

Salt and Serenity

Speculoos Cookies

Speculoos is the generic name of the traditional crispy, spice cookies from Belgium. They are sold under the brand name of Biscoff.

Yield depends upon the size of your cookie cutters. I used a large (7 inch cookie cutter and I got about 10 cookies.

Cookies

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup unsalted butter, removed from fridge 30 minutes before starting

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 Tablespoons dark brown sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cardamom

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground cinnamon

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon finely ground black or white pepper

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups All-Purpose Flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole wheat flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda

3 Tablespoons milk (regular or low-fat, not nonfat)

Royal Icing (small batch)

8 ounces (2 Cups) powdered sugar

2 Tablespoons meringue powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon clear vanilla or almond extract

1. To make the cookies: In the stand mixer, fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the butter, dark brown sugar, spices, salt and pepper for about 5 minutes.
2. In a medium sized bowl, whisk together all purpose flour, whole wheat flour, and baking soda.
3. Add dry ingredients to the mixer and mix on low speed for 1 minute. Add the milk and continue mixing just until dough begins to hold together.
4. Divide the dough in half. Roll out each half between 2 sheets of parchment paper to a thickness of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Refrigerate for 2 hours or more. If you are in a hurry, you can freeze the sheets of dough for 30 minutes.

5. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
6. Working with one sheet at a time, cut out shapes using your desired cutters, and transfer the cookies to the prepared pans.
7. Bake the cookies for 15 to 20 minutes, until they're lightly browned around the edges. Remove them from the oven and transfer them to a rack to cool. As they cool, they'll become quite hard.
8. To make the icing, in the bowl of an electric mixer combine powdered sugar and meringue powder. Add the water and extract slowly. Beat at medium-high speed until very smooth, about 8 minutes. You can thin the icing with a bit more water to make it the correct consistency for piping.
9. Once cookies are totally cooled, fit a disposable piping bag with a #2 or #3 plain tip. Fill bag halfway with royal icing and pipe designs on cookies. Let icing harden before packaging. These cookies will stay fresh in an airtight container for up to 3 weeks.