

Get to Know Springerle and Speculaas

The Dutch call them *Speculaas*. The French call them *Spéculoos*. The Germans call them *Spekulatius*. I call the spiced holiday cookies simply delicious.

No matter how you spell them or call them, you'll find many families baking spiced biscuits near the Christmas season. In Holland on December 5th, just before the [Saint Nicholas celebration](#), Dutch families are busy baking Speculaas. In parts of German-speaking Europe, the Alsace region of France, and parts of Switzerland, families are rolling out lots of Speculaas dough.



(c) Photo by Andreas Bauerle (Wikimedia Commons)

The main ingredients in Speculaas are the spices of winter—pepper, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, cardamom, and nutmeg and when baked infuse the home with a warming wintry fragrance. The cookies are easy to make and if you use a mold, the impression forms a delicate looking cookie perfect for gift giving or enjoying with a cup of tea.

Springerle and Speculaas

Don't get your Springerle mixed up with your Speculaas.

- Springerle and Speculaas are both cookie dough types.

- Speculaas dough contains warm spices.
- Springerle dough contains anise and when baked they seem to “spring up”.
- The Springerle is not only a cookie, but a mold you can use to emboss designs on Springerle or Speculaas.

Once your Speculaas dough has been prepared, you can use a Springerle mold (press or a rolling pin) to emboss a design of choice on your cookie before baking.

Springerle History

Traditionally, the first Springerle mold designs were of horses and their riders. Hence the name “little jumper” or “little knight”. Many ancient molds have survived and can be found in museums such as the [Musée des arts et traditions populaires Musée du Springerle](#) in Alsace. The quaint folk art museum is devoted to the history of wooden molds and Christmas Springerle cookies. Now that sounds delicious.

At German Christmas markets you’ll find all types of Springerle impressions for sale from simple to intricate. The molds make lovely Christmas gifts that are functional for baking or can be used decoratively in your home. Keep in mind the more intricate the mold, the trickier they are to work with (at first).

After a bit of practice, you’ll have spicy Speculaas springing up all over the kitchen.