

Recipe Concept:

Cream Cheese Bark Bagel Board

A show-stopping spread where a thin sheet of savory “cream cheese bark” is blast-chilled to an ultra-clean snap, then shattered over warm bagels. Fast cycles let you build multiple flavors (classic everything, hot honey, dill-lox) with beautiful, crisp shards.

Why a blast chiller?

- Rapid chilling to $\leq 38^{\circ}\text{F}$ controls bacterial growth and preserves texture—key HACCP points for cook-chill. (In typical cycles, blast chillers pull down to $\sim 38^{\circ}\text{F}$ within ~ 90 minutes; shock freezing reaches $\sim 0^{\circ}\text{F}$ within ~ 240 minutes.) Use these facts in caption or overlay.
- Micro-crystal formation keeps dairy smooth; conventional cooling forms larger crystals that damage structure. Great demo visuals.

Ingredients

(yields ~24 bagel servings)

Cream cheese bark base

- 4 lb full-fat cream cheese, room temp
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup whipped ricotta
- 1½ tsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp lemon zest

Flavor sets (choose 2-3)

- Everything: ½ cup everything bagel seasoning, ¼ cup toasted sesame, ¼ cup dehydrated onion
- Hot Honey: ¾ cup hot honey, 2 Tbsp crushed chili flakes
- Dill-Lox: ¾ cup finely chopped cold-smoked salmon, ¼ cup dill fronds, 2 Tbsp capers (drained)

Quick toppings (blast-chilled fast)

- Pickled red onions (see “rapid chill quick-pickle” below)
- Thin cucumber ribbons
- Chives, microgreens



Equipment

- Blast chiller (PrepRite or equivalent), with probe and soft-/hard-chill programs
- Two full-size sheet pans, parchment or silicone mats
- Offset spatula, bench scraper, digital thermometer

Method (optimized for a blast chiller)

1. Mix the base

In a mixer, beat cream cheese until smooth; fold in sour cream, ricotta, salt, and zest.

2. Spread thin & slate the flavors

Line sheet pans; spread base to ~3–4 mm thick (think chocolate bark). Divide surface into flavor “lanes” and sprinkle/add toppings (press gently).

3. Soft-chill set (rapid)

Run a soft-chill program targeting $\leq 38^{\circ}\text{F}$ in the center. For a thin layer, this typically completes well under a standard full-pan cycle; verify with the probe and end when set and cold. (Messaging: “Set to safe temp fast with micro-crystal precision.”)

4. Optional shock-freeze edge for snappier shards

If you want glass-like snap, run a brief shock-freeze (5–10 minutes) to lower the surface temp—still within the micro-crystal sweet spot—then transfer to holding.

5. Shatter & build

Peel bark; use a bench scraper to crack into irregular shards. Serve over warm bagels with quick-chilled garnishes.

Rapid-Chill Quick-Pickled Onions (side component)

1. Bring to a boil: 1 cup water, 1 cup cider vinegar, 2 Tbsp sugar, 2 tsp salt.
2. Pour hot brine over 2 thinly sliced red onions; wait 2 minutes.
3. Hard-chill uncovered in the blast chiller until $\leq 38^{\circ}\text{F}$. You'll get bright color, crisp bite, and immediate service without carryover cloudiness.

Large-Batch Notes (service for cafés or events)

- Spread onto chilled sheet pans to speed the pull-down.
- Stagger pans; avoid stacking in the chamber to maintain airflow and even micro-crystal formation.
- Use programmed presets and core probes to document pull-down for HACCP logs (great B-roll of the screen readout).

Alternate Flavor Sets (quick ideas)

- Everything + scallion schmear shards with hot-honey drizzle
- Za'atar + whipped feta bark
- Maple-pecan 'sweet bagel' bark (brief shock-freeze for candy-bar snap)



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