

## Spread: The New Nutella

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*Homemade carrot cake cupcakes. What looks like peanut butter frosting is something very different: biscoff (spéculoos) spread. It has the consistency of PB and the flavor of gingersnaps. Photo courtesy Lotus Bakeries.*

CAPSULE REPORT: Move over Nutella; there's a new sweet spread in town. In America, it's called biscoff (as in, "biscuits for coffee"). In Europe, it's called spéculoos spread. The all-natural, nut-free spread is made of 57% ground spéculoos cookies (the national cookie of Belgium). And it is luscious.

Unless you have some relationship to Belgium, France or Holland, you may not have heard of spéculoos (SPECK-you-loose; in Dutch, it's speculaas, pronounced SPECK-e-lahs) cookies. In the U.S. they have been called Dutch Windmill cookies.

The thin, crunchy cookies are flavored with brown sugar and spices. They were originally children's Christmas cookies, stamped with an image of Saint Nicholas in celebration of Saint Nicholas Day (December 6th).

- The name may derive from Latin *speculum*, mirror, in reference to the bas-relief image of Saint Nick stamped into the cookies.
- Alternatively, the name might derive from *specerij*, the Dutch word for spices. The cookies are flavored with holiday spices—cardamom, cinnamon, clove, ginger and nutmeg—plus white pepper.

The cookie flavor was so popular that a few decades ago, the Christmas cookies became available year-round. They are often served with coffee and they are also used to make specialty ice cream.

And now, spéculoos is an award-winning spread. It was created in 2007 on a Belgian reality TV show contest seeking the year's best new invention. The spéculoos spread made by contestant Els Scheppers was a top finalist.

Lotus Bakeries, producers of the largest brand of spéculoos cookies, worked with Ms. Scheppers to launch the product into the marketplace. When the spread was first released, it sold out within three hours. And of course, within three months, there were imitators. Who can resist a spreadable gingersnap?

- Spéculoos spread/biscoff spread has the creamy consistency of peanut butter, but contains no nuts.
- It's all natural: no preservatives, artificial flavors or colors.
- It's a delight for kids and adults alike.
- Feel free to call this product by both names: biscoff and spéculoos. We prefer the European name, and unless you learn it, you may pass by some delicious spéculoos products on your next trip abroad.

Join us on the the [next page](#) for recipes. Before you click away, take a peek at the [article index](#) below.

**WHAT IT IS:** A sweet spread the consistency of peanut butter, with the flavor of gingersnaps.

**WHY IT'S DIFFERENT:** Called "Europe's alternative to peanut butter," it's nut-free, all natural, vegan and as delicious as fudge (but far less sweet). Note: Product is packed in a facility where tree nut products are processed.

**WHY WE LOVE IT:** It's new to the U.S., it's delicious, and it's a multi-tasker for baked goods, bread spreads, pancakes, sandwiches, apples and much more.

**WHERE TO BUY IT:** [Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and at retailers nationwide (the distribution of this new product is growing). Here's a [\\$1.00 coupon](#) for retail purchases.

<http://www.thenibble.com/zine/archives/speculoos-spread.asp>