

**Title:** Joyeux Noel  
**Summary:** Top French baker Gontran Cherrier of Tiong Bahru bakery shares with us classic Christmas recipes from home.  
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RECIPES

## JOYEUX NOËL

TOP FRENCH BAKER **GONTRAN CHERRIER**  
OF TIONG BAHRU BAKERY SHARES  
WITH US CLASSIC CHRISTMAS  
RECIPES FROM HOME.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIYOSHI YOSHIZAWA, JAMBU STUDIO

### **Kougelhof**

*To liven up this voluptuous baked treat, add a few drops of rum into melted butter and pour over the top, then dust with icing sugar. Recipe on p.54*

# [ ] spaesprüt

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**Gontran Cherrier,** an artisan boulanger from Paris, was born to a family of bakers. His philosophy is to offer simple bread with plenty of flavour.



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## SPECULOOS

Makes: 100

250 g butter, softened  
300 g brown sugar  
500 g flour  
6g baking powder  
25 g milk  
30 g or ½ large egg  
20 g gingerbread spice mix (either store-bought or see below \*\*)  
50 g orange zest  
A pinch of salt

1. In a large bowl, combine the butter with brown sugar and mix until smooth.
2. Sift flour with baking powder, add to the butter mixture and use an electric mixer on low speed to mix well.
3. Mix the remaining ingredients together in a separate bowl and slowly incorporate into the dough until well mixed.
4. Rest the mixture, covered, for an hour in the fridge before using.
5. Dust some flour on a flat surface and roll the dough out into 3mm thickness. Use a sharp knife to cut the dough into small rectangles of 6cm X 4cm.
6. Arrange the speculoos on a tray lined with baking paper and bake in a pre-heated oven at 170°C for 15 mins.
7. When ready, place the speculoos on a cooling rack and allow to cool to room temperature. Store in air tight container.

## GINGERBREAD

Makes: 1 loaf

A pinch of salt  
75 g fresh cream (thick)  
85 g full fat milk  
52 g (1 large) egg  
365 g honey  
50 g brown sugar  
195 g rye flour  
65 g flour  
7 g baking powder  
5 g gingerbread spice mix \*\*  
Icing sugar for dusting

1. In a mixing bowl, combine the salt, fresh cream, milk and egg and mix together.
2. Heat the honey with the brown sugar until the brown sugar is melted.
3. Sift the flours with the baking powder, add the gingerbread spice mix and combine with the wet ingredients.
4. Pour the dough into a 20cm rectangular loaf tin greased with butter and dusted with flour.
5. Bake in a convection oven at 160°C for 60 mins. Check if the cake is ready by inserting a knife's tip into the centre. The tip should come

out clean. Unmold after baking and set aside to cool. Dust with icing sugar and serve.

\*\* For the gingerbread spice mix, combine 5 g ground star anise, 5 g cinnamon, 5 g cloves and 5 g nutmeg. Combine well and store in an air-tight jar until ready to use.

## KOUGELHOPF

Makes: 1

195 g flour  
A pinch of salt  
20 g sugar  
50g egg (or one large egg)  
65 g full fat milk  
10 g yeast  
50 g cold butter, cut into small pieces  
20 g raisins  
10 g roasted almonds, sliced  
Icing sugar for dusting

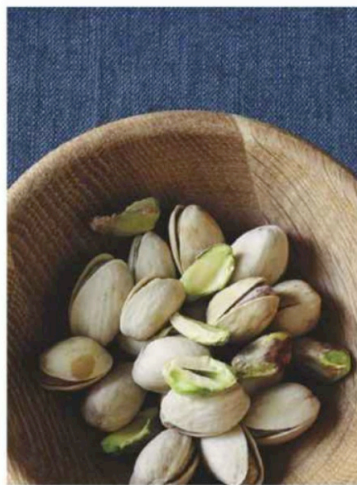
1. Sift the flour then pour into a mixer with a paddle attachment.
2. Add the salt and sugar, mix well. Add egg, milk and yeast.
3. Knead the dough until the elasticity resembles that of brioche (about 6 to 8 mins on low speed).
4. Mix in small pieces of butter till thoroughly incorporated. Stir in the fruits and nuts.
5. Rest the dough for 2 hrs.
6. Pour the dough in a kougelhoppf tin greased with melted butter and dusted with flour.
7. Proof the dough for 2 hrs in an air-con room at about 20°C before baking in a pre-heated oven at 190°C for about 45-50 mins.
8. Unmold immediately after baking. Allow to cool. Dust with icing sugar.

## STOLLEN

Makes: 1

125 g flour  
60 g cold water  
25 g butter  
½ tsp vanilla extract  
A pinch of salt  
15 g sugar  
12 g or ¼ large egg  
A pinch of ground cardamon  
A pinch of ground cinnamon  
7 g yeast  
30 g candied orange peels, chopped  
40 g rum-soaked raisins  
30 g almonds  
80 g almond paste (store-bought – optional)  
Egg and melted butter for brushing

1. Sift the flour then pour into a mixer with a paddle attachment.
2. Pour in water, butter, vanilla extract, salt, sugar, egg, cardamon and cinnamon and mix till a soft dough is formed. Add yeast then knead until elasticity of the dough resembles that of brioche.
3. Mix in the fruits and nuts.
4. Rest the dough, covered for 2 hrs.
5. Form the dough into an oval shape. To include almond paste, roll out the bread dough into a 3cm sheet, then roll out the almond paste till 1mm thick. Place the almond paste onto the bread dough and roll inwards (like a Swiss roll).
6. Brush the surface of the loaf with egg.
7. Allow the dough to rest for 45 min at cool room temperature before baking in a convection oven for about 15 min, at 170°C.
8. After baking, brush the stollen with melted butter. 🍞



## CRUNCHY GOODNESS

USE DIFFERENT TYPES OF NUTS SUCH AS MACADAMIA, WALNUTS OR PISTACHIO TO JAZZ UP YOUR BAKED TREATS, AND PAIR THEM WITH DRIED FRUITS SUCH AS APRICOT AND PEAR.

# [ ] spaesprît

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“This is a classic **French speculoos** recipe. I’ve rolled the dough to this thickness as I prefer the texture.”



### **Speculoos**

*This is a type of spiced shortcrust biscuit traditionally baked for Christmas. Recipe on p. 54*



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## Stollen

*A classic Christmas bread that's perfect for afternoon tea. Recipe on p. 54*

**“For more flavour,** prep the dough one day in advance. Traditional stollens do not include almond paste, but I’ve added it to this recipe for an extra dimension.”