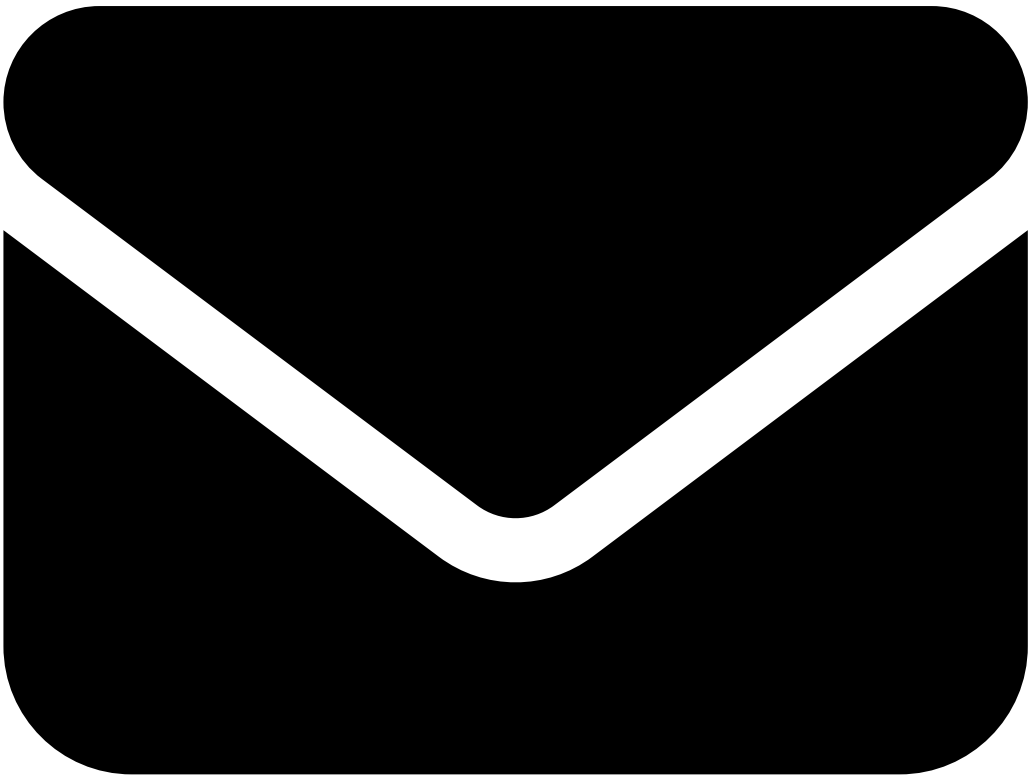
# Italian Almond Brittle (Mandorle Croccanti)

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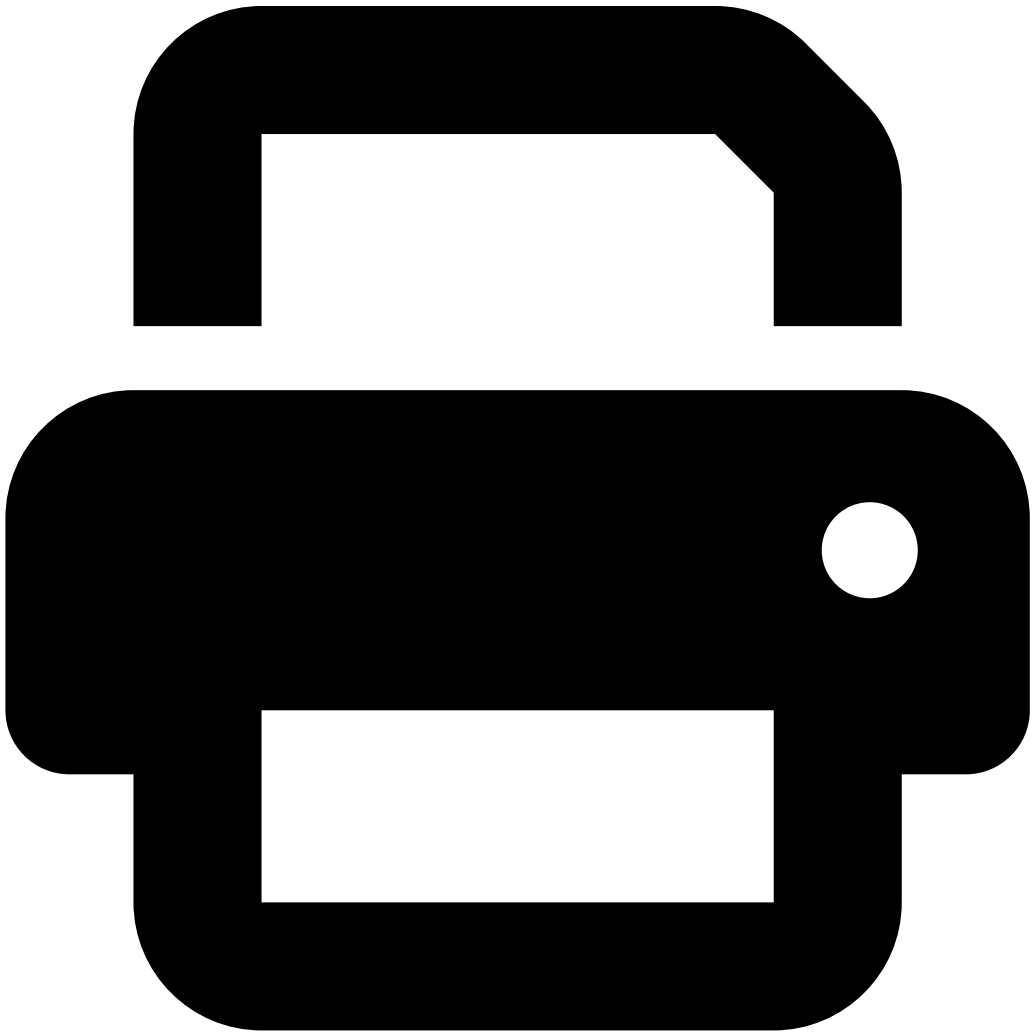
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Mandorle Croccanti brings back some of my sweetest childhood memories growing up in Italy. I was raised on a farm, and we didn’t have the abundance of ingredients or conveniences that we have today. We made do with what we had, and often the simplest ingredients created the most memorable treats.

At Christmas, these crunchy caramel-coated almonds were something special. They were a treat we looked forward to, made with just a few simple ingredients, and often wrapped up and given as gifts to family and friends. There was something so special about receiving a homemade gift, especially one made with love.

Today, whenever I make Mandorle Croccanti, I’m reminded of those Christmases growing up on the farm. It’s amazing how a simple combination of almonds, sugar, and water can bring back so many memories. These are the kinds of traditional Italian recipes I love sharing because they carry a little piece of my

childhood and the traditions I never want to lose.

## What Are Mandorle Croccanti?

Mandorle Croccanti translates to crunchy almonds in Italian. They are made by coating whole almonds in cooked sugar syrup that caramelizes into a hard, glossy coating.

Once cooled, the candy becomes crisp and crunchy and can be broken into irregular pieces. Depending on the region and family tradition, Italian almond brittle is also known as croccante alle mandorle.

## Why You'll Love This Recipe

- **Simple ingredients:** You only need almonds, sugar, and water.
- **Wonderful crunch:** The caramel hardens around the almonds, creating a crisp candy.
- **Perfect for gifting:** Break it into pieces and package it in decorative bags or tins.
- **Make-ahead friendly:** Prepare it ahead of the holidays and store it in an airtight container.
- **Beautiful presentation:** Colorful nonpareils make this candy especially festive.

## Chef's Tips for Perfect Almond Brittle

- Toasting the almonds first gives the finished candy a deeper, nuttier flavor.
- Have your baking sheet and parchment ready before making the caramel. Once the sugar reaches the right color, you need to work quickly.
- Watch the caramel carefully. It can go from golden to

burnt very quickly.
- Keep the almonds warm so they don’t cool the caramel too quickly when added.
- Never touch or taste hot caramel. It can cause serious burns.

# Storage

Store Mandorle Croccanti in an airtight container at room temperature in a cool, dry place. Keep it away from humidity, which can cause the caramel to become sticky.

Properly stored, the brittle will keep for approximately 2–3 weeks.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Can I make Mandorle Croccanti ahead of time?**

Absolutely! This is a wonderful make-ahead candy. Prepare it several days before serving and store it in an airtight container.

**Why is my almond brittle sticky?**

Humidity is usually the culprit. Make sure the candy has cooled completely before storing it, and keep it in an airtight container.

**Can I use sliced or slivered almonds?**

Yes, although whole almonds give the candy its traditional rustic appearance and a satisfying crunch.

**Do I need a candy thermometer?**

A thermometer is helpful for consistency. The caramel should reach approximately 340°F, or a deep amber color, before adding the almonds.

**Can I leave off the nonpareils?**

Of course! The candy is delicious with just almonds and caramel. The sprinkles are an optional decorative touch.

# More Italian Holiday Treats to Make

If you love traditional Italian sweets as much as I do, you'll want to add a few more homemade treats to your holiday baking list. Growing up in Italy, Christmas was about sharing what we had, preparing homemade goodies, and giving simple gifts made with love. These Mandorle Croccanti are a perfect example of that tradition.

If you're putting together an Italian Christmas cookie platter or making edible gifts for family and friends, try some of my other Italian favorites, including my Italian Amaretti Cookies, Homemade Italian Biscotti, and Italian Christmas Cookies.

To make these almond candies, a few kitchen essentials make the process easier. I recommend using a heavy-bottomed saucepan for even caramel cooking, a reliable candy thermometer to help monitor the temperature, and parchment paper for easy cleanup and removal once the candy hardens.

Kitchen tools you'll need:

- Heavy-bottomed saucepan
- Candy thermometer

  Parchment paper

- Decorative treat bags for gifting

# Italian Almond Brittle (Mandorle Croccanti)



Mandorle Croccanti is a traditional Italian almond brittle made with whole almonds coated in golden homemade caramel. This crunchy Italian candy is easy to prepare and perfect for holiday dessert trays, gifting, and sharing.

- 2 cups whole raw almonds
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 Tbsp. colorful nonpareils (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toast almonds for 8–10 minutes. Keep warm.
2. Combine sugar and water in a heavy saucepan.
3. Heat until sugar dissolves, then boil without stirring until the caramel reaches approximately 340°F and turns amber. Approximately 8–12 minutes
4. Quickly stir in the warm almonds.
5. Immediately spread onto a parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. Sprinkle with nonpareils while still hot.
7. Cool completely before cutting or breaking into pieces.

Chef’s Tip: Have your baking sheet lined with parchment paper and your almonds lightly toasted and warm before you begin making the caramel. Once the caramel reaches a golden amber color, work quickly to coat the almonds and spread the mixture before it hardens. Be careful when handling hot caramel, as it can cause serious burns. For the best crunch, allow the candy to cool completely before cutting or breaking it into pieces.

Tip text
Dessert
Italian
Italian almond brittle