



# Citrus Spice Holiday Cookie Wreaths

## The Story in the Dough

My grandson calls these my “secret message” cookies. The poppy seeds look like tiny black dots. He says they are Morse code for joy. I still laugh at that.

Making them is like telling a story. You mix the bright orange zest with the earthy seeds. You roll the dough into a log. Then you wait. Patience is the first ingredient you don’t measure. What’s a food memory that always makes you smile?

## Why the Little Things Matter

Let's talk about that orange zest. You only need one tablespoon. But it makes all the difference. It's the sunny smell of the whole cookie.

This matters because cooking teaches us to notice small joys. A scent, a color, a crunch. It's not just food. It's a feeling you bake in. *Fun fact: The orange oil in the zest is where all that wonderful fragrance lives!*

## Grandma's Rolling Trick

Chilling the dough log is key. I set it in the fridge and forget it. I use that time to wash the dishes. Or to watch the birds at the feeder.

When you slice it, use a gentle sawing motion. Don't push down hard. This keeps the round wreath shape perfect. Do you have a kitchen task you use as quiet time?

## The Warm Kitchen Smell

When these cookies bake, my whole house smiles. The citrus and spice float through the rooms. Doesn't that smell amazing? It smells like a cozy afternoon.

Watch them carefully near the end. You want just a hint of gold on the edges. That means they are done. Let them cool on the sheet. They firm up as they wait.

See also [Spiced Sweet Potato Holiday Pie](#)

## Sharing the Wreaths

I stack these in an old tin. The wreath shape is for sharing. A circle has no end, you see. It reminds us of connection.

This matters too. Food is how we say “I thought of you.” It is a simple, tasty gift. Which neighbor or friend would you share a cookie tin with this week?

## Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Granulated sugar	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup (2 $\frac{1}{3}$ ounces/66 grams)	
Light brown sugar	2 tablespoons, packed	
Salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	
Poppy seeds	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	
Orange zest	1 tablespoon, grated	
Unsalted butter	12 tablespoons (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sticks)	Cut into pieces and softened
Vanilla extract	2 teaspoons	
Large egg yolk	1	
All-purpose flour	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/213 grams)	



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### Instructions

**Step 1:** Grab your food processor. Put in both sugars, the salt, poppy seeds, and orange zest. Let it whirr for about half a minute. You want the brown sugar lumps gone. Now add the soft butter, vanilla, and that single egg yolk. Process it again until it looks creamy. Stop and scrape the bowl sides with a spatula. Add all the flour. Pulse it just until a dough forms. (A little extra flour on your hands stops the sticky dough from clinging!)

**Step 2:** Flour your countertop a bit. Turn the dough out onto it. Gently roll and shape it into a log. Aim for about as long as your forearm. Wrap it tightly in plastic wrap. The fridge is its home now for two hours. This makes slicing so much easier later. I sometimes make the dough on a Wednesday for Saturday baking. Do you think the orange zest or vanilla smells better? Share below!

**Step 3:** Heat your oven to 350 degrees. Put racks in the top and bottom thirds. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Unwrap your firm dough log. Slice it into little rounds, about as thick as a pencil. Place them an inch apart on the sheets. Bake for about 15 minutes. Switch the sheet positions halfway. You'll know they're done when the edges turn a light gold. Let them cool right on the sheet for 10 minutes. I still laugh at how I used to burn my fingers moving them too soon.

See also [Silent Night Chocolate Graham Pie](#)

### Creative Twists

These little wreaths love to dress up. You can make them special in so many ways. Try a simple lemon glaze drizzle for extra zing. A sprinkle of

sparkling sugar before baking makes them glitter. For a cozy change, use cinnamon instead of poppy seeds. Doesn't that sound lovely? Which one would you try first? Comment below!

## Serving & Pairing Ideas

These cookies shine on a big platter. Stack them in a little tower with some fresh cranberries. A small bowl of orange marmalade for dipping is just perfect. For a drink, a cup of hot spiced cider is my non-alcoholic pick. For the grown-ups, a sweet sherry pairs beautifully. It feels like a holiday hug. Which would you choose tonight?



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# Keeping Your Cookie Wreaths Fresh & Bright

These cookies stay wonderful for a week. Just tuck them in an airtight tin. I use my old biscuit tin with the red flowers. Layer cookies between parchment paper so they don't bump.

You can freeze the dough log for a month. Wrap it well in foil. This is perfect for busy weeks. You can bake just a few fresh cookies anytime. I once forgot I had dough frozen. Finding it felt like a gift!

Batch cooking like this saves precious time. It lets you share homemade joy easily. You can have cookies ready for surprise guests. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

## Simple Fixes for Happy Baking

Is your dough too crumbly? It might be too cold. Let it sit on the counter for five minutes. I remember when my first batch cracked. A little patience fixed it perfectly.

See also [Black Cherry Chocolate Linzer Stars](#)

Are cookies spreading too much? Your butter was likely too soft. Your dough log must be firm before slicing. Chilling matters for pretty, crisp edges. This builds your kitchen confidence.

Are the bottoms browning too fast? Use that middle oven rack. Rotate your sheets halfway through baking. This gives every cookie an even, golden kiss. Good technique makes the flavor just right. **Which of**

**these problems have you run into before?**

## Your Quick Questions, Answered

**Q: Can I make these gluten-free?** A: Yes. Use a good gluten-free flour blend. I like the one-to-one kind.

**Q: Can I make the dough ahead?** A: Absolutely. It chills for days or freezes for a month.

**Q: I don't have poppy seeds.** A: Try sesame seeds or just leave them out. The orange zest is the star.

**Q: Can I double the recipe?** A: You can. Just make two separate logs of dough. It's easier to handle.

**Q: Any fun twist?** A: A tiny drizzle of powdered sugar glaze looks like snow. \*Fun fact: Orange zest has oils that make your kitchen smell sunny.\* **Which tip will you try first?**

## From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope you love making these citrus spice wreaths. They always remind me of my granddaughter's smile. Baking is about sharing stories and simple joys.

I would love to hear about your baking adventure. Tell me all about it in the comments. **Have you tried this recipe?** Your stories are my favorite thing to read.

Happy cooking!  
—Elowen Thorn.



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