



# What to Bake When You're *Baked*

## Kitchen Creations to Cure Your Munchies

Written by Kelsey O'Leary | Photographs by Gillian Arend & Abbey Fitzpatrick

As someone who has spent countless nights creating treats that satisfy both my creative cravings and the munchies, here's my guide to the best things to bake while you're baked!

I'm not saying I always make everything perfectly after indulging, but I love to start baking and see what I can come up with. In particular, I would not recommend trying to make a  $\frac{1}{4}$  batch of cookies — the math does not math. Still, the result was somehow tasty. The last time I tried that, I ended up with too

much sugar compared to literally everything else, and not enough baking soda. This made the edges of the cookies lacey and crispy because there was no rise to the cookies. I should have prefaced with this, but a chocolate chip cookie is my classic, so having the final product not even look like one of my cookies... let's just say was a shock. Since then, I've gotten a little better with my own baked baking, and now I'm here to share. So sit back, relax and, well, I think you know what to do next!

### Recipe 1: Crac — The Instant Gratification Snack

This is NOT what you're thinking. This is the most addicting mixture of sweet, salty, and crunchy. Whenever I make this, people go crazy for it. It's a staple for my friends and family and is so easy to pull together. You can also keep the ingredients around which is very helpful for when you finish the batch and need to make another one!

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
- 1-2 boxes saltine crackers (depending on pan size)
- 1 bag mini chocolate chips (semi-sweet recommended)

#### Directions:

1. Start by preheating your oven to 350 F.
2. Then, in a pot on the stove over low heat, make a simple caramel by melting the butter and brown sugar together. Make sure to stir this often as it melts so nothing burns.
3. Once the butter and sugar get melting, you can choose to add the salt and vanilla. Keep stirring occasionally until the butter and sugar start to foam. Once foamy, start stirring constantly until everything thickens up, then turn off the heat and keep stirring until everything has completely come together in a smooth caramel sauce.
4. In between stirring the caramel, line a baking sheet with parchment paper, and make sure the parchment goes all the way to the edges of the tray (I've used greased foil for this and it works, but can be tricky).
5. Lay out the saltine crackers across the tray until they are completely covering it.
6. When the caramel is finished, it will thicken up and become super silky. Pour the caramel over the crackers and use a rubber spatula to spread the caramel evenly and out to the edges.
7. Add the tray to the oven and then bake for about 7 minutes.
8. Take the tray out of the oven and pour the chocolate chips over the top, they will start to melt from the residual heat (this is why I say mini chips; they melt faster). After the chips melt a little, spread the chocolate out to the edges and then let the tray cool on the stove for about 5 minutes so the tray is warm but can be picked up. Then, add to the freezer for 15 minutes (sorry for the wait, but it is so worth it).
9. I find the longer they sit the better, but as soon as they are set you can break the sheet apart (or cut them into smaller pieces, but that's not as fun) and start snacking because they'll be gone before you know it!
10. If you're planning on bringing these anywhere, I recommend storing them in the fridge in a Tupperware to keep them from melting together.

## Recipe 2: Cinnamon Vanilla Crinkle Cookies — The Waiting Game Treat

I am now going to do the unthinkable and ask for your patience, but we all know you're waiting for your gummy to kick in anyway. The cookie dough has to sit in the fridge, but it's so worth it for how fluffy and addicting the cookies are. I brought these to my friend's house last time I made them, and they were gone before I left!

### Ingredients:

- 1 stick + 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 ¼ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ½ cup powdered sugar



### Directions:

1. In a pot over medium-low heat add the butter, making sure it is first cut up into some smaller pieces. Let the butter melt and wait for it to start getting foamy — this is normal. Keep stirring until you see some amber color coming through under the foam. Take the pot off the heat and let the butter cool while you get started on the rest.
2. While you wait, get a small bowl to combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Mixing this before will help make sure everything gets combined. I normally like a one-bowl recipe, but this works, just trust.
3. Now that the butter is cool, add the granulated sugar and brown sugar to the pot and stir to combine.
4. Next, add the eggs (why the butter needs to cool off the heat) and the vanilla, mixing until smooth. Slowly stir in the flour and mix until just combined. Then cover the pot and let it sit in the fridge (I say 30 minutes, but 1 hour is probably better if you really have the time).
5. After your 30 minutes (SET A TIMER), preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a baking tray with parchment paper and set that aside.
6. Add the powdered sugar to a shallow bowl or plate. Roll the dough into 1-1½ tablespoon sized balls, then roll them through the powdered sugar and place them on the baking sheet (you can fit 12-15 depending on the size).
7. Bake for 10-12 minutes. They will turn a little golden, but it is not a drastic color change.
8. Let them cool for at least 10 minutes so they are set (the last time you are waiting, I promise), then enjoy!



## Recipe 3: Individual Berry Cobbler — The Solo Session Dessert

This single-serve cobbler is so easy and can be customized depending on your mood. We have all been there, the munchies hit and you have found the movie or book you want to settle in with, but what treat will you have? Now you can keep the ingredients on hand for this and make it in no time.

### Ingredients:

- ½ cup frozen berries
- ½ tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons oats
- 1 tablespoon flour
- Pinch of salt

### Directions:

1. Grab your favorite mug and add the berries to the bottom (you can eyeball half a cup or measure it out, it will be okay either way).
2. Sprinkle the granulated sugar over the berries, mix, and set aside (you can add a squeeze of lemon if you wish, but I do not).
3. In a small bowl, melt the butter then mix in the brown sugar, oats, flour, and salt until combined.
4. Dump this mixture over the berries and then start with microwaving for 60-90 seconds (you may need more or less depending on the microwave). If the top doesn't look set add another 15-30 seconds.
5. Let cool for several minutes to avoid burning your tongue, then enjoy!



I hope these recipes get you inspired and excited to start baking when you are thinking of getting baked. DO NOT FORGET to set your timers for the oven and the fridge! You can also take some of these recipes and make them your own. In the cobbler, try different berries or even peaches; for the cookies, add flavors you love like peppermint instead of cinnamon, or even substitute a little cocoa powder for some of the flour; you can experiment with different toppings on the crac — the options are endless. My golden rule is always to have fun when you are baking, you might not know what the outcome will be, but hopefully, something yummy. If not, you can always try again.