

## 5. Ischel's Mini Cakes 2024

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### Ischel's Mini Cakes

About 20 cookie sandwiches

Ingredients:

Cookies:

**¾ cups** of almonds - whole (or walnuts)  
**1 ½ cups** of all-purpose flour + **Extra flour** for flouring surface  
**1 cup** of confectioners' sugar  
**½ TSP** of ground cinnamon  
**¼ TSP** of baking powder  
Lemon zest from one lemon  
**1 ½ sticks** (¾ cups) of butter - soft (room temperature)  
**1** large egg

Filling:

**1 cup** of almonds - whole (or walnuts)  
**½ cup** of confectioners' sugar  
**2 TBSP** of rum extract  
**1/3 cup** of preserve of your choice  
**1 stick** (¼ LB) of butter – room temperature

Final touch:

About **20 pcs** of peeled almonds – adjust if needed \*

Coating:

Chocolate coating recipe below

\* You can purchase already peeled almonds, or you can peel it yourself:

1. Fill a small pot with water and bring to a boil.
2. Place in unpeeled almonds and cook in boiling water for about 60 seconds.
3. Drain water from the almonds over a colander and then rinse with cold water.
4. Place on a kitchen towel and peel each one by one by squeezing the skin off of the almonds – it will go easily, and each almond will squeeze out of the skin very quickly.

Tools:

Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups

Food Processor

Kitchen Mixer with Whisk and Flat Beater Attachment or Hand Mixer

Whisk

Small Hand Grater or Zester

Plastic Wrap

Bowl Scraper or Silicone Spatula

Rolling Pin

2" Round Cookie Cutter (or glass)

Icing Spatula

3 Medium Size Baking Sheets with Parchment Paper or Silicone Mat

Optional: Pastry bag with pastry tips

Directions:

**1. Cookies:**

**1.1. Almond preparation:**

1.1.1. Place into a small food processor:

**¾ cups** of almonds

Process at high speed until the fine texture is reached - no larger chunks are present (about 2 minutes).

**1.2. Dough:**

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

Processed almonds from the previous step

**1 ½ cups** of all-purpose flour

**1 cup** of confectioners' sugar

**½ TSP** of ground cinnamon

**¼ TSP** of baking powder

Lemon zest from one lemon

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

1.2.2. Add:

**1 ½ sticks** of butter - soft

**1** large egg

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

- 1.2.3. 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.

### 1.3. Resting time:

- 1.3.1. Wrap the dough with plastic wrap (scoop it on the wrap and then cover it with the wrap).

**Tip:**

If you want to work with the dough soon, form it into a disk, not into a roll shape.

- 1.3.2. 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 it from the refrigerator about an hour before cookie cutting.

### 1.4. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

### 1.5. Cut the cookies:

**Notes:**

- Work one-by-one on a lightly floured surface. The dough needs to always sit on a floured surface during flattening to separate the cut cookies that are ready to bake.
- 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.
- Optionally, you can keep placing scraps from the dough into the fridge before further processing to prevent the dough from softening.

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

- 1.5.2. Using a rolling pin, flatten the dough to about 3/16" thickness.

1.5.3.

1.5.4. Cut the cookie using a round cookie cutter or glass.

1.5.5. Gently place cookies on the baking sheet with parchment paper.

**Important:**

Ensure they are not touching each other (about 15 on each baking sheet).

**Tip:**

Make manipulation of the vanilla bottoms easier by using an icing spatula.

1.5.6. 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.

**1.6. Bake:**

1.6.1. Bake in a preheated oven until fully baked. The surface turns from a doughy texture to a solid but slightly fluffy (about 12 minutes).

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

**Notes:**

- 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 underbaking; and is why some people tend to extend the baking time and overbake cookies. To ensure cookies are properly baked, watch the surface texture, and bake the cookies for at least 8 minutes to reach the best results.

1.6.3. Let it cool totally on the baking sheet before assembly (or using an icing spatula, move to the cooling rack).

**2. Filling:**

**2.1. Almond preparation:**

2.1.1. Place into a small food processor:

**1 cup** of almonds

Process quickly until the fine texture is reached - no larger chunks are present (about 2 minutes).

2.1.2. Place almonds into the kitchen mixer with a flat beater and add:

**½ cup** of confectioners' sugar  
**2 TBSP** of rum extract  
**1/3 cup** of preserve  
**1 stick** (¼ LB) of butter

And process until the pastry cream is formed.

2.1.3. Optionally place the filling into the pastry bag (for easier manipulation) or set it aside for later steps (by just spreading it with a spatula).

### 3. Assemble the cookie sandwich:

3.1. Pipe or spread part of the filling onto the cookie.

#### Notes:

- Pipe or spread it in the center, leaving about ¼ inch or more space around the edge.
- When covered and pressed with another cookie, the filling will be distributed closer to the edges.
- Ideally, the final filling layer (after pressing with another cookie) will be 1/4 inch thick.

3.2. Place into the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes before the next step.

### 4. Chocolate coating:

4.1. Prepare the recipe for chocolate coating (recipe below) and then dip the top part of each cookie.

4.2. Let the dipped cookies rest in the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes before serving.

#### Notes:

Refrigeration of the cookies is not necessary, but it is better to keep the chocolate coating hard (not melted).

#### 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.

## Chocolate Coating

Ingredients:

**¾ sticks** (6 TBSP) of butter – cut into a few thick slices

**1 cup** of chocolate chips \*Additional preparation steps:

**1 TBSP** of hot water (from a kettle or microwave)

\*The choice of chocolate chips is up to you. I prefer 60% dark chocolate.

Tools:

Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups

Double Broiler (medium sauce pan along with a medium mixing bowl)

Whisk

Silicone Spatula

Food Thermometer

Directions:

### 1. Melting:

- 1.1. Prepare a water bath by placing about 1" of water in a medium pot and cover it with a medium bowl (see section "How to prepare a water bath" [here](#)).
- 1.2. Bring the water to a light simmer on medium heat, then lower the heat to low, and place into the top of the water bath (the medium bowl):

**¾ sticks** of butter – cut into a few thick slices

**1 cup** of chocolate chips

**1 TBSP** of hot water

Stir with a whisk until about ½ of the chocolate melts and all ingredients are partially dissolved (about 2 minutes).

## 2. Cooling:

- 2.1. Remove the pot from the heat (leave the bowl in the pot with steaming water) and keep stirring until all chocolate fully melts and all ingredients are fully combined (about 2 - 4 minutes).
- 2.2. Then, let the mixture lightly cool with occasional stirring to reach a preferred working temperature, which is between 85 - 100°F (about 3 minutes).
- 2.3. Then, use it to dip in your cookies.

## Bonus Recipe:

### Meringue Kisses

About 25 - 30 cookie

Ingredients:

**6** egg whites – room temperature

**2 cups + ¼ cup** of confectioners' sugar

Tools:

Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups

Kitchen Mixer with Whisk

Pastry bag with/without tip, 1 OZ Disher or Spoon

Medium Size Baking Sheet with Parchment Paper or Silicone Mat

Directions:

#### 1. Batter:

- 1.1. Place into your kitchen mixer bowl:

**6** egg whites – room temperature

**¼ cup** of confectioners' sugar

Whisk on medium speed to get more air into the egg whites and to make the egg whites foamy (about 2 - 3 minutes).

- 1.2. Add:

**2 cups** of confectioners' sugar (the rest of the total amount)

Increase the speed to high and whisk until done – stiff peaks are formed (about 4 - 10 minutes).

**Note:** If your egg whites were taken directly from the fridge (they aren't room temperature), this step can take 20 minutes or even significantly longer!

## 2. Create cookies:

2.1. Using a pastry bag with or without tips, 1 OZ disher or a set of spoons, place the batter portion on the baking sheets with the parchment paper. Leave at least 2" space between each.

**Note:** With 1 OZ disher, you should be able to create 25 – 30 cookies.

## 3. Air drying:

3.1. Let air dry (at room temperature) to allow for crust creation for about 1 - 2 hours.

## 4. Baking:

4.1. Set oven to preheat to 250° F.

4.2. Bake in a preheated oven until fully baked – the top has a lightly beige color and looks crunchy (about 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours).

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### Disclaimer:

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

- outcome of preparation
- 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
- provide health and dietary advice to readers
- safety during preparation, including incorrect handling of equipment and the equipment's suitability for food preparation, improper cooking techniques, sourcing of ingredients, and anything related to the preparation and consumption of the products of this recipe

All readers are responsible for evaluating if the recipe and its' ingredients and steps fit with their dietary restrictions and can adjust accordingly.