

Published December 22nd, 2021

The perfect pastry pairing for a morning coffee pick-me-up

By *Susie Iventosch*



Dark Chocolate & Sea Salt Rugelach Photo Susie Iventosch

I love it when cafes offer rugelach among their pastry selection, because they are the perfect sweet bite to pair with coffee. They've always reminded me of the cinnamon roll-ups my mom used to make with leftover pie dough, but rugelach dough is made with cream cheese in addition to butter. They usually come with cinnamon or chocolate fillings, and both are so delicious. It's hard to pick, so sometimes you just need both - one for the first cup of coffee, and one for the second. This recipe from Jake Cohen, (published in the December 2019 issue of Fine Cooking Magazine), is especially good because it's topped with sea salt. You can add any nut or fruit fillings you want to these tasty treats, such as finely chopped walnuts or pecans, currants, or your favorite jam. I used an iridescent edible glitter on top of the chocolate drizzle for some holiday pizzazz. Santa will love these too, so be sure to save a few for his cookie plate!

Dark Chocolate & Sea Salt Rugelach

Makes 4 Dozen

Cream Cheese Dough

INGREDIENTS:

8 oz. cream cheese, softened

4 oz. (8 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened

1/4 cup powdered sugar

11 oz. (2 1/3 cups) all-purpose flour; more as needed

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

Nonstick cooking spray

1 large egg, at room temp

1 teaspoon whole milk

DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl using a hand-held electric mixer or in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the cream cheese, butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Add the flour and salt, and then mix just until a smooth dough forms. Divide dough into four equal parts and shape them into a cube or square. Wrap in plastic and chill for 1 hour or up to overnight.

Position a rack in the center of the oven, and heat the oven to 375 F. Line two large rimmed baking sheets with silicone baking mats or parchment paper lightly coated with cooking spray.

Remove one dough square from the refrigerator, and place on a lightly floured work surface. (If you've refrigerated the dough overnight, let it sit out at room temperature for several minutes so it is more malleable and easier to roll out). Roll dough into an 8-inch square. Spread one-fourth of the filling on the dough, leaving a 1/2-inch edge at the top and bottom. Slice the square in half. Starting at a long end, roll each half into a cylinder from the outside in, and then cut each rolled half into six evenly sized pieces.

In a small bowl, whisk the egg and milk. Arrange 12 rugelach on one of the prepared baking sheets. Brush with the egg wash, and bake until golden-brown, 16 to 21 minutes. Repeat with the remaining dough and filing.

If desired, once out of the oven and cooled, drizzle melted chocolate over top of rugelach, or alternatively,

sprinkle with sea salt or powdered sugar.

Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Filling

INGREDIENTS

8 oz. (about 1 3/4 cups) coarsely chopped dark chocolate

2 oz. (4 Tbs.) unsalted butter

2 tablespoons powdered sugar (plus some extra for garnish)

1 teaspoon kosher salt

DIRECTIONS

Combine the chocolate, butter, sugar, and salt in a heat-proof bowl over a small saucepan of simmering water. Whisk until melted and smooth. Cool completely, and chill until the consistency of peanut butter.



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