

December Spice Club:

Cardamom Powder



Suggested Reading

Sarah Al-Hamad, *Cardamom and Lime: Recipes from the Arabian Gulf*

Trina Hahnemann, *Scandinavian Baking: Sweet and Savory Cakes and Bakes, For Bright Days and Cozy Nights*

Karoline Jönsson, *Happy Vegan Christmas: Plant-Based Recipes for Festive Scandinavian Feasts*

Chetna Makan, *The Cardamom Trail: Chetna Bakes with Flavors of the East*

Swayampurna Mishra, *My Indian Kitchen: 75+ Authentic, Easy and Nourishing Recipes for Your Family*

Beatrice Ojakangas, *The Great Scandinavian Baking Book*

Yotam Ottolenghi, *Sweet: Desserts from London's Ottolenghi*

Cardamom

As we head toward the first day of winter and many celebrated cherished holiday traditions, we wanted to feature a spice that embodies light in the darkness. Enter: cozy and warming cardamom.

One of the enclosed recipes is Scandinavian – in line with a sweet hygge theme to warm the kitchen. Beatrice Ojakangas of *The Great Scandinavian Baking Book* explains that cardamom-flavored coffeebreads are an essential element on the coffeetable for coffeetime, a ritual that can make up three of the six meals of the Scandinavian day (!). Cardamom also features heavily in their cookies and cakes as well. Ojakangas writes of her recipe for Icelandic Jewish cakes (*Gydingakökur*) that they are considered by Icelandic cooks to be an essential part of the Christmas cookie tray, though the origin of the cookies at the time of writing had eluded her. Further research on the topic indicates that Jewish cakes (really a cookie) may have been so called because they were sold in Jewish bakeries in the 1700's. We turned to Jake Cohen, writer of *Jew-Ish: A Cookbook*, for a more modern cookie featuring cardamom and oodles of chocolate.

Cardamom use is not restricted to these ethnic cuisines. Indian, East Indian, Spanish, Mexican, German, South Asian, and Middle Eastern cuisines use cardamom for myriad purposes: savory dishes and meats; sweet breads and bakes; breath-freshening; as well as spiced teas and coffees. In short: everyone loves cardamom!

There is general consensus among chefs that freshly decorticated (de-seeded) and ground cardamom is superior to pre-ground offerings. Be mindful of fresh cardamom's more powerful aroma and adjust recipes that call for freshly ground or pre-ground as necessary. If you have disliked cardamom in the past, try using less than the recipe calls for – the flavor should be enticing, not overpowering. With its savory-sweet versatility, cardamom is sure to shine.

Enclosed in this kit is organic, decorticated cardamom seed powder in a 4 oz. Ball jar. Best if used by September 2024. Both recipes make 24 cookies/buns.

Norwegian Coffee Buns (*Hveteboller*)

Beatrice Ojakangas, *The Great Scandinavian Baking Book*

“These simple buns are served fresh with morning coffee.”

BUNS

2 packages active dry yeast
½ cup warm water, 105° - 115°
⅓ cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon salt
½ cup melted butter
1 teaspoon cardamom
2 cups milk, scalded and cooled to lukewarm
6 – 6 ½ cups all-purpose flour

GLAZE

1 slightly beaten egg
2 tablespoons milk
Pearl sugar, plain sugar, or crushed sugar cubes for topping

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve the yeast in the warm water. Add a pinch of sugar and let stand 5 minutes until yeast foams. Stir in the remaining sugar, salt, butter, cardamom, and milk.

Add half the flour and beat until smooth and satiny. Add the remaining flour slowly, stirring until mixture will not absorb more flour. Let stand 15 minutes.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured board and knead until smooth and satiny, 5-10 minutes. Wash bowl, grease it, and place dough in bowl, turning the dough to grease top. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

Turn dough out onto a lightly oiled surface. Divide into 24 parts. Shape into smooth balls. Cover baking sheets with parchment or lightly grease them. Place dough on baking sheets and let rise until almost doubled, about 45 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°.

Mix egg and milk and brush rolls with the mixture. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden.

Salted Chocolate-Cardamom Cookies

Jake Cohen, *Jew-Ish: Reinvented Recipes from a Modern Mensch*

“Primarily made of ganache, the dough needs to be chilled slightly to set, or it will be too runny to scoop. The sweet spot for the perfect firmness is 45 minutes in the fridge; leave it too long, and your dough will be hard as a rock, which won’t be fun to scoop!”

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. dark chocolate (70% cacao), chopped (2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups)
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
4 large eggs
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
Flaky sea salt, for garnish

Set a medium bowl over a small pot of simmering water. Put the chocolate and olive oil in the bowl and heat, stirring as needed, until melted and well combined. Remove the bowl from the heat.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, kosher salt, baking powder, and cardamom.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until thick and lightened in color, about 2 minutes. Slowly whisk in the melted chocolate mixture, then gently fold in the dry ingredients until a smooth dough forms. Cover and refrigerate for 45 minutes. While waiting for the dough to chill, line two half-sheet pans with parchment paper and preheat oven to 350°.

Scoop the dough into 2-tablespoon balls, rolling each gently with your hands to smooth it, and place on the prepared sheet pans, spacing the cookies 2 inches apart. You should have 12 cookies per pan. Sprinkle a pinch of flaky sea salt over each ball of dough. Bake, rotating the pans halfway through, for 10-12 minutes, until the cookies are puffed and just starting to crack on the surface. Let cool completely on the pans, then serve.