

Salt and Serenity

Cinnamon Bun Hamentashen with Almond Shortbread Dough

Makes about 30 hamentashen

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

Almond Shortbread Dough:

1 cup (2 sticks) cold butter
1 scant cup icing sugar
¼ cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs beaten
3¼ cups all-purpose flour
½ cup almond flour (I like Bob's Redmill brand)
1 teaspoon fine sea salt

Filling:

¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 cup raisins
1 cup toasted chopped pecans or almonds
½ cup unsalted butter, softened

½ cup room temperature water

Icing:

2 cups icing sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ cup water, or as needed
1 teaspoon lemon juice
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

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 overmixing 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 1/4 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. To make the filling, combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and use your fingers to combine. Set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F.
5. Use a 3 inch cutter to cut the dough into circles. Put circles on baking sheets.
6. Brush the edge of the circles with cool water. Place a teaspoon of the filling into the center of each circle. I found it helps to pre-form the filling into a rough triangular shape before placing it on the dough. Fold up three sides of the dough against the filling, forming a triangular shape. Pinch the edges and corners gently so that the shape holds together. Repeat with remaining filling and dough. Bake, on the middle rack, for about 16-18 minutes until golden brown.
7. Set hamentashen on a wire rack to cool, placing a sheet of parchment or waxed paper beneath to catch any drips when applying the icing. Prepare icing by blending all ingredients together in a medium bowl to make a soft pourable glaze. When hamentashen are cool, transfer icing to a disposable piping bag, and pipe icing decoratively on top of the hamentashen. Or, you can just use a fork to drizzle the icing over the pastries.
8. Allow the icing to set, then store hamentashen in an airtight container, for up to a week.