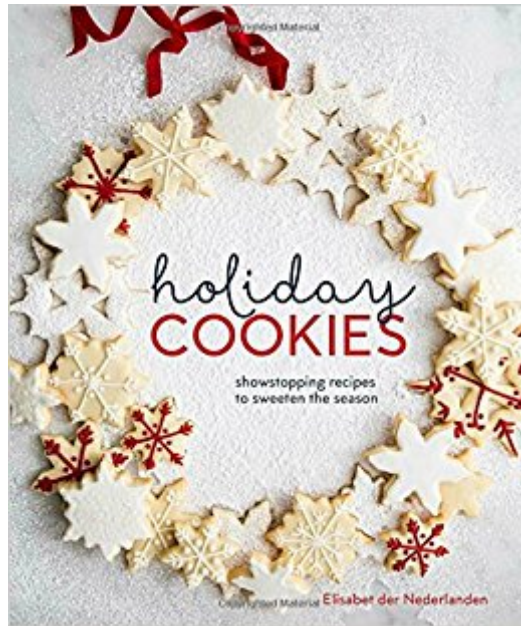




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Holiday Cookies: Showstopping Recipes To Sweeten The Season



Synopsis

From Icebox Pinwheel Cookies to Red-and-White Meringue Kisses to Apple Cider Caramels, find new inspiration for the best of seasonal baking with *Holiday Cookies*. This instant holiday classic is packed with 50 recipes, each gorgeously photographed and meticulously tested, along with dozens of decorating and packaging ideas. Filled with reimagined favorites like Giant Molasses Spice Cookies and Hazelnut Sandwich Cookies; confections like Peppermint Bark, Smoked Almond and Cacao Nib Brittle, and Dark Chocolate-Hazelnut Fudge; and detailed instructions for gorgeous gingerbread houses, cookie place cards, and edible ornaments, this is a cookie book like no other. Because the recipes are easy to scale up or down, *Holiday Cookies* is perfect for cookie exchanges, gift-giving, and just enjoying throughout the season. From a veteran baker and recipe developer, each cookie in this collection is guaranteed to be a stand-out, and destined to become your new Christmas classic.

Book Information

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Chocolate-Stenciled Shortbread Rounds You need only a tiny amount of cocoa for dusting over the stencil on these small, pretty cookies, which makes dressing them up a delicate job. These shortbread rounds are so lovely, however, that your time and effort will be well spent. The stencil I used is of a small, intricate snowflake, but nearly any holiday-inspired shape will work just as long as it's made from a firm material. For the sides, I use clear coarse decorating sugar, but you can use a colored sugar if you prefer. **Recipe - Makes about 36 cookies** Sift the flour into a bowl, then whisk in the salt. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle

attachment, combine the butter and confectioners' sugar and beat on medium speed for about 3 minutes, until light and creamy. Add the vanilla and beat until combined. On low speed, add the flour mixture and beat just until incorporated and the dough starts to come together. Scrape the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and divide in half. Shape each half into a disk 4 to 1 inch thick, then wrap each disk in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour. Position two oven racks, evenly spaced, in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out one dough disk about 4 inch thick. Using the cookie cutter, cut out as many cookies as possible and carefully transfer them to a prepared baking sheet, spacing them evenly. Gather up the dough scraps, reroll them, cut out more cookies, and add them to the sheet. Repeat with the remaining dough disk. Pour the decorating sugar onto a small flat plate. One at a time, gently roll the edge of each cookie in the sugar and return to the baking sheet. One at a time, lay the stencil over a cookie and sift a light dusting of cocoa powder over the stencil. Lift the stencil straight up and move it to the next cookie. Repeat until all of the cookies are decorated. Bake the cookies for 16 to 18 minutes, until the edges are lightly golden, switching the baking sheets between the racks about halfway through the baking time. Transfer the baking sheets to wire racks and let cool for 5 minutes, then carefully transfer the cookies to the racks and cool completely before serving.

Special Equipment 1 4-inch round cookie cutter; 1 2-inch (or smaller) stencil in design of choice.

Ingredients 2 cups all-purpose flour 2 teaspoon kosher salt 1 cup (8 ounces) unsalted butter, at room temperature 2 cup confectioners' sugar 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 4 cup coarse decorating sugar 1 tablespoon Dutch-process cocoa powder (see page 153)

ELISABET DER NEDERLANDEN is a passionate professional baker and a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. She has worked as a food stylist and professional recipe developer/tester for commercial, advertising, and packaging projects. In addition, she has managed recipe testing and food styling for more than 30 cookbooks.

INTRODUCTION The aroma of baking that fills my home in December is unlike that of any other time of year and heightens my excitement for the approaching holidays. Thinking about what lies ahead conjures up memories of being a child, when early every moment of the holiday season seemed warm and festive. I was born and brought up in Sweden, where my parents built a house

next door to my grandmother's home. The nearest town was six miles away, so my childhood was spent in the countryside. I learned to bake from a young age, and as a teenager I worked in a konditori (bakery) in that nearby small town. From the age of thirteen, children in Sweden can take two weeks every semester to do practical training at a local workplace, which is how I came to be at the Holgers Konditori. Opened in 1903, the bakery is located in the main square and is where everyone in town goes for special-occasion cakes, cookies, and buns. When I finished my training, Holgers offered me a summer job, and I worked there every summer. I loved every minute. That love of baking extended into my home life, particularly around the holidays. Once autumn arrived, which brought fewer daylight hours, inside activities like baking became the norm. Come winter, nighttime fell early, and any opportunity to celebrate and decorate – especially with lights – helped brighten the darkest time of year. In Sweden, holiday celebrations start early and include many festivities, such as the Advent season, which begins on the fourth Sunday preceding Christmas. One of my favorite celebrations is St. Lucia Day, in which girls dressed in white lead a candlelight procession, and everyone in the group sings and pepparkakor, a gingery cookie with plenty of snap (you'll find the recipe on page 88), is served. A lot of baking is done early in December, when breads, cakes, cookies, and confections are made and then stored for the upcoming celebrations. I remember eating many of these treats only during the holidays, so just making them would put you in the spirit of the season.

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