

# Salt and Serenity

## Dried Cherry and Pecan Hamentashen

**Makes 40 hamentashen**

**The filling for these hamentashen is adapted from on my Aunt Carol's prune filling. I substituted some dried cherries for half the prunes and switched out the strawberry jam in her recipe for sour cherry jam.**

Uri Scheft owner of Breads Bakery in New York City and Lehamim Bakery in Tel Aviv created the dough for this recipe.

### **Almond Shortbread Dough:**

230 grams (2 sticks) cold butter

100 grams (1 scant cup) icing sugar

50 grams (¼ cup) granulated sugar

1½ large eggs (90 grams), beaten

400 grams (3 cups plus 2 Tablespoons), all-purpose flour, plus extra for dusting and rolling

50 grams (½ cup) almond flour (I like Bob's Redmill brand)

5 grams (1 teaspoon) fine sea salt

### **Dried Cherry Filling:**

115 grams (⅔ cup) dried cherries

115 grams (⅔ cup) pitted prunes

115 grams (⅔ cup) golden raisins

75 grams (¼ cup) dried cherry jam

5 grams (1 teaspoon) fresh lemon juice

5 grams (1 teaspoon) almond extract

### **Egg wash:**

1 large egg

1 Tablespoon water

Pinch fine sea salt

### **For dipping:**

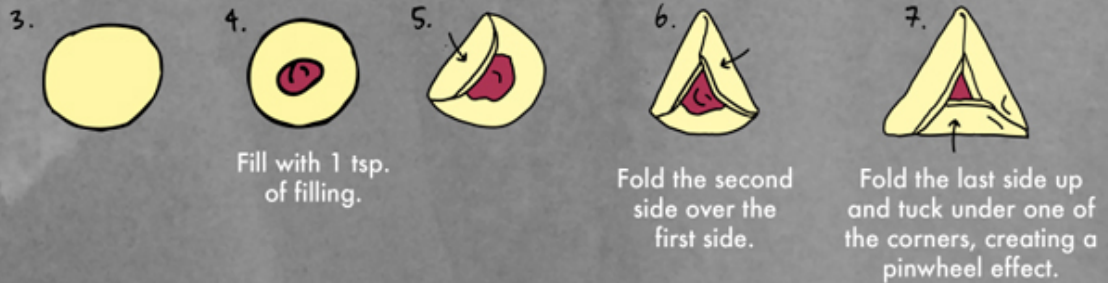
170 grams (½ cup) honey

120 grams (½ cup) toasted pecans, finely chopped

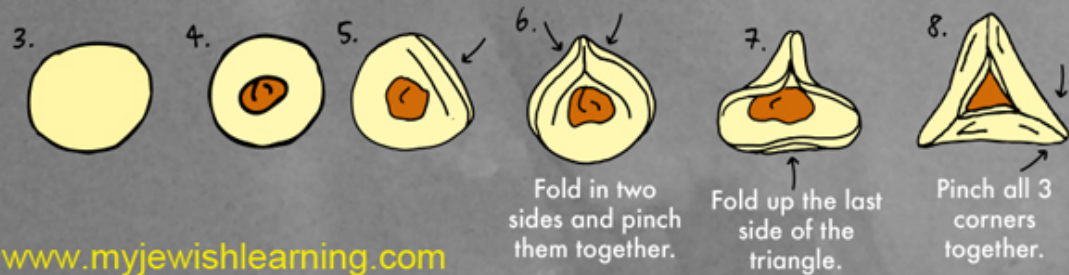
1. Make almond shortbread dough: Set the butter on a piece of parchment paper and whack it with a rolling pin. You want to soften the butter, but keep it cold. Place the smashed butter, confectioners sugar and granulated sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, and mix on low speed until combined, about 30 seconds. Increase the speed to medium low and beat for 30 more seconds, until everything is well mixed, but not airy.

2. Add the beaten eggs and mix on low speed until just combined. Add the all purpose flour, almond flour and salt and mix just until almost combined. Dump dough out onto the counter and use your hands to fold and work the dough until it comes together. Finishing the dough by hand prevents over mixing and ensures a tender dough.
3. Divide dough into 2 pieces and roll each piece, between 2 sheets of parchment paper, into a 10 x 14 inch rectangle, about 1/8 inch thick. Chill rolled dough in fridge for one hour. (Dough will keep in fridge for 5 days or can be frozen for up to a month).
4. Place all the filling ingredients in the food processor and pulse until finely chopped, about 10-15 pulses.
5. Adjust the oven racks to the upper and lower middle positions and preheat the oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
6. Prepare egg wash: In a small bowl, whisk together egg, water and salt.
7. Remove one dough sheet from the fridge and place on work surface. Peel off top parchment sheet and gently lay it back in place. Flip the dough over; peel off and set top parchment layer aside. Use a 3 inch round cookie cutter (or upside down glass) to stamp out as many rounds as possible, leaving as little space between them as possible so that you do not have too many scraps. Place rounds on parchment lined baking sheet, setting them 1½ inches apart. Set scraps aside. Repeat with second sheet of dough.
8. Gather scraps and roll between 2 sheets of parchment to an 1/8 inch thickness. Chill for 30 minutes and cut out more rounds. Place them on a parchment lined cookie sheet.
9. Use a pastry brush to brush the entire surface of each shortbread round with egg wash. Using a spoon or piping bag, place about 1 scant tablespoon of filling in the center of each round. Don't overfill hamentashen, or filling will ooze out when you bake them.
10. Hamentashen can be folded or pinched closed. Try a few of each kind to see which way you like better. I found an excellent tutorial on [www.myjewishlearning.com](http://www.myjewishlearning.com).

## THE FOLDING METHOD



## THE PINCHING METHOD



[www.myjewishlearning.com](http://www.myjewishlearning.com)

11. Form hamentashen using the pinching or folding method, as pictured above.
12. Bake 2 trays of hamentashen at once. Bake for 8 minutes. Switch position of trays and bake for a further 8-9 minutes, until golden brown. Cool hamentashen on baking sheets set upon cooling racks.
13. Dip top of each hamentashen in honey and then into chopped pecans.
14. Store cooled hamentashen in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.