

DECEMBER

Baking School In-Depth: Kringle

Welcome some holiday cheer with our very merry December Baking School In-Depth module: Kringle! Akin to an oversize Danish just begging to be sliced and shared, this is one bake that's sure to bring everyone together. In Denmark, the pastry is traditionally pretzel-shaped with an almond filling, also called *wienerbrød* (Viennese bread). The kringle we know and love in the United States was first introduced in the 1800s by Danish immigrants moving to Wisconsin, namely in Racine. Complete with a lofty, laminated layer of pastry given new height with Red Star® Active Dry Yeast surrounding a rich Almond Cream and brightly flavored cranberry jam, our take on this northern treat will have everyone celebrating. From laminating and shaping your dough to fixing up a beautiful Almond Cream, Quick Cranberry Jam, and stir-together Almond Glaze, this month's module delivers Nordic charm in a straightforward, step-by-step package. Plus, this recipe makes two Kringles, so there's sure to be plenty to go around at your next holiday get-together.



INGREDIENT BREAKDOWN

Great recipes require great ingredients. This combination of simple ingredients is key to achieving sweet, showstopping Kringles.

UNSALTED EUROPEAN-STYLE BUTTER: Laminated doughs rely heavily on good-quality butter. We use unsalted European-style butter in this recipe because of its higher milk fat content, which lends richness and buttery flavor to our Kringle's pastry component. Because European-style butters tend to heat up a lot quicker than your standard butter, we freeze our cubed butter before incorporating it into our dough. Like a rough puff pastry, as the bits of butter in the dough are rolled out and stacked via the book-fold technique, they become thin sheets of fat between the dry ingredients. When the dough comes into contact with the heat of the oven, that butter begins to melt away and steam, creating leavened layers. These small pockets of butter are essential, so it's important not to overmix your dough; otherwise, the butter will melt into the dough, losing its structure and creating a tough pastry.

WATER: Moisture, in the form of warm water, is needed to activate the yeast and hydrate the dough. Not only does this hydration help to build elasticity, but when cooking, the water is also converted to steam, which helps leaven the dough and prevents the crust from forming too quickly and burning.

GRANULATED SUGAR: Sugar, also referred to as glucose, acts as food for yeast, which converts it to carbon dioxide and alcohol in the fermentation process. This ultimately helps to tenderize the dough, creating a soft, delicate crumb. The sugar in this dough also adds a tinge of sweetness, contributes to our Kringle's golden color, and helps to retain moisture both while each Kringle is baked and if they're stored.

RED STAR® ACTIVE DRY YEAST: The true standard when it comes to baking with yeast, Red Star® Active Dry Yeast is a tried-and-true favorite for a reason. Providing a moderate and steady leavening rate that allows for maximum flavor development, this yeast works incredibly well in enriched doughs such as this. The slower action of active dry yeast also makes it the perfect choice for the slow rise of refrigerated doughs like this. An essential part of this dough's leavening, yeast needs food (sugar and carbohydrates), warmth (the warm water and sugar mixture in this recipe will activate your yeast), and moisture for proper fermentation. Keep in mind, yeast is killed at 140°F (60°C), so keep your thermometer on hand when heating your water and sugar.

BREAD FLOUR: For a dough that undergoes this amount of folding and shaping, a high-protein flour like bread flour provides enough structure to create a strong gluten network without the traditional kneading required of most yeast breads. The strength given to the dough by the flour also helps it maintain its height as it bakes, which allows the irresistible layers of this bake to hold.



INGREDIENT BREAKDOWN

KOSHER SALT: As a general rule of thumb, the ratio of salt to flour in bread doughs like this is 1.8% to 2% of flour weight. It's important to weigh your salt because different salt crystals measure differently. Additionally, dough without enough salt easily overferments. Salt also helps with crust color and enhances flavor.

WHOLE MILK: We use milk to add both fat and flavor to our dough, but we cut it with water to keep the dough from getting too dark during baking. As the natural sugars found in milk heat at high temperatures, they undergo the Maillard reaction, which involves browning in its end stages, thus contributing to the golden color of our Kringle.

ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR: Used to lightly dust your work surface as you begin rolling and folding your dough, all-purpose flour is a lower-protein flour, making it less absorbent than bread flour. This is important, as you want your dough to maintain moisture even as it's rolled out.

EGG: A whole egg is whisked together with 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water to create an egg wash. Brushed on just before baking, an egg wash adds both shine and golden color due to the Maillard reaction. This reaction requires sugar, protein, and high heat, with the extra layer of protein from the egg helping to create an even richer golden color.

ALMOND CREAM: Also referred to as frangipane, our Almond Cream is deliciously aromatic and sweet. With a procedure that closely resembles how you might make cookie dough, creaming butter and sugar and then adding flour and an egg white, this filling comes together quickly and in a single bowl! It might just become your new favorite filling for pastries.

QUICK CRANBERRY JAM: No flavor is quite as festive as cranberry. Our Quick Cranberry Jam is accented with orange and cinnamon, giving it a fresh, lightly spiced kick. It comes together quickly on the stovetop, with a cornstarch slurry used to thicken and give it a glossy sheen. The cornstarch molecules act like a sponge, not only absorbing water but expanding as the water is absorbed. The same thing happens with any starch; think of how your oatmeal or polenta bubbles, thickens, and expands as it's heated. For quick jams like this, it's the perfect solution.

ALMOND GLAZE: A sweet and simple stir-together glaze, our Almond Glaze adds a final note of aromatic almond flavor while also making this bake all the more visually appealing.



TOOL TALK

The tools behind our technique



ROLLING PIN: The choice of countless professional pastry chefs, tapered rolling pins offer outstanding maneuverability and a sensitive feel. The angled ends facilitate shaping the dough, while the flat, slim center lets you roll your dough with a smooth finish at the desired thickness. A classic barrel rolling pin with handles would also work for this recipe. (Pictured is the Williams Sonoma French Tapered Olivewood Rolling Pin.)

HAND MIXER: For our Almond Cream, a hand mixer allows for power and speed but with more control. Excellent at whipping air into mixtures that might not have enough volume for a stand mixer to effectively reach and mix, the use of a hand mixer saves you both time and energy. (Pictured is the Breville Handy Mix Scraper 9-Speed Hand Mixer.)

MEDIUM SAUCEPAN: To make our Quick Cranberry Jam, you want a stainless steel saucepan that'll heat efficiently and uniformly with precise temperature control and no hot spots. This will help prevent burning when making your jam. (Pictured is the Williams Sonoma Signature Thermo-Clad™ Stainless-Steel Saucepan.)

TOOL TALK



OFFSET SPATULA: The flexible, angled blade of an offset spatula provides unmatched control while remaining comfortable to work with. A go-to tool of all pastry chefs, in this recipe, it works best for delicately spreading fillings into an even layer. (Pictured is the Williams Sonoma Olivewood Offset Icing Spatula.)

PASTRY BRUSH: Brushing your Kringles with egg wash is key to creating gorgeously golden rings. It's important that the bristles of the brush are sturdy yet flexible, which is why we often opt for a pastry brush with bristles instead of silicone. (Pictured is the Williams Sonoma Olivewood Pastry Brush.)

SPATULA, WHISK, AND GLASS BOWLS: For all your mixing needs, you really can't beat the basics. Spatulas are perfect for simple stirring and folding, whisks are essential in mixing dry ingredients and breaking up clumps, and glass bowls give you a 360-degree visual while staying cool (glass doesn't conduct heat well). (Pictured is the Williams Sonoma Silicone Spatula with Stainless-Steel Handle, Williams Sonoma Signature Stainless Steel French Whisk, and Glass Mixing Bowls.)

STAND MIXER: An excellent time- and strength-saver, stand mixers are fantastic at bringing dough together without the effort of hand mixing. But it's important that your dough's time in the mixer is short and sparing once the butter and wet ingredients have been added. (Pictured is the KitchenAid® Artisan Stand Mixer, 5-Qt., and KitchenAid® Stand Mixer Clear Glass Bowl Attachment, 5-Qt.)

KRINGLE



KRINGLE

Makes 2

A radiant wreath of lusciously laminated dough, aromatic Almond Cream, fresh and fruity cranberry jam, and bright Almond Glaze, this wintry bake will be a highlight of the holidays. And in the spirit of giving, this recipe is designed to be shared, with one Kringle to keep and another to gift. Whether you serve it for breakfast, brunch, a midafternoon snack, or dessert, it's sure to delight.

- 1⅓ cups (303 grams) cold unsalted European-style butter, cut into ½-inch cubes**
- ⅓ cup (80 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, divided**
- 6 tablespoons (72 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) active dry yeast***
- 4½ cups (572 grams) bread flour**
- 3½ teaspoons (10.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 1 cup (240 grams) cold whole milk**
- All-purpose flour, for dusting**
- 1 large egg (50 grams)**
- Almond Cream (recipe follows)**
- Quick Cranberry Jam (recipe follows)**
- Almond Glaze (recipe follows)**

1. Freeze cold butter until firm, about 10 minutes.
2. In a small microwave-safe bowl, stir together ⅓ cup (80 grams) water and ½ teaspoon (2 grams) sugar; heat on high in 10-second intervals until an instant-read thermometer registers 110°F (43°C) to 115°F (46°C). Whisk in yeast until well combined. Let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat bread flour, salt, and remaining 5 tablespoons plus 2½ teaspoons (70 grams) sugar at low speed until combined. Add ⅓ cup (76 grams) cold butter; beat until mixture resembles coarse bread crumbs, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 1 cup (227 grams) cold butter; pulse

mixer between low speed and “off” setting just until butter is coated with flour.

4. Add cold milk to yeast mixture; while pulsing mixer between low speed and “off” setting, add yeast mixture to flour mixture in a slow, steady stream just until a shaggy dough comes together. (There will still be large pieces of butter.) If any flour remains at bottom of bowl, gently knead by hand to incorporate.
5. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Turn out dough, and shape into a rough 7-inch square. (Dough will be soft and slightly sticky.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 30 minutes.
6. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Roll dough into an 18x9-inch rectangle, lightly dusting surface and top of dough with all-purpose flour as needed. Fold dough in half so short sides meet. Pat fold to mark center. Unfold dough, and pull one short side to center. Pull opposite side to center so short sides are touching. Pinch seams together; fold along center seam, like closing a book. (This is called a book-fold.) Rotate dough 90 degrees; repeat rolling and folding procedure. (Dough will start out soft, rough, and somewhat sticky but will come together; turn dough over as needed so edges are rolled out as evenly as possible.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 15 minutes.
7. Repeat rotating, rolling, and folding procedure. (This will make a total of 3 book-folds.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1½ hours or up to overnight.
8. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
9. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water.
10. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Divide dough in half. Roll half of dough into a 26x9-inch rectangle. (Dough will be thin. If at any point the dough is hard to roll out, cover with plastic wrap, and let stand for 3 to 5 minutes

before trying to roll again.) (Keep remaining dough in refrigerator until ready to use.) Gently score or mark dough in thirds crosswise. (You will have 3 [3-inch] sections.) Spread half of Almond Cream (scant ½ cup or 111 grams) down center third of rectangle, leaving a ¼-inch border at each short end. Spread half of Quick Cranberry Jam (½ cup or 111 grams) on top. Fold one side of dough over filling. Brush remaining side and ends of dough with egg wash, and fold over filling and dough. Press firmly on all seams to make sure it seals. Make sure dough and filling are even, there are no air pockets, and it is still 26 inches long. Lift at either end, and place on 1 prepared pan. Shape into an oval, making sure seam is at center of oval and not on outside edges, pressing ends together and pinching to seal. Oval should be even thickness and about 10x8 inches. Using a fork dipped in flour, dock top of oval about every 1 inch. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, about 30 minutes. Repeat with remaining dough, remaining Almond Cream, and remaining Quick Cranberry Jam when first one is ready to bake.

11. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
12. Brush top and sides with egg wash.
13. Bake until dough is lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until deep golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in bread registers 190°F (88°C) to 200°F (93°C), 15 to 20 minutes more, covering with foil after 10 minutes of baking at 350°F (180°C) to prevent excess browning. Let cool completely on pan.
14. Increase oven temperature to 400°F (200°C). Repeat egg washing and baking with remaining Kringle.
15. Spoon Almond Glaze on top of cooled Kringles. Cover and store at room temperature for up to 3 days.

**We used Red Star® Active Dry Yeast.*

KRINGLE (CONTINUED)

ALMOND CREAM

Makes about 1 cup

- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (64 grams) almond flour
- 1 large egg white (30 grams)
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon almond extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a medium bowl, beat butter and sugar with a hand mixer at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Beat in almond flour until well combined and no longer crumbly. Add egg and almond extract, and beat at low speed until combined. Beat in all-purpose flour and salt.

QUICK CRANBERRY JAM

Makes about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup

- 1 cup (100 grams) fresh or frozen cranberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) lightly packed orange zest
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice

- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) cornstarch

1. In a medium saucepan, stir together cranberries, sugar, orange zest and juice, salt, and cinnamon. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until cranberries are tender and burst and mixture thickens slightly, 5 to 8 minutes.

2. In a small bowl, whisk together 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water and cornstarch. Slowly add cornstarch slurry to cranberry mixture, whisking constantly. Increase heat to medium, and bring to a boil. (Mixture will thicken.) Cook for 2 minutes. Pour into a heatproof bowl, and let cool completely before using. If making ahead of time, cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Let come to room temperature before using.

ALMOND GLAZE

Makes 1 cup

- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (40 grams) water
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon almond extract

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (40 grams) water, melted butter, salt, and almond extract until smooth. Use immediately.



PREPARING THE DOUGH

From mixing to laminating to resting, this dough is all about technique and temperatures. Keeping your dough cold throughout mixing and shaping will ensure your butter holds its shape, ultimately creating this bake's signature laminated layering.

1. Freeze cold butter until firm, about 10 minutes.
2. In a small microwave-safe bowl, stir together $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80 grams) water and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) sugar; heat on high in 10-second intervals until an instant-read thermometer registers 110°F (43°C) to 115°F (46°C). Whisk in yeast until well combined. Let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.



3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat bread flour, salt, and remaining 5 tablespoons plus $2\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (70 grams) sugar at low speed until combined. Add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (76 grams) cold butter; beat until mixture resembles coarse bread crumbs, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 1 cup (227 grams) cold butter; pulse mixer between low speed and “off” setting just until butter is coated with flour. It's important not to overmix at this stage. Larger pieces of butter will help create more-defined layers as the dough is rolled out and laminated.
4. Add cold milk to yeast mixture; while pulsing mixer between low speed and “off” setting, add yeast mixture to flour mixture in a slow, steady stream just until a shaggy dough comes together. (There will still be large pieces of butter.) If any flour remains at bottom of bowl, gently knead by hand to incorporate.
5. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Turn out dough, and shape into a rough 7-inch square. (Dough will be soft and slightly sticky.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 30 minutes.

PREPARING THE DOUGH



6. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Roll dough into an 18x9-inch rectangle, lightly dusting surface and top of dough with all-purpose flour as needed. Fold dough in half so short sides meet. Pat fold to mark center. This will act as a guide for your folds. Unfold dough, and pull one short side to center. Pull opposite side to center so short sides are touching. Pinch seams together; fold along center seam, like closing a book. (This is called a book-fold.) Rotate dough 90 degrees; repeat rolling and folding procedure. (Dough will start out soft, rough, and somewhat sticky but will come together; turn dough over as needed so edges are rolled out as evenly as possible.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 15 minutes. Freezing between book-folds will help keep your butter cold. If at any point you notice your butter melting, return the dough to the freezer to allow it to firm up.

7. Repeat rotating, rolling, and folding procedure. (This will make a total of 3 book-folds.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1½ hours or up to overnight.

MAKING THE FILLINGS

Festively flavored, our Almond Cream and Quick Cranberry Jam fillings are quick to come together. With the jam, it's important that it properly thickens, while the Almond Cream relies upon creamed butter and sugar to achieve its light, fluffy consistency.

AN AMAZING ALMOND CREAM



1. In a medium bowl, beat butter and sugar with a hand mixer at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Beat in almond flour until well combined and no longer crumbly. Add egg and almond extract, and beat at low speed until combined. Beat in all-purpose flour and salt. You might be wondering, why a hand mixer instead of a stand mixer? The yield of this filling isn't quite enough for a stand mixer to be able to properly mix; a hand mixer allows better reach and control with lower-volume mixing.

MAKING THE FILLINGS

A QUICK CRANBERRY JAM



1. In a medium saucepan, stir together cranberries, sugar, orange zest and juice, salt, and cinnamon. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until cranberries are tender and burst and mixture thickens slightly, 5 to 8 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water and cornstarch. Slowly add cornstarch slurry to cranberry mixture, whisking constantly. Increase heat to medium, and bring to a boil. (Mixture will thicken.) Cook for 2 minutes. Pour into a heatproof bowl, and let cool completely before using. If making ahead of time, cover and refrigerate until ready to use. (Your jam should keep for up to 1 week in the refrigerator.) Let come to room temperature before using.

FILLING YOUR KRINGLES

Now that your dough, Almond Cream, and Quick Cranberry Jam are made, it's time to bring it all together into a fun and festive filled ring

1. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water.



3. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Divide dough in half. Roll half of dough into a 26x9-inch rectangle. (Dough will be thin. If at any point the dough is hard to roll out, cover with plastic wrap, and let stand for 3 to 5 minutes before trying to roll again.) (Keep remaining dough in refrigerator until ready to use.) Gently score or mark dough in thirds crosswise. (You will have 3 [3-inch] sections.) These lines will act as a guide for your filling and folds. It's important that you don't cut through your dough; otherwise, your filling might leak out when you shape or bake your Kringles. Spread half of Almond Cream (scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 111 grams) down center third of rectangle, leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch border at each short end. Spread half of Quick Cranberry Jam ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup or 111 grams) on top.

SHAPING AND BAKING YOUR KRINGLES

The most important part of shaping your Kringles is ensuring that all seams are sealed to prevent any filling from spilling out as they bake. Egg wash and crimping will help create a sturdy seal.



1. Fold one side of dough over filling. Brush remaining side and ends of dough with egg wash, and fold over filling and dough. Press firmly on all seams to make sure it seals. Make sure dough and filling are even, there are no air pockets, and it is still 26 inches long. Lift at either end, and place on 1 prepared pan. Shape into an oval, making sure seam is at center of oval and not on outside edges, pressing ends together and pinching to seal. Oval should be even thickness and about 10x8 inches. Using a fork dipped in flour, dock top of oval about every 1 inch. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, about 30 minutes. Repeat with remaining dough, remaining Almond Cream, and remaining Quick Cranberry Jam when first one is ready to bake.
2. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).

SHAPING AND BAKING YOUR KRINGLES



3. Brush tops and sides with egg wash.
4. Bake until dough is lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until deep golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in bread registers 190°F (88°C) to 200°F (93°C), 15 to 20 minutes more, covering with foil after 10 minutes of baking at 350°F (180°C) to prevent excess browning. Let cool completely on pan.
5. Increase oven temperature to 400°F (200°C). Repeat egg washing and baking with remaining Kringle.

A GORGEOUS GLAZE

Now that your Kringles have cooled, you can make the simple and sweet Almond Glaze to spoon on top



1. In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (40 grams) water, melted butter, salt, and almond extract until smooth. Use immediately.

A GORGEOUS GLAZE



2. Spoon Almond Glaze on top of cooled Kringles. Cover and store at room temperature for up to 3 days.