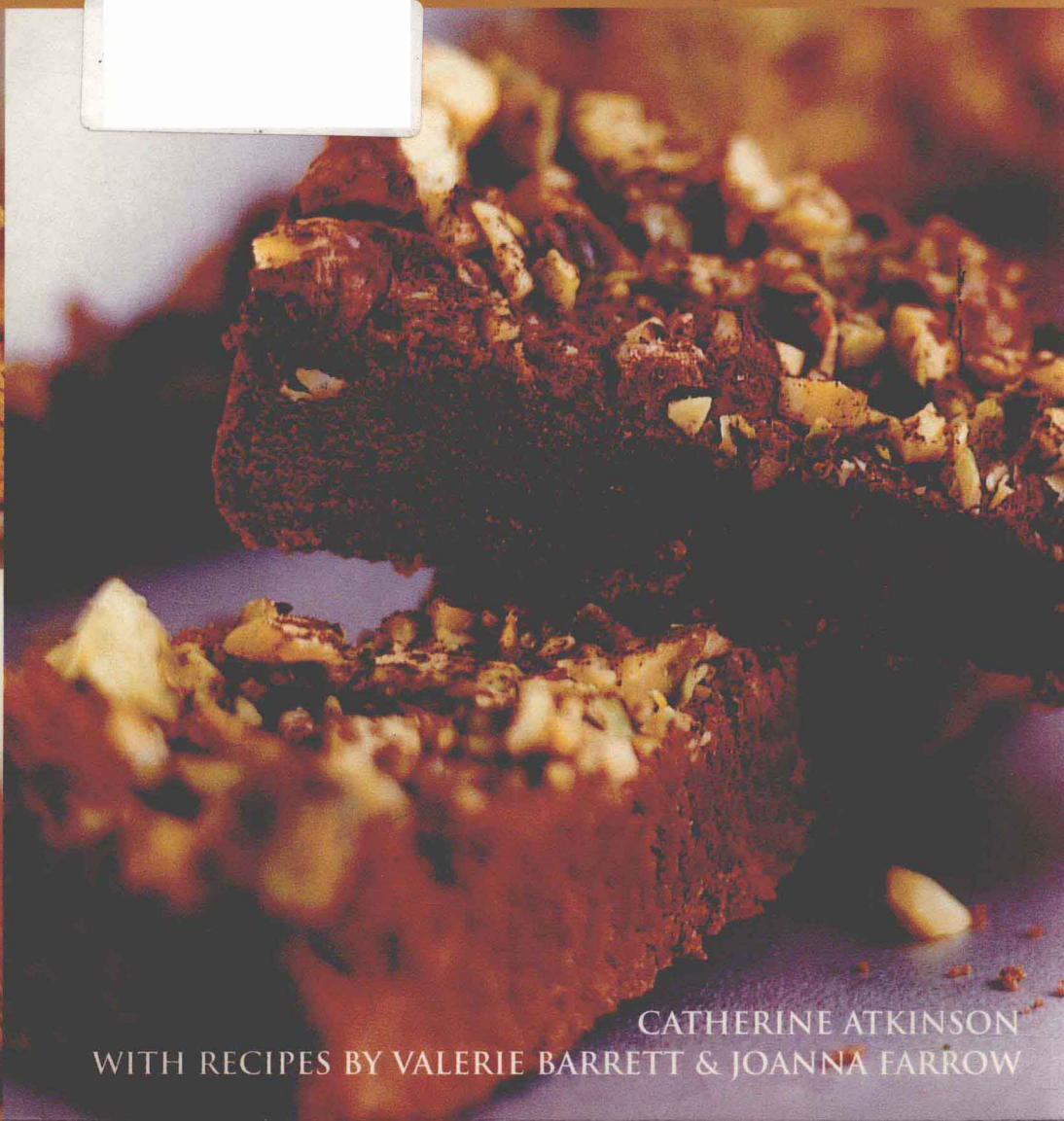




THE BIG BOOK OF COOKIES

OVER 100 STEP-BY-STEP RECIPES FOR DELICIOUS COOKIES, BISCUITS AND BARS



CATHERINE ATKINSON
WITH RECIPES BY VALERIE BARRETT & JOANNA FARROW

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藏书章



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NOTES

Bracketed terms are intended for American readers.

For all recipes, quantities are given in both metric and imperial measures and, where appropriate, measures are also given in standard cups and spoons. Follow one set, but not a mixture, because they are not interchangeable.

Standard spoon and cup measures are level. 1 tsp = 5ml, 1 tbsp = 15ml, 1 cup = 250ml/8fl oz

Australian standard tablespoons are 20ml. Australian readers should use 3 tsp in place of 1 tbsp for measuring small quantities of gelatine, flour, salt, etc.

Medium (US large) eggs are used unless otherwise stated.



Contents

The Cookie-making Tradition	6
The Art of Making and Baking Cookies	8
Cookie Ingredients	10
Equipment	18
Methods of Making Cookies	24
Drop Cookies	28
Rolled Cookies	31
Piped Cookies	34
Pressed Cookies	37
Moulded Cookies	38
Bar Cookies	40
Short-cut Cookies	44
Baking Cookies	48
Cookie Decoration	50
Cookie Fillings	58
Storing Cookies	60
Presentation and Packaging	62
Teatime Treats	66
Celebration Cookies	80
Wholesome Bites	94
Ultimate Indulgence	106
Dessert Cookies	118
Brownies and Bars	130
Cookies for Special Diets	140
Savoury Crackers	148
Index	158

The Cookie-making Tradition



Left: Storing home-baked cookies in a cookie jar will ensure that they stay fresh for as long as possible.

There are differences in opinion about the origins of the word *biscuit*, but whether it is derived from the French *cuit* or from the Latin *biscoctus*, all agree that it means twice-cooked.

EARLY COOKIES

Originally, cookies were double-baked. They were browned for a few minutes when the oven was at its hottest, then removed and returned to finish baking when the oven was cooling down. This time-consuming process dried out the cookies so that they kept well — essential in the days before airtight containers. Not all cookies were baked; some were fried into wafers.

Rusks and ship's biscuits, which needed to keep for several months, were also baked in this way. The dough was first baked, then cooled, sliced, and dried in a gentle heat until crisp; Italian *biscotti* are still made in this manner.

During the Middle Ages, improvements were made. Sugar and spices were added to biscuits to make them more palatable and, in the late Middle Ages, it was discovered that adding beaten egg to biscuit dough made the finished cookie lighter and that ground nuts could be used instead of flour. This led to the creation of meringue, sponge and macaroon cookies.

Cookie mixtures changed significantly in the 18th and 19th centuries. The tradition of baking rusks and frying cookies virtually

No matter what age you are, there's little so enjoyable as a freshly baked cookie. They always feel like the ultimate treat, despite the fact that they're so simple to make. Cookies, in one form or another, have been around for centuries and some of the most popular cookies today derive from these original treats.

AN AMERICAN INVENTION

The term cookie was first used in the United States when early Dutch settlers brought their *koekje* (little cakes) to New York. At about the same time, wood-burning and coal-fired ovens were introduced, which made baking more reliable and the popularity of cookies and cookie-making soon spread.

Eastern European, Scandinavian and British immigrants who settled in the United States all made great contributions to the cookie-making tradition. For example, refrigerator cookies originated from German Heidesand cookies, which are made by shaping the dough into long, sausage-shaped rolls, cutting them into thin, round slices and then baking them.

In other parts of the world, the word for (and meaning of) cookie varies. In Scotland, a cookie is a sweetened bread bun that is either filled with whipped cream or thickly iced. In Britain and France, cookies are known as biscuits, while in the United States, the term biscuit is used to describe a large, soft scone.

disappeared – although in parts of Europe, India and the Middle East some cookies are still fried today – and enriched short cakes became very popular. These rich, buttery doughs still form the basis of many modern cookies.

Although savoury cheese biscuits (crackers) have their origins in medieval times, plain, savoury biscuits were not created until the 18th century. These later developed into salted crackers and cocktail savouries for nibbling with drinks.

During the 19th century, with the availability of cheap sugar and flour and chemical raising agents such as bicarbonate of soda (baking soda), cookie factories were able to open up. As the quality of factory-made cookies improved, more and more people began to buy rather than make their own cookies.

COOKIE-MAKING TODAY

In more recent years, consumers have started to turn away from foods containing artificial additives. Commercial cookies have become less popular and there has been a resurgence in home-baking.

Time-saving kitchen devices such as food mixers have helped to speed up cookie-making, and the widely available range of more unusual ingredients has opened up the possibilities for the modern cook who can make just about any cookie they want.

With the help of this book, you can learn everything you will ever need to know about cookie-making – from the basic techniques to the perfect cookie to serve with coffee, put in a lunchbox or offer as a gift.

CLASSIC COOKIES

Anzac A crunchy cookie from New Zealand, named after the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC). It is made with butter, golden (light corn) syrup, rolled oats and coconut.

Bath Oliver A hard, crisp savoury cracker created as a health product by Dr W. Oliver of Bath, England, in 1730.

Digestive/Graham cracker

Also known as sweetmeal or wheatmeal, this moderately sweet cookie is made with brown flour. Despite its name, it has no special digestive properties.

Maria Popular in Spain, this thin, plain crisp cookie was created in England to celebrate the wedding of the Grand Duchess Maria of Austria to the Duke of Edinburgh.

Fortune Cookie During the Ming Dynasty, political resisters baked cookies containing messages detailing secret meetings and plans. The idea was revived in San Francisco in the 19th century.

***Below:** Modern fortune cookies contain predictions of the future.*



***Above:** Maryland cookies are one of the most popular and well-known types of chocolate chip cookie.*

Jumble Well-known as early as the 17th century, this cookie was originally flavoured with rose water, aniseed or caraway seeds and tied into knots. The mixture is now made into S-shapes.

Petit Beurre This plain, crisp French cookie has been made in Nantes since the 1880s. It was created by Louis Lefevre-Utile and is also known as LU or *P'tit lu*.

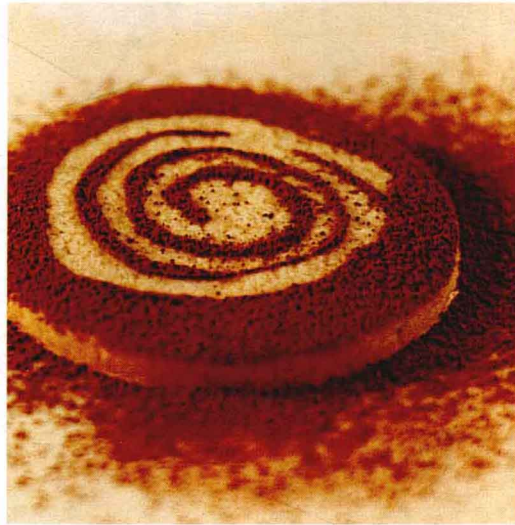
Shortbread Scottish shortbread evolved from 16th-century short cakes. The main ingredients are usually flour, sugar and butter. Petticoat tails are shortbread baked in a round, named after the shape of an outspread petticoat.

Snickerdoodle A Pennsylvanian Dutch speciality, this spicy cookie contains nutmeg, nuts and raisins.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

These are absolute classics; two of the best-known being Toll House cookies and chocolate chip Maryland cookies.





The Art of Making and Baking Cookies

Cookies are simple to make but there is some basic know-how that will make cookie-making even easier. This chapter explains everything you will ever need to know – from basic equipment and ingredients to making, shaping and baking different types of cookie dough; decorating and storing cookies; and making pretty cookie gifts for friends and family.

Cookie Ingredients

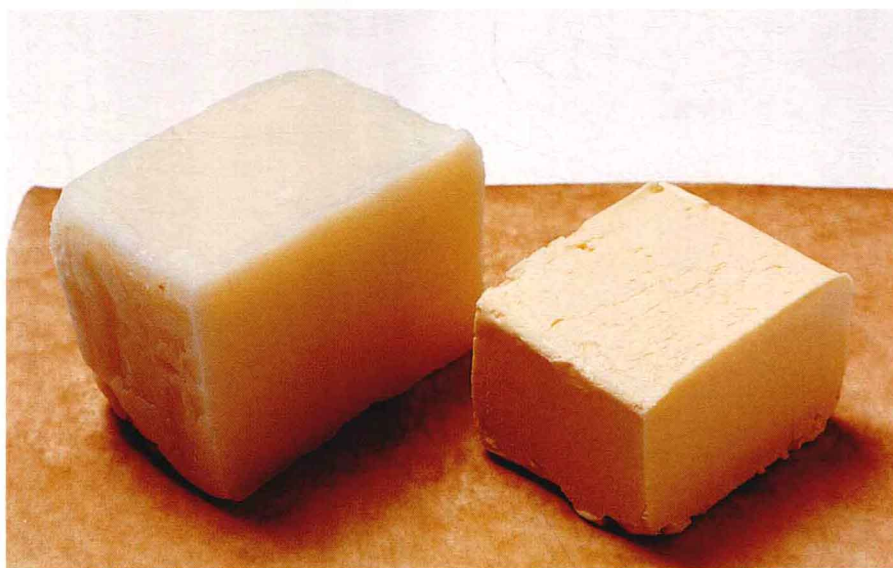
Most cookies are made from a few basic ingredients – butter, sugar, flour and sometimes eggs and other ingredients and flavourings. To make the best cookies, always use really fresh, good quality ingredients.

BUTTER

Unsalted (sweet) butter is best for making cookies; it has a sweet, slightly nutty taste and a firm texture, which is particularly well-suited to cookies made using the rubbed-in method.

The temperature of butter is important. For rubbed-in cookies butter should be cold and firm but not too hard; take it out of the refrigerator 5 minutes before using. To cream butter, it should be at room temperature. This is very important if you are beating by hand. If you forget to take butter out of the refrigerator in advance, soften it in the microwave on low power for 10–15 seconds.

If you need to melt butter, dice it so that it melts more quickly and evenly. Melt the butter over a very low heat to prevent it burning



and remove it from the heat when it has almost melted; the residual heat will complete the job. If you need to brush baking tins (pans) or sheets with melted butter, use unsalted butter rather than salted, which tends to burn and stick.

STORING BUTTER

Butter should be stored in the refrigerator or freezer. It can absorb other flavours easily so protect it from strong-smelling ingredients by wrapping tightly in greaseproof (waxed) paper or foil. If possible, store in a separate compartment.

Salted butter can be stored in the refrigerator for about a month but unsalted butter should be used within 2 weeks. Alternatively, you can store unsalted butter in the freezer and transfer it to the refrigerator 1–2 days before you need it. All butter can be frozen for up to 6 months.

Left: Unsalted butter produces cookies with a wonderfully rich flavour and warm golden colour.

Above: White vegetable fat (left) and block margarine (right) work well in some cookie recipes.

OTHER FATS

Margarine This won't produce the same flavour as butter but it is usually less expensive and can be used in the same way. Block margarines are better for cookie-making, although soft margarine may be used for creaming.

White cooking fats Made from blended vegetable oils or a mixture of vegetable and animal or fish oils, white fats are flavourless and create light, short-textured cookies. They work well in highly flavoured cookies, in which you wouldn't taste the butter. Lard is an opaque white fat made from rendered pork fat and features in some traditional cookie recipes.

Oil This may sometimes be used instead of solid fat. Sunflower and safflower oils are preferable as they are light in colour with a mild taste. Olive oil has a distinctive flavour but may be added to savoury crackers.

SUGAR

There are many different types of sugar, all of which add their own distinctive character to cookies.

REFINED SUGARS

Produced from sugar cane and sugar beet, refined white sugar is 99.9 per cent pure sucrose.

Granulated sugar This has large granules and can be used in rubbed-in mixtures or to make a crunchy cookie topping.

Caster/superfine sugar This is the most frequently used sugar for cookie-making. It has a fine grain so is ideal for creaming with butter. It is also used for melted mixtures, meringue toppings and sprinkling over freshly baked cookies.

Icing/confectioners' sugar

This fine, powdery sugar is used to make smooth icings and fillings and for dusting cookies. It may also be added to some piped mixtures.

Soft brown sugar This is refined white sugar that has been tossed in molasses or syrup to colour and flavour it; the darker the colour, the more intense the flavour. It makes moister cookies than white sugar, so never substitute one for the other.



UNREFINED SUGARS

Derived from raw sugar cane, these retain some molasses. They often have a more intense flavour but tend to be less sweet than refined sugars.

Golden caster/superfine sugar and granulated sugar These are pale gold and are used in the same way as their white counterparts.

Demerara/raw sugar This rich golden sugar has a slight toffee flavour. The grains are large so it is only used in cookie doughs if a crunchy texture is required. It is good for sprinkling over cookies before they are baked.

Above: (Left to right) Soft brown sugar and demerara (raw) sugar give cookies a slightly caramel taste.

Muscovado/molasses sugar

This fine-textured, moist soft brown sugar may have a treacly flavour.

STORING SUGAR

Sugar should always be stored in an airtight container. If white sugar forms clumps, break it up with your fingers. If brown sugar dries out and hardens, warm it in the microwave for about 1 minute.

OTHER SWEETENERS

There are many other ingredients that can be used as sweeteners.

Golden/light corn syrup Slightly less sweet than sugar, this produces moist, sticky cookies and is often used in no-bake recipes.

Maple syrup Thinner than golden syrup, this has a distinctive flavour.

Honey Use blended honey in cookie doughs as the flavour of milder honeys will be lost.

Malt extract This concentrated extract made from barley has a distinctive flavour, thick consistency and dark, almost black colour.

Molasses A by-product of sugar refining, molasses looks like malt extract but has a slightly bitter taste.



Above:

Coarse-grained granular sugar is good for sprinkling.

Left: Fine-grained caster sugar is widely used in cookie doughs.

FLOUR

Most cookie recipes use plain (all-purpose) flour as it has a low gluten content, resulting in a crumbly texture. The grains are processed then treated with chlorine to make the flour whiter. You can also buy unbleached flour, which has a greyish colour. Some flour is pre-sifted but you should sift it anyway as the contents tend to settle during storage. Flour, even the same type and brand, may vary slightly, so always hold a few drops of liquid back in case they aren't needed.

SELF-RAISING FLOUR

Known as self-rising flour in the United States, this flour contains raising agents that make cookies spread and rise, giving them a lighter texture. If you run out of self-raising flour, you can substitute plain flour, adding 5ml/1 tsp baking powder to each 115g/4oz/1 cup. Self-raising flour should not be kept for longer than 3 months because raising agents gradually deteriorate.



Left: Wholemeal (whole-wheat) flour gives cookies a lovely taste.

WHOLEMEAL FLOUR

Also known as whole-wheat flour, this is milled from the entire wheat kernel and contains all the nutrients and flavour of wheat. It is coarser than white flour, giving a heavier result. It absorbs more liquid than white flour so recipes should be adjusted if wholemeal flour is used.

Brown (wheatmeal) flour contains only 80–90 per cent of the bran and wheat germ and has a finer texture and milder taste.



Above: Rice flour is often added to shortbread to give a crumbly texture.

Left: Cornmeal produces cookies with a golden colour, delicious flavour and distinctive texture.

NON-WHEAT FLOURS

These can be great for cookie making, although some should be combined with wheat flour.

Potato flour This fine powder is made from potato starch and can be mixed with wheat flour to give a lighter texture to cookies.

Chestnut flour This light brown, nutty flavoured flour is made from ground chestnuts and is often sold in Italian delicatessens.

Cornmeal Also known as polenta or maize meal, this is bright yellow and coarse or medium ground.

Cornflour/cornstarch This fine white powder is made from the middle of the maize kernel. It is often used in piped cookie mixtures to give a smooth texture.

Soya flour Made from soya beans, this has a distinctive nutty flavour. It has a high protein content. Medium- and low-fat varieties are available.

Rice flour This is made by finely grinding polished white rice and is used in many cookie recipes, to give a short, slightly crumbly texture.

GLUTEN-FREE BAKING

Some people are allergic or intolerant to the protein gluten, which is found in both wheat and rye. Specially produced gluten-free and wheat-free flour mixtures can be used for baking, as can any of the naturally gluten-free flours such as cornmeal, potato flour, rice flour and soya flour.



Above:

Bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) and baking powder give cookies a lighter texture.

RAISING AGENTS

Although cookies are usually made with plain (all-purpose) flour, raising agents may be added to give them a lighter texture. Raising agents make cookies spread more, so space them well apart for baking.

Raising agents react when they come in contact with water and produce carbon dioxide bubbles that make the cookie rise during baking. Cookie doughs containing raising agents must therefore be shaped and baked as soon as liquid is added. Store raising agents in a dry place and use within their use-by date because they deteriorate with age, becoming less effective.

Baking powder This is a mixture of alkaline bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) and an acid such as cream of tartar.

Bicarbonate of soda/ baking soda This can be added to a cookie mixture that contains an acidic ingredient.

Right: Eggs are widely used in cookie-making and can help to produce rich, golden cookies with a great flavour.

EGGS

These are used to enrich cookie doughs and bind dry ingredients. They are often included in rolled doughs because they prevent the mixture from spreading too much during baking. If a recipe does not specify the size of an egg, use a medium (US large) one.

For baking, eggs should be at room temperature; cold egg yolks may curdle and cold egg whites will produce less volume when whisked. Add eggs to a creamed mixture a little at a time, beating after each addition and adding 15ml/1 tbsp sifted flour if the mixture starts to curdle. Whisk egg whites in a very clean bowl and use straight away.

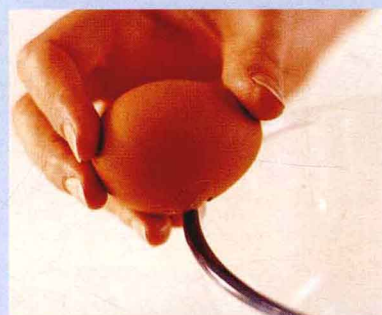
BUYING AND STORING EGGS

Always check the use-by date on eggs and never buy cracked, damaged or dirty eggs. A fresh egg will have a round, plump yolk and a thick white that clings closely to the yolk. Store eggs in the refrigerator, pointed-end down. Do not store near strong-smelling foods or possible contaminants such as raw meat; their shells are porous and can absorb odours and bacteria.



SEPARATING EGGS

Some recipes require only an egg yolk or an egg white. Egg separating devices are available from kitchenware stores but it is easy to separate eggs by hand.



1 Tap the middle of the egg sharply against the rim of a bowl, then, holding the egg over the bowl, prise the shell apart with the tips of your thumbs.



2 Gently tip the white into the bowl, retaining the yolk in the shell. Tip the yolk into the other half-shell, letting any remaining white fall into the bowl.

Cook's Tip

You can also separate the yolk from the white by tipping the whole egg into the palm of your hand and letting the white drain into a bowl through your fingers.

FRUIT, NUTS AND SEEDS

Dried, candied and crystallized fruit, nuts and seeds can be added to cookie doughs to add flavour, colour and texture, or to decorate.

DRIED FRUIT

The drying process intensifies the flavour and sweetness of the fruit. Adding dried fruit does not affect the moisture of the dough so you can usually substitute one type of dried fruit for another in a recipe.

Vine fruit These include sultanas (golden raisins), raisins and currants. Buy seedless fruit, choosing a reliable brand or go for fruit in clear bags so that you can check its softness and colour. As dried fruit ages, a white coating may develop; it is still usable, but you should never buy it in this condition. It can be kept in an airtight container for up to a year, but is best used within 6 months. Some brands are lightly tossed in oil before packing to keep the fruits separate; uncoated vine fruits may stick together and should be pulled apart before adding to cookies.

Apricots These are produced in California and other parts of the American Pacific coast, Australia, South Africa, Turkey and Iran. Some are very dry and need to be soaked in a little liquid before using; others, usually labelled ready-to-eat, have a softer texture and sweeter flavour and are generally better for cookie-making. After picking and stoning (pitting), the fruits may be treated with sulphur dioxide to retain their colour and prevent mould growing.

Unsulphured apricots, which are darker in colour and very sticky, are also available; they should be stored in the refrigerator.

Apples and pears Dried in rings or as halved fruit, these have a chewy texture. They are best used finely chopped and added to drop cookie mixtures.

Tropical fruits Exotic fruits such as papaya and mango are available dried and have an intense flavour and vibrant colour. They are often sold in strips, which can be easily chopped with a sharp knife or snipped into small pieces with a pair of scissors. Dried pineapple and dried banana are also available and make a tasty addition to cookies.

Left: Dried fruit such as apricots and pears make a delicious, healthy addition to cookies.



Above: Crystallized fruit such as glacé cherries and angelica can be used both as ingredients to flavour cookies and as decorations.

Cranberries and sour cherries

These are brightly coloured and add a wonderful sweet-and-sour flavour to cookies. They make a very good addition to festive cookies.

Candied and crystallized fruit

Fresh fruits such as whole pitted cherries and apricots or pieces of kiwi and pineapple are steeped in sugar. The process retains the original bright colour of the fruit. Angelica, the bright green stem of the herb, is candied in this way. Because of their pretty colour, candied and crystallized fruit are usually used to decorate cookies rather than in the dough.

Crystallizing fruit takes a long time, making the fruit expensive. Candied citrus peel is cheaper and can be bought ready-chopped. However, make sure that chopped candied peel is still soft and moist as it can dry out quickly; it is better to buy whole pieces of candied peel and chop or slice it as required.



NUTS

These can be added to cookie mixtures or chopped and sprinkled over unbaked cookies. Always buy really fresh nuts in small quantities, then chop as necessary. Store in an airtight container, ideally in the refrigerator or freezer.

Almonds Sweet almonds are available ready-blanching, chopped, split, flaked (sliced) and ground.

Brazil nuts These wedge-shaped nuts are actually a seed. Their creamy white flesh has a sweet milky taste and a high fat content. Store carefully and use within a few months. They can be grated.

Cashew nuts These kidney-shaped nuts are always sold shelled and dried. They have a sweet flavour and almost crumbly texture.

Coconut White, dense coconut flesh is made into desiccated (dry unsweetened shredded) coconut and flakes. It is also possible to find sweetened shredded coconut, which is good for decorating cookies.

Below: Hazelnuts have a lovely nutty taste and can be used whole or chopped into small pieces.



Hazelnuts These are particularly good chopped and toasted, as this brings out their flavour.

Macadamia nuts Also known as Queensland nuts, these round, white, buttery nuts are native to Australia but are now also grown in California and South America.

Peanuts Strictly speaking, these are a legume not a nut, as they grow underground. Peanuts may be used raw or roasted, but do not use salted nuts unless specified.

Pecan nuts These are rather like elongated walnuts in appearance, but with a milder, sweeter flavour.

Pine nuts These are the fruits of the stone pine, which grows in the Mediterranean. Small and creamy coloured, they have an almost oily texture and aromatic flavour.

Pistachio nuts Bright green in colour, these are often used for decorating cookies.

Walnuts These are well flavoured with a crunchy texture. In the United States there are several types: white walnuts or butternuts, the large pale-shelled variety called English or Californian, and strong-flavoured, black-shelled walnuts.



SKINNING NUTS

To make skinning easier, either roast or blanch the nuts first.

To roast nuts, spread them out in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 10–12 minutes, until the skins split and the nuts are golden. Tip the nuts on to a clean dishtowel and rub gently to loosen and remove the skins.



To blanch nuts, place in a bowl, pour over boiling water and leave for 5 minutes. Drain, then slip them out of their skins.

SEEDS

These are a popular ingredient in wholesome cookies and savoury crackers. They can be added to cookie doughs to give a crunchy texture or sprinkled over the tops of cookies before they are baked to give an attractive finish. Sesame and poppy seeds work particularly well because of their small size. However, larger seeds such as sunflower seeds work well too.

Left: Sunflower and pumpkin seeds can be added to cookie doughs or sprinkled over unbaked cookies.

COOKIE FLAVOURINGS

There are many flavourings that can be added to cookies. They may add a subtle or strong taste, and some can also add texture.

CHOCOLATE

From cocoa-flavoured drop cookies to chocolate chip and chocolate-coated varieties, chocolate is the most popular cookie flavouring.

Dark/bittersweet chocolate

This has a bitter flavour and is the most popular chocolate for cookie-making. The degree of bitterness depends on the percentage of cocoa solids. Continental dark chocolate contains a minimum of 70 per cent cocoa solids so it is ideal for very sweet, sugar-laden cookies. Plain (semisweet) chocolate contains at least 50 per cent cocoa solids; the eating variety may contain as little as 25 per cent. It can be chopped and added to cookie doughs, but does not melt well.

Milk chocolate This contains milk powder and a higher percentage of sugar than plain chocolate. It is more difficult to melt.

White chocolate This contains no cocoa solids, only cocoa butter, milk solids and sugar. Some cheaper brands use flavourings and vegetable oil in place of cocoa butter. Brands that contain more cocoa butter are best for baking and melting. White chocolate may caramelize during baking due to its high sugar content.

Couverture This fine-quality plain, milk or white chocolate is used by professional cooks, and can be bought from specialist stores and by mail order. It melts beautifully and makes glossy cookie coatings.



Chocolate chips or dots These tiny chocolate pieces melt well and are easy to work with. The milk and white versions are more stable than bars of milk and white chocolate.

Chocolate cake covering This usually contains little real chocolate and is flavoured with cocoa powder. It melts well and is good for coating cookies, but has a poor flavour.

Unsweetened cocoa powder This bitter, dark powder can be added to cookie mixtures or dusted over the tops. (Drinking chocolate contains about 25 per cent cocoa powder and 75 per cent sugar. It is not suitable for baking.)

Complementary flavours Chocolate can be combined with many other flavourings. The most subtle is vanilla, which often goes unnoticed, yet greatly enhances the taste and aroma of chocolate. The bitterness of coffee can offset

Above: *Chocolate – in its many forms – is a popular cookie ingredient.*

the sweetness of chocolate, and caramel works well, especially if the sugar is cooked until it is dark, as this helps to reduce some of its sweetness. Both mint and orange add a subtle tang to chocolate cookies, and are especially good for fillings, frostings and icings; nuts are a classic addition.

STORING CHOCOLATE

Chocolate should always be wrapped in foil and kept in a dry, cool place. In hot weather, chocolate can be kept in the refrigerator but it may develop a whitish bloom; this is the cocoa butter rising to the surface. The chocolate will still be safe to use and won't alter the flavour of cookies but it can affect the final texture of the cookies.