

COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

SPRINGFORM PANS

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After three years of testing our favorite models side-by-side, one model now stands out.

list of products tested

Frieling Glass Bottom Springform Pan

Kaiser Bakeware Noblesse Springform Pan

A springform pan is a desirable—no, make that essential—piece of kitchen equipment. Without the removable sides that define a springform pan, cheesecakes and mousse cakes would have to be served straight from the confines of their cake pan prisons or, worse, messily dislodged so that their formerly clean lines and crisp corners resembled more of a pile than a cake. But are all springform pans created equal? To find out, we baked chocolate mousse cakes and cheesecakes in six pans, ranging in price from \$9 to \$32.

An ideal springform pan should release a cake from the sides and bottom effortlessly. All six pans tested had acceptable side release, but dislodging a cake from the bottom proved to be trickier. Here the top pans have a rimless bottom that makes it especially easy to slide a spatula underneath the cake to remove it. The other pans tested have rimmed bottoms that can get in the way of cake removal.

Because cheesecakes are often baked in a water bath, a tight seal between the band and the bottom of the springform pan is key, so we baked cheesecakes in a water bath tinted with green food coloring. The less secure the seal of the pan, the more water would seep through, and the greener the cheesecake would be. This test wasn't as clear-cut (or green-cut) as we had hoped. Even the best-performing pan showed an edge of green around one-third of the cake. The worst performers had a complete circle of green around the cake. We recommend wrapping the bottom of any springform pan with foil when baking in a water bath.

Our two favorite pans were the priciest of the lot—and we had trouble choosing a winner. But three years of intensive use in the test kitchen have taken their toll on several pans from one of our favorite models. They've suffered extensive peeling of their nonstick coating, especially on the pan bottom. And we've slowly developed a preference for the second model. With its glass bottom, we could monitor the browning of the crust on our tortas. And it turns out the tempered-glass bottom is anything but fragile—a conclusion we came to after it survived several falls onto the test kitchen floor. We also like the fact that this model has handles, which are helpful when removing the pan from a water bath or oven.

So we've revised our original recommendation and this time crowned only one pan the winner.

WINNER



Frieling's Handle-It Glass Bottom Springform Pan

We really liked the glass bottom option and found it anything but fragile.

**America's
TEST KITCHEN**

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