

HWL Flaky Rugelach

An old-world cookie made gently — the way it should be.

Rugelach is one of those cookies people remember long after the tray is gone — the kind you pause over, noticing the layers and buttery crumb before reaching for another. This dough is intentionally simple — butter, cream cheese, flour — but handled with care. Instead of fully creaming the fat, the dough is mixed just shy of smooth and given one easy fold, creating delicate bakery-style flake without complexity.

Flaky Rugelach Dough

Ingredients — Small Batch (2 Rounds)

Unsalted butter — 227 g (8 oz)

Full-fat cream cheese — 225 g (8 oz)

All-purpose flour — 250 g (8.8 oz)

Fine sea salt — 3 g (½ tsp)

Ingredients — Large Batch (4 Rounds)

Unsalted butter — 454 g (16 oz)

Full-fat cream cheese — 450 g (16 oz)

All-purpose flour — 500 g (17.6 oz)

Fine sea salt — 6 g (1 tsp)

Dough Method

- 1 Mix the butter and cream cheese just until mostly combined, leaving visible streaks. Do not cream smooth.
- 2 Add the flour and salt in two additions, mixing gently after each just until a soft dough forms.
- 3 Divide the dough into equal portions, flatten into discs, wrap, and refrigerate at least 2 hours.
- 4 Roll one disc into a rectangle about ¼ inch thick. Fold into thirds like a letter, rewrap, and chill 30–45 minutes.
- 5 Roll thin (10–11 inches), add filling, cut into wedges, and roll into crescents.

Baking

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Arrange rugelach seam-side down on parchment-lined baking sheets. Brush lightly with egg wash, apply chosen sugar with a light pinch of flaky sea salt if using, and bake 18–22 minutes, rotating once, until lightly golden. Cool briefly on the pan, then transfer to a rack.

Make-Ahead

Dough keeps refrigerated up to 3 days or frozen up to 2 months. Shaped rugelach may be frozen and baked from frozen, adding 2–3 minutes.

Finishing & Fillings

Egg Wash: 1 whole egg + 1 tbsp water or milk. Whisk gently; brush lightly.

Cardamom Sanding Sugar: Sanding sugar 50 g (¼ cup) + ground cardamom ¼ tsp. Best with fruit fillings.

Pearl Sugar Finish: Pearl sugar as needed. Best with chocolate fillings.

Salted Finish (Optional): A light sprinkle of flaky sea salt (Maldon), about ■–¼ tsp total, mixed into sanding sugar or sprinkled lightly after egg wash.

Chocolate Rugelach Filling

Finely chopped dark or semi-sweet chocolate 85 g (3 oz), granulated sugar 50 g (¼ cup), unsweetened cocoa powder 1 tbsp, fine sea salt pinch. Mix dry ingredients and sprinkle evenly.

Orange–Apricot–Almond Filling

Apricot preserves 120 g (½ cup), orange zest 1 tsp, finely chopped almonds 60 g (½ cup), pinch salt, optional pinch cardamom. Stir smooth and spread thinly.