italian Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches



These Italian Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches are a classic Italian dessert that celebrates the best of fresh summer fruit. Juicy peaches are filled with a buttery mixture of crushed amaretti cookies, then baked until tender and lightly caramelized. Simple to prepare yet elegant enough for entertaining, this easy peach dessert is perfect served warm with whipped cream, mascarpone, or vanilla gelato.

- 4 ripe but firm peaches (halved and pitted)
- 12 amaretti cookies (crushed finely)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter (melted)
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder or finely chopped chocolate

- 1 tablespoons sweet liqueur like Amaretto or Marsala
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Butter for greasing the baking dish

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly butter a baking dish large enough to fit the peach halves snugly.
2. Prepare the filling: In a bowl, mix crushed amaretti cookies, sugar, melted butter, egg yolk, cocoa powder (if using), liqueur, and cinnamon until it forms a soft paste.
3. Stuff the peaches: Spoon the filling into the hollow of each peach half, mounding slightly.
4. Bake: Arrange the peaches cut side up in the prepared dish. Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until the peaches are soft and the filling is golden and set.
5. Serve warm or at room temperature, dusted with powdered sugar and topped with a scoop of gelato or a dollop of whipped cream, if desired

Dessert
Italian
Italian amaretti stuffed peaches