

CHRUSTIKI

MAKES ABOUT 30 PIECES

This recipe comes from my great-grandmother on my Polish side, whom we called "Babcia." My favorite part about going to Babcia's house for Christmas was that she would make these amazing cookies and let me help her douse them in the confectioners' sugar before everyone devoured them. I was so lucky to even know a great-grandmother, let alone be able to bake with one. I've adapted the recipe a little by using a stand mixer instead of making the dough entirely by hand; the end result is just as good as I remember. **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** pizza cutter (optional); spider

2½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for kneading and rolling

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

7 large egg yolks

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon confectioners' sugar, plus more for dusting

3 heaping tablespoons sour cream

Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

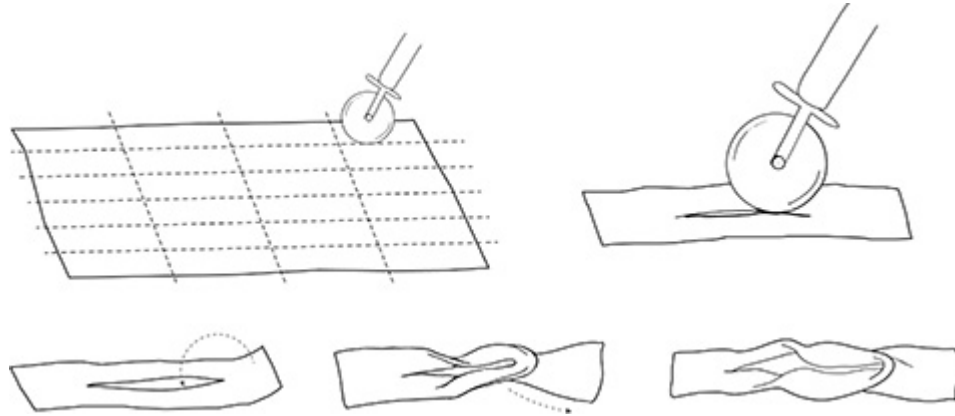
Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt together into a medium bowl.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the egg yolks on low to medium speed until frothy. Beat in the vanilla, sugar, and sour cream. Blend the mixture well, then beat in the flour mixture.

Turn out the loose dough onto a floured work surface and lightly knead it until it becomes smooth and elastic, about 5

minutes. If the dough sticks to the work surface, knead in a little more flour. Divide the dough into 3 equal portions.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough, one piece at a time, into a rough rectangle, making it as thin as you can, but without making it see-through. Keep the remaining dough covered with a moist towel while it waits.



Cut the rolled-out dough into strips 3 to 4 inches long and 1½ inches wide. A pizza cutter works great for this, but you can use a knife. Slit each piece in the center. Pull one end through the slit so it has a sort of bow-tie look. As you work, place the cookies on a baking sheet and cover with a moist paper towel so they don't dry out.

Line one or more baking sheets with dry paper towels. In a heavy-bottomed, deep saucepan, pour in enough vegetable oil to come up 3 inches (or use a deep fryer if you have one). Heat the oil to 375°F. Working in batches, drop about 5 pieces of dough into the oil and fry until light golden, about 1½ minutes, turning over once. Remove the chrustiki with a spider and drain on the paper towels. Let cool. When cool, sift confectioners' sugar over them.

