

# Holiday Cookbook

The EngagedMD team's favorite holiday recipes



# Happy holidays from EngagedMD!

In the spirit of the holidays, and with a team that spends a lot of time in the kitchen, we thought it'd be great to share some of our favorite recipes.

Each member of the team has included a recipe of their own. Check out what we're cooking up this holiday season!

Happy holidays from our family to yours,

- **The EngagedMD Team**



# Blueberry Buckle



**Taylor Kniffin**

# Blueberry Buckle

## Taylor Kniffin

Growing up, my mom baked a Blueberry Buckle for most family gatherings, and she never missed an opportunity to mix one up on Christmas morning. This variation on coffee cake makes a delicious breakfast while you're unwrapping gifts from your Christmas stocking, as well as for a snack throughout the entire day. Sometimes I even do 1.5x the topping ingredients for an even more buttery and cinnamon-y buckle!

### Filling

- $\frac{2}{3}$  Cup of Sugar
- 4 T. Butter
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$  Cup Milk
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  Cup Flour
- 2 t. Baking Powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  t. Salt
- 2 cups blueberries

### Toppings

- $\frac{1}{2}$  Cup Sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$  Cup Flour
- 1 t. Cinnamon
- 4 T. Butter, cold or just a little soft





# Blueberry Buckle

## Taylor Kniffin

### Instructions:

1. Grease and flour 9" pan and preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Mix filling together. Put in greased and floured 9" square pan. (If you use a different size pan, just check with toothpick to see if done)
3. Mix toppings together. Use fork to break up butter and coat with the dry ingredients until crumbly.
4. Add topping to the top of the filling and bake for 40-50 minutes at 375 degrees.



# Mandelbrot



**Jeff Issner**

# Mandelbrot

## Jeff Issner

Mandelbrot is a traditional Jewish cookie, that literally translates from Yiddish to "Almond Bread". This recipe is my mom's specialty -- always fresh out of the oven (or freezer!) when the family is in town and made with chocolate chips instead of almonds. Delicious as a dessert or to dip in your coffee first thing in the morning.

### Ingredients

- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup Crisco
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 2 ½ cups flour

Can add chocolate chips (mini or regular), chopped nuts, package of Bits o'Brickle, or Craisins.



# Mandelbrot

## Jeff Issner

### Instructions:

1. Mix sugars, Crisco, vanilla until smooth. Add eggs one at a time. Combine baking powder and flour. Add slowly to mixture. Roll into 2 loaves on greased cookie sheet (each will be approximately 3" wide and 1" high). Sprinkle cinnamon or cinnamon sugar on top.
2. Bake at 350 for 25 minutes or until brown. Remove, cool for about 15-20 minutes until you can cut slices. Put slices on side and if you want, sprinkle cinnamon / sugar. Bake 5-10 more minutes. Freezes well - enjoy!





# Jerk Chicken



**Adam Daniels**

# Jerk Chicken

## Adam Daniels

This recipe is a favorite from me and my wife!

### Ingredients

- 6 chicken thighs bone and skin on
- 3 green onions from tip to tail with root trimmed
- 1/2 yellow onion
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper de-seeded and de-veined
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup distilled white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice



# Jerk Chicken

## Adam Daniels

### Instructions:

1. Add the chicken thighs to a large skillet and brown them on medium high heat on both sides for 3-5 minutes.
2. In a food processor add the green onions, onion, jalapeno, soy sauce, vinegar, vegetable oil, brown sugar, thyme, cloves, nutmeg and allspice and puree until smooth.
3. Add the chicken to the slow cooker skin side up and pour the sauce over the chicken.
4. Cook on low for 8 hours.



# Tiramisu Alfajores



**Olivia Duggan**

# Tiramisu Alfajores

## Olivia Duggan

My best friend's mom recently entered this cookie in the Milwaukee local newspaper's cookie of the year contest and won. She is very proud of it, so I thought this could be a good addition.

Entry in the "Cheesy Peasy" Category (Makes approximately 24)

### Ingredients:

- 10 T unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 C sugar
- 2 large egg yolks
- 1.5 tsp espresso powder
- 1 T brewed espresso
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 C flour
- 1 C plus 1 T cornstarch
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt





# Tiramisu Alfajores

## Olivia Duggan

### Filling:

- 7 oz mascarpone cheese, room temperature
- 3 oz cream cheese, room temperature
- 1/3 C confectioners sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla

### Finishing

- 3 oz grated bittersweet or semisweet chocolate



# Tiramisu Alfajores

## Olivia Duggan

### Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat sugar and butter until light and fluffy, about three minutes.
3. Add egg yolks and beat to combine. Add espresso and vanilla and beat to combine.
4. Add flour mixture and beat on low speed just until dough comes together. Turn the dough out onto wax paper, divide in half, and roll each half into a log about 1.5 inches thick.
5. Wrap in plastic and chill at least two hours.



# Tiramisu Alfajores

## Olivia Duggan

### Instructions:

6. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment. Remove dough from plastic wrap and slice into  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch-thick rounds. Place on lined sheets and bake until the edges begin to get golden, about 7-8 minutes. Cool completely.
7. In the bowl of a mixer, combine mascarpone, cream cheese, confectioners sugar, and vanilla. (You made add 1T of rum or marsala wine, as desired). Beat until smooth and creamy, about one minute.
8. Flip half of cookies upside down and pipe a layer of filling onto bottoms. Top with remaining cookies.
9. Roll sides of cookie in grated chocolate or sprinkle chocolate along edges, rotating the cookie all the way around.



# Lamb Shawarma



**Euan Howard-Sorrell**

# Lamb Shawarma

## Euan Howard-Sorrell

This recipe is an all time favorite of mine and something you can make no matter the occasion (as long as you have lots of hungry people around). The recipe is adapted from Chef Yosam Ottolenghi's book Jerusalem, so it seems fitting to have this as a fun change to a regular Holiday lunch/dinner. This dish fosters the kind of fanatical devotion that might even start a new tradition. My advice after cooking this upwards of 5 times, are as follows: Whole spices are best and make sure to toast them! If possible, leave the lamb to marinate overnight, (A cold garage will do fine if you don't have fridge space!) finally, be sure to keep a bit of water in the roasting pan after the first half hour of cooking, it will keep the lamb juicy and tender.





# Lamb Shawarma

## Euan Howard-Sorrell

### Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons black peppercorns
- 5 cloves
- ½ teaspoon cardamom pods
- ¼ teaspoon fenugreek seeds
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 star anise
- ½ cinnamon stick
- 1 tablespoon grated nutmeg, about half a pod
- 4 tablespoons fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon sweet paprika
- 1 tablespoon dried sumac
- ¾ tablespoon kosher salt
- 3-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- ¾ cup chopped cilantro, stems and leaves included
- ½ cup peanut or other neutral oil
- 1 leg of lamb, on the bone, about 5 1/2-6 1/2 pounds



# Lamb Shawarma

## Euan Howard-Sorrell

### Instructions:

1. Put the peppercorns, cloves, cardamom, fenugreek, fennel, cumin, star anise and cinnamon in a cast-iron pan set over medium-high heat and dry-roast them for a minute or two, until the spices begin to pop and release their aromas. Take care not to burn them. Add the nutmeg, ground ginger and paprika, and toss for a few more seconds, just to heat them, then transfer to a spice grinder. Process the spices into powder. Transfer to a medium bowl, and stir in the sumac, salt, fresh ginger, garlic, cilantro, lemon juice and oil, and stir to combine.
2. Use a small sharp knife to score the leg of lamb about a half inch deep. Put the lamb in a large roasting pan and rub the marinade all over it, using your hands to massage the meat. Turn the lamb fat-side up, cover the pan with aluminum foil and place it aside on a countertop for at least a couple of hours, or preferably, rest it overnight in the refrigerator. Longer the better!



# Lamb Shawarma

## Euan Howard-Sorrell

### Instructions:

3. Heat oven to 350. Remove the aluminum foil, and place the lamb in the oven. Roast for approximately 4 hours, or until the meat is completely tender. After 30 minutes of roasting, add a quarter to a half inch of boiling water to the pan, and use this liquid to baste the meat every hour or so. (Add more water, as needed, making sure there is always AT LEAST a quarter inch of water in the bottom of the pan.) After 90 minutes or so, cover the lamb with aluminum foil to prevent the spices from burning. Once the lamb is done, remove it from the oven, and leave to rest for 10 to 15 minutes before carving and serving.



# Lamb Shawarma

## Euan Howard-Sorrell

I personally like to serve this dish with turmeric, cumin, and coriander spiced basmati rice, fresh pita, a simple tomato and cucumber salad, a homemade harissa sauce, and a garlic yogurt sauce with lemon and sumac. I baste the lamb one last time before plating uncarved (it looks fabulous), so everyone can take turns carving the lamb onto their pita.

I also make sauces and salad ahead of time so you can spend time with family while the lamb is cooking, but you always have the excuse to run off and “check the lamb” if you need a refill or just a graceful exit from conversation.



# Oatmeal Lace Cookies



**Reed Kelly**



# Oatmeal Lace Cookies

## Reed Kelly

These cookies are a holiday favorite! They are so light and buttery that you can eat several before you feel full! They are delicious on their own or served with vanilla ice cream.

### Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups oatmeal
- 2 ¼ cups brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup of melted butter
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla



# Oatmeal Lace Cookies

## Reed Kelly

### Instructions:

1. Place 1 Tbsp scoop per cookie onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Ensure that each scoop is spaced a few inches apart as the cookies will spread out.
2. Cook 7 minutes at 375 degrees.
3. Let cool slightly before removing from cookie sheet.

Each batch will yield several dozen cookies, but because they only take 7 minutes to bake, you can make several cookie sheets worth in a row! I often have two cookie sheets going simultaneously-- while one is in the oven, I'm scooping dough onto the other. Remember, use a new sheet of parchment paper every time you put a batch in the oven!



# Magic Bars



**Stephanie Sehnert**

# Magic Bars

## Stephanie Sehnert

Magic bars are the Christmas cookie that my family makes at least 3-4 batches of each holiday season, and I have been making and eating them for as long as I can remember. They're the perfect mix of salty and sweet and they require pretty minimal work and baking skills. I have never met someone who didn't obsess over these cookies (even coconut haters will fall in love with the magic of magic bars!).

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 cups cornflake crumbs (run cornflakes through a food processor or crush with a rolling pin in a plastic bag)
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 1/4 cup coconut flakes or shreds
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 3 Tbs sugar
- 1/2 pkg semi sweet chocolate chips (6 oz total)



# Magic Bars

## Stephanie Sehnert

### Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Place butter in a 13x9" pan and put in the oven to melt as the oven preheats. Combine cornflake crumbs and sugar. Once butter is melted, remove pan from oven and mix the cornflake/sugar mixture into the butter. Press mixture into the bottom of the pan to create a crust. Cover with nuts, then chocolate, then coconut. Drizzle sweetened condensed milk evenly over the top. Bake 25-30 minutes at 325 degrees or until slightly browned on top.





# Saltine Toffee



**Taylor Stein**

# Saltine Toffee

## Taylor Stein

### Ingredients:

- 1 sleeve saltine crackers
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup peanut butter chips

### Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment or aluminum foil, sprayed lightly with cooking spray. Line the saltine crackers up in rows on the prepared baking sheet.
- Add the butter and brown sugar to a large saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the butter is completely melted and bring to a boil.



# Saltine Toffee

## Taylor Stein

### Instructions:

- Remove from the heat and pour over the crackers on the baking sheet. Transfer the baking sheet to the oven and bake at 350°F for 5-8 minutes or until the toffee layer is bubbling.
- Remove from the oven, sprinkle the chocolate and peanut butter chips on top, and allow to melt. Once melted, spread over the toffee with a spatula so that all crackers are covered.
- Transfer to the refrigerator to chill for 45-60 minutes. Break into pieces and enjoy!





# Gluten-Free, Vegan Cinnamon Rolls



**Mike Wezner**

# Gluten-Free, Vegan Cinnamon Rolls

**Mike Wezner**

This is by far my favorite vegan dessert. My wife and I love to cook these up for family to eat over coffee Christmas morning!

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons vegan butter, to coat the foil pan

Dough

- 2 cups almond milk, at room temperature
- ½ cup vegan butter, melted
- ¼ cup organic sugar
- 1 packet active dry yeast
- 5 ½ cups flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt

Filling

- ¾ cup vegan butter
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon





# Gluten-Free, Vegan Cinnamon Rolls

**Mike Wezner**

Ingredients:

Icing

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons almond milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

- Generously rub two disposable foil pie pans with vegan butter.
- In a large bowl, whisk together the almond milk, melted butter, and sugar. The mixture should be just warm, registering between 100-110°F (37-43°C). If it is hotter, allow to cool slightly.
- Sprinkle the yeast evenly over the warm mixture and let set for 1 minute.



# Gluten-Free, Vegan Cinnamon Rolls

**Mike Wezner**

Instructions:

- Add 5 cups flour and 1 teaspoon of salt to the milk mixture and mix with a wooden spoon until just combined.
- Cover the bowl with a towel or plastic wrap and set in a warm place to rise for 1 hour.
- Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
- After 1 hour, the dough should have nearly doubled in size.
- Remove the towel and add an additional ½ cup (95g) of flour and salt. Stir well, then turn out onto a well-floured surface.
- Knead the dough lightly, adding additional flour as necessary, until the dough just loses its stickiness and does not stick to the surface.
- Roll the dough out into a large rectangle, about ½-inch (1 cm) thick. Fix corners to make sure they are sharp and even.
- Spread the softened vegan butter evenly over the dough.



# Gluten-Free, Vegan Cinnamon Rolls

**Mike Wezner**

Instructions:

- Sprinkle evenly with brown sugar and cinnamon.
- Roll up the dough, forming a log, and pinch the seam closed. Place seam-side down. Trim off any unevenness on either end.
- Cut the log in half, then divide each half into 7 evenly sized pieces. About 1½ inches (8 cm) thick each.
- Place 7 cinnamon rolls in each cake pan, one in the center, six around the sides. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm place to rise for 30 minutes.
- To prepare the frosting. In a medium-size mixing bowl, whisk together powdered sugar, almond milk, and vanilla until smooth.
- Remove plastic wrap. Bake the cinnamon rolls in a preheated oven at 350°F (180°C) for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown.
- While still warm, drizzle evenly with frosting.

**Enjoy!**



# Syed's Sopapilla Cheesecake



**Syed Abdul Aziz**

# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

## Syed Abdul Aziz

As the self-proclaimed Director of Product and Desserts at EngagedMD, I make my share of desserts for the office. However, Cheesecakes are one of my favorite desserts to make, and the most consistently reproducible dessert that I make. I am someone who has a hard time following recipes as they are written, and always want to make my own modifications. However, with this recipe that I've taken from [Kitchn.com](#), I can honestly say that following the recipe step-by-step will guarantee the most delicious cheesecake you have ever had. People have on numerous occasions told me that this cheesecake tastes better than Cheesecake Factory.





# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

## Syed Abdul Aziz

The 4 Key steps you must follow in this recipe are:

1. Add Cornstarch or flour. It prevents the cheesecake from cracking and also makes the consistency more firm
2. A Water bath makes the cheesecake more creamy
3. Letting the Cheesecake cool gradually will prevent it from cracking. First, let the cheesecake sit in the oven with the oven turned off and the oven door cracked slightly open. Then let it sit outside on the counter until it's no longer warm. Then chill the cheesecake in the fridge.
4. Chill the cheesecake for at least 4 hours.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Cheesecake Ingredients:

- Butter, for coating the pan
- 2 pounds full-fat cream cheese
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch, or 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

## Syed Abdul Aziz

### Crust Ingredients:

- 12 whole graham cracker rectangles (6 ounces)
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup (2 ounces) sugar, optional
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, optional

### Equipment:

- 9-inch or 10-inch springform pan
- Aluminum foil
- Food processor
- Stand mixer or electric hand mixer
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Spatula
- Roasting pan or other dish big enough to hold the springform pan



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Heat the oven and soften the cream cheese. Arrange a rack in the lower-middle position of the oven and heat to 350°F. Take the blocks of cream cheese out of their boxes and let them come to room temperature on the counter while you prepare the crust, about 30 minutes.
- Coat the pan with butter. Use your fingers to coat a small pat of butter all over the bottom and sides of a 9-inch or 10-inch springform pan.
- Wrap the pan in foil. Cut 2 large pieces of foil and place them on your work surface on top of each other in a cross. Set the springform pan in the middle and fold the edges of the foil up and around the sides of the pan. The foil gives you extra protection against water getting into the pan during the water bath step.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Prepare the crust. Crush the graham crackers in a food processor (or in a bag using a rolling pin) until they form fine crumbs – you should have 1 1/2 to 2 cups. Melt the butter in the microwave or on the stovetop and mix this into the graham cracker crumbs. The mixture should look like wet sand and hold together in a clump when you press it in your fist. If not, add extra tablespoons of water (one a time) until the mixture holds together. Transfer it into the springform pan and use the bottom of a glass to press it evenly into the bottom.
- Bake the crust. Place the crust in the oven (be careful not to tear the foil). Bake until the crust is fragrant and just starting to brown around the edges, 8 to 10 minutes. Let the crust cool on a cooling rack while you prepare the filling.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch, and salt. Place the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. (Alternatively, use an electric handheld mixer and large bowl.) Mix on medium-low speed until the mixture is creamy, like thick frosting, and no lumps of cream cheese remain. Scrape down the beater and the sides of the bowl with a spatula.
- Mix in the sour cream, lemon juice, and vanilla. Add the sour cream, lemon juice, and vanilla and beat on medium-low speed until combined and creamy. Scrape down the beater and sides of the bowl with a spatula.





# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Mix in the eggs and yolk one at a time. With the mixer on medium-low speed, beat in the eggs and the yolk one at a time. Wait until the previous egg is just barely mixed into the batter before adding the next one. At first, the mixture will look clumpy and broken, but it will come together as the eggs are worked in.
- Stir a few times by hand. Scrape down the beater and sides of the bowl with a spatula. Stir the whole batter a few times by hand, being sure to scrape the bottom of the bowl, to make sure everything is incorporated. The finished batter should be thick, creamy, and silky. Don't worry if you see a few specks of un-mixed cream cheese here and there; they will melt into the batter during baking and won't affect the finished cheesecake.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Pour the batter over the cooled crust. Check to make sure the crust and the sides of the pan are cool – if they're cool enough to comfortably touch, you can go on. Pour the batter over the cooled crust and spread it into an even layer.
- Transfer the pan to the water bath. Transfer the pan to a roasting pan or other baking dish big enough to hold it. Bring a few cups of water to a boil and pour the water into the roasting pan, being careful not to splash any water onto the cheesecake. Fill the pan to about an inch, or just below the lowest edge of foil.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Bake the cheesecake. Bake the cheesecake for 50 to 60 minutes. Cakes baked in a 10-inch pan will usually cook in 50 to 55 minutes; cakes in a 9-inch pan will cook in 55 to 60 minutes. The cheesecake is done when the outer two to three inches look slightly puffed and set, but the inner circle still jiggles (like Jell-O) when you gently shake the pan. Some spots of toasted golden color are fine, but if you see any cracks starting to form, move on to the next step right away.
- Cool the cheesecake in the oven. Leave the cheesecake in the oven. Turn off the oven and crack the door open or prop it open with a wooden spoon. Let the cheesecake cool slowly for 1 hour.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Run a knife around the edge of the cake and cool the cake completely. Remove the cheesecake from the oven and from the water bath, unwrap the foil, and transfer it to a cooling rack. Run a thin-bladed knife around the edge of the cake to make sure it's not sticking to the sides (which can cause cracks as it cools). Let the cheesecake cool completely on the rack.
- Chill the cheesecake for 4 hours in the refrigerator. Chill the cheesecake, uncovered, for at least 4 hours or up to 3 days in the refrigerator. This step is crucial for letting the cheesecake set and achieving perfect cheesecake texture – don't rush it.



# “Better than Cheesecake Factory” Cheesecake Recipe

**Syed Abdul Aziz**

Instructions:

- Top the cheesecake and serve. Take the cheesecake out of the refrigerator about 30 minutes before you plan to serve. Unmold the cake and top the cheesecake just before serving. You can serve the cake right from the bottom of the springform pan, or use a large off-set spatula to gently unstick the crust from the pan and transfer it to a serving platter.

I like to top the cheesecake with a combination of fresh strawberries and blueberries mixed with a canned fruit topping but you can top it with any type of topping you'd like.





# Happy Holidays!

- The EngagedMD team

