

Holiday Cookies

Raspberry Almond Shortbread Thumbprint Cookies



Ingredients

- 2 cups + 2 Tbsp (300g) all-purpose flour (don't pack flour in when measuring)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter, cold and diced into 1 Tbsp pieces
- 2/3 cup (140g) granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp almond extract
- 1/2 cup raspberry jam, seedless if preferred
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp almond extract
- 2 - 4 tsp water

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl whisk together flour and salt, set aside. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, blend together butter and sugar until combined (it will take a minute or two since the butter is cold. If you don't have a paddle attachment that constantly scrapes bowl, then occasionally stop mixer and scrape down sides and bottom of bowl). Mix in almond extract then add in flour blend until mixture comes together (it will take a bit of mixing since the butter is cold, so be patient, it will seem really dry at first).

Shape dough into 1-inch balls, about 1 Tbsp each, and place 2-inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Make a small indentation with thumb or forefinger in each cookie (large enough to fit 1/4 - 1/2 tsp of jam). Fill each with 1/4 - 1/2 tsp jam. Chill in refrigerator 20 minutes (or freezer for 10 minutes). Bake in preheated oven 14 - 18 minutes. Cool several minutes on baking sheet then transfer to a wire rack to cool (at this point you can add a little more jam if you'd like to, it just won't be set like the other is). Drizzle cookies with glaze when cool. Store cookies in an airtight container.

For the glaze:

Whisk all glaze ingredients together in a small mixing bowl, adding enough water to reach desired consistency. Pour or spoon mixture into a sandwich size resealable bag, cut a small tip from one corner and drizzle over cookies.

Recipe source: adapted from both Land O Lakes and MarcieJ's review on allrecipes.com

Source: <http://www.cookingclassy.com/2014/12/raspberry-almond-shortbread-thumbprint-cookies/>

Salted Caramel Stuffed Chocolate Crinkle Cookies



Ingredients

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup + 2 Tbsp cocoa powder
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp salt
10 tbsp salted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup packed light-brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
2 dozen caramels (such as Kraft) or Rolos, unwrapped
Coarse sea salt
3/4 cup powdered sugar

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt, set aside. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fit with a paddle attachment, whip together butter, granulated sugar and light-brown sugar on medium-high speed until pale and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Add in eggs one at a time, stirring after each addition until combine. Mix in vanilla. With mixer set on low speed, slowly add in dry ingredients and mix just until combine.

Scoop dough out 2 tbsp at a time and roll into a ball. Press one caramel into the center, sprinkle top of caramel with a small pinch of coarse sea salt then fold cookie dough around caramel and salt (make sure the caramel is fully covered with dough around all sides). Shape into a ball once more then roll in powdered sugar*. Align cookies on Silpat lined or buttered cookie sheets and bake in preheated oven 11 - 13 minutes. Allow to cool on cookie sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool (note that the caramel will set after it cools, I liked these cookies best warm for soft gooey caramel). Store in an airtight container.

*I gave my cookies a generous coating of the powdered sugar before baking, but when they baked a lot of the powdered sugar baked and dissolved into the cookie anyway. So I found you can coat the top again with powdered sugar after baking (which is not pictured) to get a prettier cookie. If doing so roll in powdered sugar once before baking (doesn't need to be generously), then bake them and allow to cool and dip the tops of cookies in a fresh batch of powdered sugar (so there is no cross contamination) and shake off some of the excess. If you want to do it that way I would recommend using 1/2 cup powdered sugar for rolling before baking and reserve 1/4 cup in a separate bowl to dip and coat the tops after baking.

Source: <http://www.cookingclassy.com/2012/11/salted-caramel-stuffed-chocolate-crinkle-cookies/>

Orange Chocolate Spice Cookies



Ingredients

3 cups sifted flour
3 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp cloves
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg
Juice of one orange (just shy of 1/3 cup)
Zest of one orange (optional)
1 TBSP cocoa powder
1 cup sugar
1/2 tsp vanilla
2 eggs (beaten)
6 TBSPs butter, room temperature
1/2 cup milk

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Put all the ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer and combine.

Shape the cookies into small balls and bake for 15 minutes on a parchment lined baking sheet.

Once cooled dip in glaze (recipe below).

Glaze

1/2 cup powdered sugar
1 TBSP milk

Whisk the sugar and milk until well combined.

Drizzle over cookies or dip them in.

Note: For a thicker glaze on the cookies, increase the amount of powdered sugar.

Source: <http://www.crazyforcrust.com/2013/06/orange-chocolate-spice-cookies/>

Hot Cocoa



Hot Cocoa Mix:

3 ounces bittersweet chocolate (60% or greater)
1/2 cup unsweetened Dutch-process cocoa powder
1/2 cup coconut sugar (or Turbinado sugar)
3 tablespoons powdered milk
1/8 teaspoon sea salt

To Make 1 Cup Hot Cocoa:

1 cup milk, soy or nut milk of your choosing, or water
3 tablespoons Hot Cocoa Mix
Whipped cream, optional, to top
Ground cinnamon, optional, to top

Directions

Chop the chocolate: Chop the bittersweet chocolate finely. Measure out all the other ingredients.

Mix the cocoa ingredients: In a medium bowl, stir together ingredients. Make sure to incorporate the salt and powdered milk thoroughly.

Store in an airtight jar: Pour mixture into airtight jar for storage. Store at room temperature for up to 3 months.

To make the cocoa: Get out a heavy-bottomed pan. Measure out 3 tablespoons of your mix and add it to 1 cup of milk (or soy/nut milk or water). Gently warm over medium heat and whisk to incorporate the mix into the milk.

Serve the hot cocoa: Pour the hot chocolate into serving cup (s) and enjoy immediately. Top with whipped cream and cinnamon if you'd like.

Recipe Notes

If you want a richer hot chocolate more in the style of a drinking chocolate, follow directions above but use 3/4 cup milk instead of 1 cup.

Source: http://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-make-your-own-hot-cocoa-mix-cooking-lessons-from-the-kitchn-200646#_