

Recipes:

1. Christmas Cookies I 2023

Two Color Mini Crescents

About **24** cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups** of all-purpose flour
- ½ cup** of confectioners' sugar
- ½ TSP** of baking powder
- Lemon zest from ½ lemon
- 1 stick (4 OZ)** of butter - soft (room temperature)
- 1** large egg
- 1 TSP** of vanilla extract
- 1 TBSP** of cocoa

Optional coating:

- ½ cup** of confectioners' sugar
- 1 bag** (about 1 TBSP) of vanilla sugar *

* Can be purchased on Amazon.com:

https://www.amazon.com/Dr-Oetker-Vanilla-Sugar-32-Ounce/dp/B01M1HHH68/ref=sr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=vanilla+sugar&qid=1605067090&sr=8-5

Usually sold in a packaging of 5 individual bags, and costs about \$5. Alternatively, you can make your own in the comfort of your own home:

1. Place ½ cup of granulated sugar and pour over about 2 TSP of vanilla extract.
2. Do not cover and let fully dry overnight.
3. When dry, place into a small blender and process until smooth with little crystals.

Tools:

- Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups
- Kitchen Mixer with Flat Beater Attachment or Hand Mixer
- Whisk
- Small Hand Grater or Zester
- Bowl Scraper or Silicone Spatula
- Rolling Pin
- Kitchen knife
- 2 Medium Size Baking Sheets with Parchment Paper or Silicone Mat

Directions:

1. Vanilla dough:

1.1. Place into a kitchen mixer with a flat beater attachment:

1 ½ cups of all-purpose flour
½ cup of confectioners' sugar
½ TSP of baking powder
Lemon zest from ½ lemon

Shortly stir together using a hand whisk until nicely combined (about 20 seconds).

1.2. Add:

1 stick of butter - soft
1 large egg
1 TSP of vanilla extract

Process at a slow speed until all ingredients are partially combined.

1.3. Then increase the speed to medium-high and process until the dough is formed (about 2 - 3 minutes).

1.4. Remove about half of the dough from the mixing bowl of the kitchen mixer and place it on the working surface for upcoming steps.

2. Cocoa dough:

2.1. Add into the kitchen mixer with the remaining dough:

1 TBSP of cocoa

Process until thoroughly combined and incorporated (about 1 – 2 minutes).

2.2. Remove the cocoa dough from the mixing bowl of the kitchen mixer and place it on the working surface for upcoming steps.

3. Resting time:

3.1. Roll both doughs individually into 1" long thick cylinders (optionally divide into more cylinders to more easily handle) and wrap them with plastic wrap.

- 3.2. Let cool in the refrigerator until partially, but not totally, hardened (about 30 minutes).

Important: If the dough in the refrigerator fully hardens (if left for a longer time, for example, overnight), remove from the refrigerator about a half hour to an hour before further processing.

4. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

5. Sugar coating:

- 5.1. Place into a medium mixing bowl:

½ cup of confectioners' sugar

1 bag of vanilla sugar

Thoroughly stir together with a whisk until nicely combined.

6. Form the crescents:

Notes:

- Work one-by-one on a non-floured surface.
- It is essential to work fast with the dough.
- If it becomes hard to work with the dough after a while (it will become too soft to form the crescents), place it back in the refrigerator for further processing to let it cool and harden.

- 6.1. Cut about 1/8" thick slices of the cylinders from both the colored doughs and then roll each to about 3" long strings (approximately 5/8" thick).
- 6.2. Wind the two strings together (create a spiral shape).
- 6.3. Roll the spiral on the working surface by hand to gently connect both doughs.
- 6.4. Bend into a horseshoe shape and place on a baking sheet.

Important:

Ensure they are not touching each other (you can have up to 24 on each baking sheet).

- 6.5. Repeat with all remaining.

7. Bake:

- 7.1. Bake in a preheated oven until fully baked – the surface of the vanilla part of the crescents will get a nice, slightly more golden color (about 10 - 12 minutes).

7.2. Rotate the baking sheets in the middle of baking.

Note:

Right after baking, the crescents have a soft texture, which can confuse some people and make them think it is a sign of underbaking; this is why some people tend to extend the baking time and overbake crescents.

7.3. Let partially cool on the baking sheet before further manipulation (for about 3 minutes).

8. Optionally coat the crescents:

Notes:

- It is up to you to coat some or none of the crescents (I usually do about half and half).
- You will have enough sugar coating to coat all crescents.

8.1. Working one by one, coat each crescent in sugar coating while still warm.

Tip:

Manipulate each crescent gently (you can use an icing spatula for easy manipulation).

8.2. Place the coated crescent on a cooling rack.

8.3. When all crescents are coated, place the remaining sugar mixture into a small sieve and gently sugar all crescents.

Tips:

- If parts of the ingredients stick to the side of the kitchen mixer during processing, stop the mixer and use a spatula to mix it back in. Then, continue processing.
- You can leave the dough to rest in the refrigerator for (up to 3 days) - Remove and leave at room temperature for about 1 hour before processing.

Linz Tarts

About 25 - 30 cookie sandwiches

Ingredients:

3 cups of all-purpose flour + **Extra flour** for flouring surface

2 cups of confectioners' sugar

½ TSP of baking powder

Lemon zest from one lemon

2 ½ sticks (10 OZ) of butter - soft (room temperature)

2 large eggs

1 TSP of Vanilla Extract

Filling:

About **1 cup** of strawberry preserve -- adjust if needed.

Optional Final Touch:

Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar

Tools:

Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups

Kitchen Mixer with Flat Beater Attachment or Hand Mixer

Whisk

Small Hand Grater or Zester

Plastic Wrap

Bowl Scraper or Silicone Spatula

Rolling Pin

3" Round Cookie Cutter (or any other cookie cutters you like for example Christmas Cookie Cutters)

Icing Spatula

4 Medium Size Baking Sheets with Parchment Paper or Silicone Mat

Directions:

1. Dough:

1.1. Place into a kitchen mixer with a flat beater attachment:

3 cups of flour
2 cups of confectioners' sugar
½ TSP of baking powder
Lemon zest from one lemon

Shortly stir together using a hand whisk until nicely combined (about 1 minute).

1.2. Add:

2 ½ sticks of butter - soft
2 large eggs
1 TSP of Vanilla Extract

Process on slow speed until all ingredients are partially combined.

1.3. Then increase the speed to medium-high and process until the dough is formed (about 2 - 3 minutes).

Note: The cookie dough will be sticky after processing. It will harden during the following resting time in the fridge.

2. Resting time:

2.1. Wrap the dough with plastic wrap (scoop it on the wrap and then cover with the wrap). If you want to work with the dough soon, form it into a disk, not into a roll shape).

2.2. Let cool in the refrigerator until partially, but not totally, hardened (about 1 hour).

Important: If the dough in the refrigerator fully hardens (if left for a longer time, for example, overnight), remove from the refrigerator about an hour before cookie cutting.

3. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

4. Cut the cookies:

4.1. Place the dough on a floured surface and lightly flour the top of the dough.

- 4.2. Using a rolling pin, flatten the dough into about 1/8" – ¼" thickness (based on your preference). If the dough starts sticking, add flour. Note that the dough needs to always sit on a floured surface during flattening to be able to separate the cut cookies that are ready to bake.
- 4.3. Cut the cookie using the cookie cutter of your choice. If you are using multiple different options of cookie cutters, make sure you cut even numbers of each shape -- to be able to later create a "sandwich".
- 4.4. Gently place cookies on the baking sheet with parchment paper using an icing spatula. Make sure they are not touching each other (about 12 - 15 on each baking sheet).
- 4.5. With the leftovers from the cut dough: quickly form the dough from them (with your hands) and roll them again with a rolling pin to cut more cookies.

Important:

- It is important to work fast with the dough.
- If it becomes hard to work with the dough after a while (the dough will start melting during cookie cutting), place on a plate and cool for a while before proceeding.
- Optionally, you can keep placing scraps from the dough into the fridge before further processing to prevent the dough from softening.

5. Bake:

- 5.1. Bake in a preheated oven until fully baked. The surface turns from a doughy texture to solid but slightly fluffy (about 8 - 10 minutes). Rotate the baking sheets in the middle of baking.
 - If flattened unevenly (even just slightly), each cookie can have a slightly different baking time, so closely watch when you get close to the end of baking and remove each, one by one if necessary.
 - Right after baking, the cookies have a soft texture, which can make some people confused and think it is a sign of under baking; and is why some people tend to extend the baking time and overbake cookies. To make sure cookies are properly baked, watch the surface texture, and bake the cookies for about 7 minutes to reach the best results.
- 5.2. Let totally cool on the baking sheet before assembly (or using an icing spatula, move to the cooling rack).

6. Assemble the cookie sandwich:

- 6.1. Spread the preserve on one cookie and cover with the other.

6.2. Place into the refrigerator for at least one hour before serving.

6.3. Optionally, sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

Tips:

- If parts of the ingredients stick to the side of the kitchen mixer during processing, stop the mixer, and use a spatula to mix it back in. Then, continue processing.
- You can leave the dough to rest in the refrigerator longer (up to 3 days) - Remove and leave at room temperature for about 1 hour before processing.

Disclaimer:

All steps in this recipe are just suggestions, and the author and/or publisher of this recipe is not responsible for the following:

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- any health risk related to the incorrect handling of food and/or not following USDA recommendations, such as but not limited to, following the minimum safe serving temperatures
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