

Salt and Serenity

Wedding Cake Cookies

Makes six 3-tier wedding cake cookies. Each “cake” consists of 3 sandwich cookies, small, medium, and large. You will need round cookie cutters measuring 1 ¾ inches, 2½ inches and 3 inches. The top of the cake is created using [this embossing stamp](#).

Cookie Dough:

227 grams (1 cup) unsalted butter, room temperature

213 grams (1 cup, packed) golden brown sugar

1 large egg

1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract

346 grams (2⅔ cups) all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt

1 cup of granulated sugar for rolling cookie dough

Blackberry Buttercream:

71 grams egg whites (from about 2-3 large eggs)

71 grams (⅓ cup plus 1 Tablespoon) sugar

227 grams (1 cup) unsalted butter, cut into 1 inch chunks, left to soften at room temperature for about 30 minutes

¼ teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt

½ teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract

16 grams (¾ cup) [freeze-dried blackberries](#) ground to a powder in spice grinder or food processor

Assembly:

½ cup blackberry jam

Royal Icing (to glue cookies together):

227 grams (2 cups) powdered sugar

2 Tablespoons meringue powder

¼ cup warm water

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Decorations:

[Sugar pearls](#) and/or [royal icing flowers](#)

1. With an electric mixer, or in the bowl of a stand mixer, beat together butter and brown sugar for 2 minutes, scraping down sides of the sides of the bowl one- or two-times during mixing.
2. Beat in egg and vanilla. Sift flour, baking powder and salt and stir to blend well.
3. Add dry ingredients to mixer and mix just until dry ingredients are incorporated. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface and knead gently 1 minute. Place dough into a small mixing bowl and set aside.
4. Adjust the oven racks to the upper and lower middle positions and heat the oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Using a small cookie scoop or Tablespoon measure, scoop out 30 grams (about 1 Tablespoon) of dough. Roll dough between your hands to form a round ball. Roll ball in bowl of granulated sugar, to coat it. Set sugared ball on baking sheet and use cookie press to flatten it. Press just until you have a border of about ¼ inch on all sides of the

- press. Gently peel cookie off the press and lay back down on baking sheet. Use a 1³/₄ inch round cookie cutter to tidy up the jagged edges of your circle, if desired. Continue until you have 6 embossed cookies.
6. Divide the remaining dough into 2 portions. Shape each into a ball, flattening slightly into a disc. Roll each disc, between two sheets of parchment paper, to a 1/4 inch thick. Leaving the dough sandwiched between the parchment layers, stack on a baking sheet and freeze until firm, 15-20 minutes.
 7. Remove dough sheets from the freezer and place on work surface. Peel off top parchment sheet and gently lay it back in place. Flip the dough over; peel off and discard second parchment layer.
 8. Cut out 6 circles with the 1³/₄-inch cookie cutter. These will be the bottom half of the embossed cookie sandwich that is the top layer of the cake. Arrange on prepared baking sheet with the 6 embossed cookies, 1/2 inch apart.
 9. Use the 2¹/₂-inch cookie cutter to cut 12 circles. Arrange on parchment lined cookie sheet. Use the 3-inch cookie cutter to cut 12 more circles. Arrange on baking sheets. You will probably need to reroll dough scraps and chill once to have enough cookies.
 10. Bake until cookies are golden, 9 to 11 minutes. Let cookies cool on sheets for 1 min, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
 11. While cookies are cooling, make buttercream: Combine the egg whites, sugar, and salt together in the bowl of your stand mixer. Set the bowl over a pan of water and turn the heat on medium low. You don't need the water to even simmer, you just want it hot enough to steam, since steam is what heats the whites.
 12. Whisk frequently to prevent an egg white omelet forming on the sides, but continual mixing isn't necessary. Aim to get the mixture to at least a 145°F for food safety reasons but reaching 150°F would make for a nice margin of error. If your egg whites are at room temperature, this won't take very long, maybe just a few minutes. Whites straight from the fridge will take longer.
 13. When the mixture is sufficiently hot, remove from the heat and use the whisk attachment to whip on medium high speed until the mixture has doubled in volume and turned snowy white. Continue whipping until the meringue is cool. Use your hands to feel the bowl itself, rather than simply testing the temperature of the meringue. You want it to feel perfectly cool to the touch with no trace of warmth.
 14. Replace whisk attachment with paddle attachment. Turn the mixer down to medium-low and begin adding in the butter, one chunk at a time. If you didn't let your meringue cool enough, this is when you'll really regret it. By the time you've added all the butter, you may need to scrape down the bowl to fully incorporate any butter or meringue that's stuck at the sides. At one point it will look like the buttercream has curdled, but just keep beating and it will come together.
 15. Add salt, vanilla extract or paste and freeze-dried blackberry powder and continue mixing until blended. Transfer buttercream to a disposable piping bag fitted with a 1/4 inch round tip.
 16. Pipe a border of buttercream around the edge of the bottom half of all the cookies. Fill in the center of the border with a dollop of blackberry jam. Top each filled cookie with its matching half. Chill sandwich cookies until buttercream is firm.
 17. While cookies are chilling, make royal icing: In the bowl of an electric mixer combine powdered sugar and meringue powder.

18. Add the water and extract slowly. Beat at medium-high speed until stiff peaks form (about 5-7 minutes). Transfer royal icing to disposable piping bag and cut a very small hole in the bag.
19. Assemble cookies: Dab a small amount of royal icing on the top of the large and medium sandwich cookies. Stack cookies into wedding cake towers. Use royal icing to glue on sugar pearls or royal icing flowers.
20. Store assembled cakes in fridge for up to 3 days.