FOOD CLASS: A COOKIE PARTY!

October 28, 2025

The Park Slope Food Coop Cooking Squad Presents

A COOKIE PARTY

November 19 @ 7:30 pm

— Bake three different cookies in one hour —

NO MIXER NEEDED!



Thumbprints



Lemon Crinkles



Crystallized Ginger & Molasses

Class is FREE, online, and open to all!

TO REGISTER:
foodcoopcooks.org/rsvp
IG: foodcoopcooks

Meet Camille, your cookie chef!

Three fun facts about Camille:

1. Camille bakes cookies and eats cookies.
2. Camille has been a member of the Park Slope Food Coop for 22 years.
3. Camille has been on staff for 18 years.

IG: camillecooks1

Join us with Guest Chef Camille to make “Three Different Cookies” on Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7:30 p.m. EST as part of the Coop’s monthly cooking series. The class will be streamed online via Zoom. We will be making Thumbprints, Lemon Crinkles, and Crystallized Ginger and Molasses Cookies!

ABOUT THE CHEF

Camille has been a member of the Coop for 22 years and bakes and eats cookies! She has also been on the Coop staff for 18 years. Follow her on Instagram @camille-cooks1.

RSVP, PARTICIPATE AND FOLLOW

Sign up for classes, download recipes, and find shopping lists to cook along from home at foodcoopcooks.org. As classes are added, they will show up on the Squad’s home page. Check back regularly for updates! Follow the Cooking Squad on Instagram at instagram.com/foodcoopcooks for more content including shopping sessions with guest chefs!

TEACH A CLASS

Though cooperation is at the heart of the Coop’s mission, so is food! The Cooking Committee is looking for guest chefs to share their food expertise, traditions, and special treats. Members receive FTOP credit for preparing and delivering classes. Tell us what you want to teach at foodcoopcooks.org/contact.

THE HOLIDAYS AT THE COOP

October 28, 2025

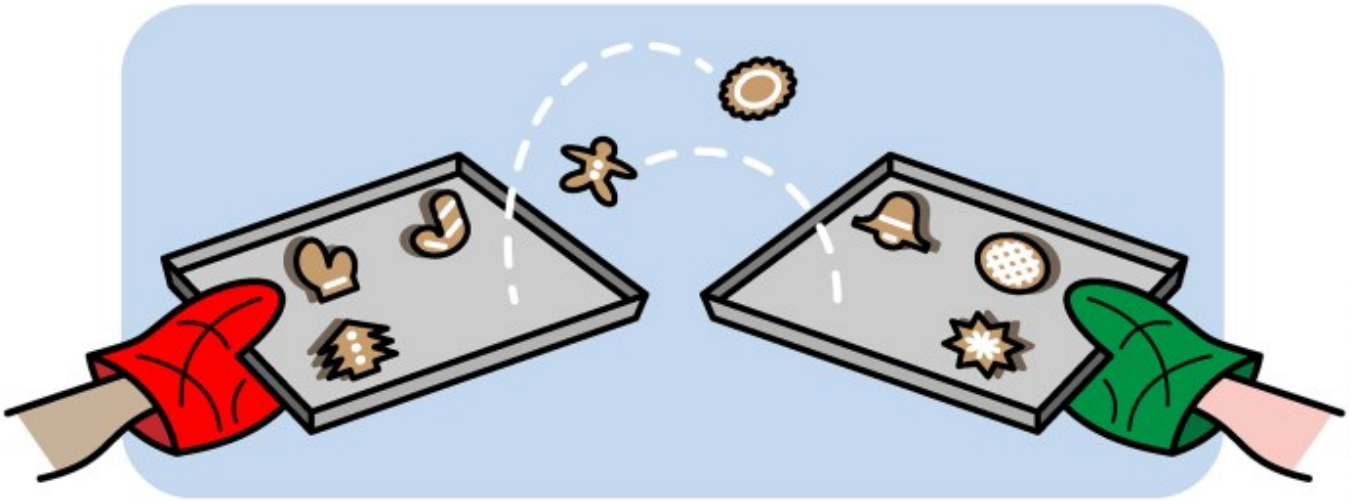


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

A SWEET TRADITION: COOKIE SWAP PARTIES

By Liora Fishman

As the holiday season approaches, I find myself dreading the inevitable onslaught of Secret Santa events II'll be asked to participate in. At the risk of being a Grinch, the volume of gift-giving that comes with this time of year can feel overwhelming, expensive and even impersonal. Don't get me wrong—I love the holidays, and I appreciate my family, friends and colleagues who organize gift exchanges. But when tasked with finding an inexpensive gift for, say, a coworker I don't know particularly well, I often find myself coming up empty.

> GUESTS TASTE ALL THE COOKIES, SWAP THEIRS FOR OTHERS, AND LEAVE WITH A VARIETY TO TAKE HOME.

Enter: the cookie swap party. It's a time-honored way to celebrate the joy of giving

and sharing during the festive Christmas season. Each guest brings a batch of cookies, preferably of their own baking. The more unique the recipe, the better! Guests taste all the cookies, swap theirs for others, and leave with a variety to take home. That is, if they don't eat all of the cookies before they get there.

THE ORIGINS OF COOKIE SWAPS

The concept of cookie exchanges, or cookie swaps, has roots that reach back to Europe in the Middle Ages. It was a time when communities came together to celebrate the holiday season, exchanging small gifts and homemade baked goods. This tradition eventually found its way to America, where it would evolve into the beloved cookie swap parties we know today. In the 1930s and 1940s, a significant shift occurred in American kitchens. The availability of ovens and the convenience of pre--packaged ingredients led to a surge in home baking. With more households now equipped for baking, cookie swap parties started to gain traction.

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Fast forward to the present day and cookie swap parties have become a cherished holiday tradition for many. "During the holiday season, it can be hard to know what to get your friends and family—and it's overwhelming to pick out gifts for all your loved ones," said Brett Krasner, who has been a Park Slope Food Coop member since 2021. "Cookie swap parties are a great way to bring a personal, home-baked touch to your holiday gifting without breaking the bank."



COOKIE SWAP PARTY DELIGHTS

Now that you‘re familiar with the historical backdrop, let‘s talk about the star of the show: the cookies themselves. Elevate your cookie game with these fancy and delectable ideas, starring ingredients from the Coop:

1. Lavender and Lemon Shortbread Cookies: These delicate shortbread cookies are infused with the fragrant flavors of lavender and fresh lemon zest, providing a delightful twist on a classic favorite.
2. Raspberry Linzer Cookies: A personal favorite, these elegant, sandwich-style cookies feature a delicate almond dough filled with raspberry jam and dusted with powdered sugar.
   Pro-tip: If you’re short on time, Bonne Maman makes a similar pre-packaged cookie available at the Coop (in the Express Line aisle).

3. Pistachio Cranberry Biscotti: For a sophisticated treat, bake up a batch of biscotti with pistachios, dried cranberries and a drizzle of white chocolate. There are few things more satisfying than dipping a biscotti into a cappuccino or a cup of tea on a chilly afternoon.
4. Matcha Green Tea Snowballs: For a unique twist, incorporate the trendy flavor of matcha into your powdered-sugar-dusted cookies, creating vibrant snowballs infused with green tea.
5. Salted Caramel Chocolate Thumbprint Cookies: These indulgent cookies feature a rich chocolate base with a gooey salted caramel center, garnished with a sprinkle of sea salt.

The pastry chef and former Brooklyn resident Jim Bohovic said making cookies based on your family traditions can be a great way to introduce family and friends to exciting new flavors and textures.

He added that he once saw guests at a New York City holiday party take his grandmother‘s cookies as if they were attending a cookie swap. Though they did not bring cookies to share, he said the guests filled their own plastic baggies with cookies. Bohovic called it a cookie “theft,” à la Cookie Monster.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

FIVE PANTRY STAPLES FOR HOLIDAY BAKING

When it comes to holiday baking, a well-stocked pantry is your best friend. Here are five pantry staples—excluding sugar and flour, which go without saying—that you'll want to have on hand for your baking endeavors:

1. Spices: Cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves add warmth and depth to your holiday recipes, creating a cozy atmosphere during the winter season.
2. Vanilla extract: A dash of pure vanilla extract enhances the aroma and taste of your baked goods, giving them a touch of sophistication.
3. Nuts: Need an excuse to raid the bulk aisle? Almonds, pecans and walnuts are fantastic for adding texture and flavor to cookies, cakes and pies.
4. Cocoa powder: Quality cocoa powder is a must for rich chocolatey holiday treats like brownies and fudgy cookies, perfect for savoring during the winter months.
5. Extracts and flavorings: Beyond vanilla, extracts like almond, peppermint and orange can elevate the flavor profile of your baked goods, offering variety and a hint of luxury.

For those of us who have allergies or dietary restrictions that might preclude participation in cookie swaps, fear not. Gluten-free flour, nut-free recipes and vegan substitutions have never been better. In fact, some products are so good they can fool even the dairy fanatics in your life. “My partner’s family are Francophiles and obsessed with butter,” said Tamar Lindenbaum, who is vegan and has been a Coop member since 2022. “The only way they’ll eat a vegan dessert is if it tastes buttery. I’ve found that the best way to make a dessert that tastes authentically buttery is by using Miyoko’s vegan butter.”

With these pantry staples and fancy cookie ideas, you‘ll be well-prepared to impress guests at your next cookie swap party. So, consider ditching Secret Santa this year and opting for a cookie swap: Gather your friends and family, whip up some extraordinary cookies, and share in the joy of this heartwarming holiday tradition.

The last word goes to the pastry chef we heard from earlier, Jim Bohovic, who said, “Holiday baking means fun, tradition, time with kiddos and sharing.”