

hamantaschen

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Hamantaschen

Triangular filled cookies eaten at Purim. The Yiddish name means Haman's pockets, a pun on *mohntaschen* — poppy pockets — and poppy seed remains the oldest filling, with prune, apricot and, in the last fifty years, chocolate and halva behind it.

The engineering question is the only one that matters: keeping three corners closed through a bake.

What makes it work

- **Underfill.** One rounded teaspoon, 10 g at most, in a 9 cm round. Every burst hamantasch was overfilled.
- **Pinch, do not fold.** Bring three sides up and pinch each corner hard enough to weld the dough to itself — the two edges must be pressed together, not merely stacked. A dab of egg white at each corner is legitimate insurance.
- **Chill the shaped cookies 30 minutes.** Cold dough holds its shape long enough for the structure to set before the butter melts.
- **A stiff filling stays put.** Jam alone is too loose; cook it down, or thicken it with ground nuts or breadcrumbs. Traditional *lekvar* is a thick prune butter for exactly this reason.
- **Bake hot and fast** so the walls set before they slump: 190 °C, 15 minutes.

Ingredients

Makes about 24.

Dough:

- 350 g all-purpose flour
- 150 g granulated sugar
- 170 g unsalted butter, softened, or 150 ml neutral oil for a pareve dough
- 2 [eggs](#)
- 8 g baking powder
- 3 g fine salt
- zest and 2 tbsp juice of 1 orange
- 1 tsp vanilla — see [Pure vanilla extract](#)

Poppy seed filling:

- 150 g poppy seeds, ground
- 200 ml [milk](#)
- 80 g [honey](#) or sugar
- 30 g raisins
- zest of 1 [lemon](#)

Or: 250 g thick prune, apricot or [fruit butter](#)

Method

For the poppy filling, simmer the ground seeds with the milk and honey for 10 minutes until thick enough to hold a line when you draw a spoon through it. Stir in the raisins and zest and cool completely.

Cream the butter and sugar, beat in the eggs, zest, juice and vanilla, then fold in the flour, baking powder and salt. Wrap and chill two hours — the dough is soft and will not roll warm.

Roll to 4 mm and cut 9 cm rounds. Place 10 g of filling in the centre of each. Lift three sides up to make a triangle and pinch the corners firmly, leaving a small window of filling visible.

Chill the shaped cookies 30 minutes. Brush with egg wash and bake **190 °C / 375 °F for 14–16 minutes**, until the edges are gold.

Notes

- **Oil dough is the traditional pareve version** and is sturdier — it holds the triangle better than butter does, at some cost in flavour.
- Rerolled scraps toughen; give them a 15-minute rest before the second roll.
- **Keeps five days** and freezes baked for three months.

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