



## Food for Thought with Catherine Jheon

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## GUEST BLOGGER: 3 Reasons Baking is NOT My Friend

I've never had any luck with baking, but a few weeks I was inspired by a recipe for a basic cookie dough I read in a magazine that came across my desk. How could I possibly mess up five little ingredients that seemed to produce such a simple little cookie? Well... I did. And here are three reasons, I should keep my cookie sheets safely tucked away.

**1. I don't pay attention to details** like measuring or what ingredients I'm using, and I inevitably end up screwing up the simplest thing. In the instance of the basic cookie dough I tried, I failed to notice the recipe called for an egg yolk and **not** the entire egg... that might have something to do with the fact the cookies spread like crazy, but what do I know?



But despite my set back, I was determined to try my hand at baking a cookie, any cookie. So I scanned foodtv.ca for something that looked relatively simple. [Stained Glass Cookies](#) vs. Jessica—it was on! I carefully brought out all the ingredients and checked them twice. So far, so good.

Now to get my hands dirty... which brings me to the second reason baking is **not** my friend.

**2. I am messy.** Flour is one of the most challenging things to handle.

Does anyone out there really bake without ending up with flour everywhere?

Then came the mixing. Unfortunately, the bowl I had was a shade on the small side, so mixing the ingredients was a bit of a struggle; it seemed to make more sense to just get right in there with my hands. So I grabbed the dough and started incorporating everything together, but soon it was completely unmanageable. My hands were coated with cookie batter; this just wasn't working.



After smearing cookie dough all over the tap and washing my hands, I had an epiphany! Maybe it might be easier to use my hands if I sprayed cooking spray on them. It worked quite well. But I felt completely ridiculous, and so out of my league.

The mixing nightmare brings me to the third reason I shouldn't quit my job to become a pastry chef...

**3. I have a tendency to overmix everything.** I worked that dough into the ground. The little voice inside my head kept telling me to stop mixing the cookie dough, but I just kept at it.



Did I happen to mention this was also all very exhausting? The stress of all this baking just wiped me out.

I put the dough in the fridge to set and wiped the sweat from my brow (okay, not quite, but I'd really felt as if I'd completed a lofty task). By then I had already decided there would be **no** "stained glass" in this cookie. I decided plain was the way to go this time around. So I rolled them and baked them, and they actually turned out okay. Well, they were a little on the tough side, but I'm guessing that had

something to do with the overmixing.

Am I the only one out there who's so intimidated by baking? Please, share your stories.

By Jessica, Manager, Foodtv.ca

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