



Italian Christmas Cookies



Italian Christmas Cookies

Introduction

Christmas in Italy is a time of celebration, family gatherings, and delicious culinary traditions. One of the highlights of the festive season is the array of Christmas cookies that fill tables and homes across the country. These cookies not only taste delightful but also carry the essence of Italian culture and festive spirit. In this article, we will explore a simple yet scrumptious recipe for Italian Christmas cookies that are perfect for sharing with loved ones.

Detailed Ingredients with measures

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract

For the Icing:

2 cups powdered sugar
3 tablespoons milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
Assorted holiday sprinkles

Prep Time

15 minutes

Cook Time, Total Time, Yield

Cook Time: 12 minutes

Total Time: 27 minutes

Yield: 24 cookies

To create these delightful Italian Christmas cookies, begin by preheating the oven to 350°F (175°C) and lining a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Next, cut in the softened butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

After that, add the eggs, along with the vanilla and almond extracts. Mix until a dough forms, and then roll the dough into 1-inch balls, placing them on the prepared baking sheet. Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes or until the bottoms are lightly golden. Once baked, allow them to cool.

For the icing, whisk together the powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla extract until smooth. Once the cookies are cool, dip the tops into the icing and immediately sprinkle with assorted holiday sprinkles. Let the cookies sit until the icing is set before serving or storing in an airtight container.

These delightful Italian Christmas cookies not only bring joy to your festive table but are also a fun activity to enjoy with family and friends during the holiday season.

See also [Creamy Zucchini Soup Recipe for Comforting Meals](#)



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Detailed Directions and Instructions

Step 1: Preheat the Oven

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper to prevent the cookies from sticking.

Step 2: Combine Dry Ingredients

In a large mixing bowl, combine 2 1/2 cups of all-purpose flour, 1/2 cup of sugar, 1 tablespoon of baking powder, and 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Mix well to evenly distribute the dry ingredients.

Step 3: Cut in the Butter

Add 1/2 cup of softened unsalted butter to the bowl. Use a pastry cutter or your fingers to cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Step 4: Add Wet Ingredients

Crack in 3 large eggs. Add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract and 1 teaspoon of almond extract. Mix everything together until a soft dough forms.

Step 5: Shape the Cookies

Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and place them spaced apart on the prepared baking sheet.

Step 6: Bake the Cookies

Bake in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the bottoms of the cookies are lightly golden. After baking, allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheet.

Step 7: Prepare the Icing

In a medium bowl, whisk together 2 cups of powdered sugar, 3 tablespoons of milk, and 1/2 teaspoon of vanilla extract until smooth and free of lumps.

Step 8: Ice the Cookies

Once the cookies are completely cooled, dip the tops into the icing. Immediately sprinkle with assorted holiday sprinkles before the icing sets.

Step 9: Let the Icing Set

Allow the iced cookies to sit until the icing is fully set before serving or storing.

Notes

Storage

Store the iced cookies in an airtight container at room temperature to keep them fresh.

Experimenting with Flavors

Feel free to substitute the almond extract with other extracts like orange or lemon for different flavors.

See also [Best Ever Chicken and Rice Casserole Recipe](#)

Sprinkles Variety

Use a variety of holiday-themed sprinkles to enhance the festive look of

the cookies.

Nutrition Information

Each cookie contains approximately 150 calories, with the total yield being about 24 cookies.



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Cook techniques

Measuring Ingredients

When baking, it's essential to accurately measure your ingredients for the best results. Use dry measuring cups for flour and sugar, and liquid measuring cups for milk. Level off dry ingredients with a straight edge for precision.

Cutting in Butter

To achieve a crumbly texture in your dough, cut the softened butter into the dry ingredients using a pastry cutter or your fingers until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. This process helps to incorporate air and create a light cookie.

Mixing Dough

When adding liquid ingredients to the dry mixture, combine gently until just mixed. Avoid overmixing, which can lead to dense cookies.

Rolling Dough

Roll the dough into even 1-inch balls to ensure uniform baking. This ensures that all cookies bake at the same rate, resulting in a consistent texture.

Baking Time

Keep a close eye on the cookies while baking. Look for a lightly golden bottom as a sign they are ready. Overbaking can lead to dry cookies.

Cooling Cookies

Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack. This step prevents them from breaking and helps them set properly.

Icing Technique

For a smooth icing finish, whisk together powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla until no lumps remain. Dip only the tops of the cooled cookies into the icing for an even coating.

Decorating with Sprinkles

Sprinkle immediately after icing to ensure the sprinkles adhere well. Allow the icing to set completely before storing.

FAQ

Can I substitute almond extract with something else?

Yes, you can use additional vanilla extract or omit it completely if you prefer. However, almond extract adds a distinct flavor typical in Italian cookies.

How should I store the cookies?

Store the iced cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to one week.

See also [Strawberry Cheesecake](#)

Can I freeze the cookies?

Yes, you can freeze uniced cookies. Place them in a single layer on a baking sheet, freeze until solid, and then transfer to an airtight container or freezer bag. Icing can be added after thawing.

What other decorations can I use?

In addition to holiday sprinkles, you can use edible glitter, colored sugar, or chocolate drizzle to decorate your cookies.

Can I make the dough in advance?

Yes, you can prepare the dough ahead of time and refrigerate it for up to 3 days. Roll the dough into balls just before baking for fresh cookies.



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Conclusion

Italian Christmas cookies are a delightful treat that beautifully captures the essence of the holiday season. Their soft texture and sweet icing, adorned with colorful sprinkles, make them not only delicious but also visually appealing. Perfect for sharing with family and friends, these cookies bring joy and warmth to any festive gathering. Enjoy making, decorating, and savoring them as a cherished holiday tradition.

Almond Biscotti

Enhance your cookie platter with crunchy almond biscotti. These twice-baked cookies are perfect for dipping into coffee or tea.

Ricciarelli

Try ricciarelli, soft almond cookies that are naturally gluten-free. Their chewy texture and subtle sweetness make them a festive favorite.

Struffoli

Incorporate struffoli, tiny fried dough balls coated in honey and sprinkles. They offer a delightful crunch and are a traditional holiday treat in Italy.

Panforte

Add panforte, a spiced fruit and nut cake, to your holiday spread. Its rich flavors and chewy texture are a delicious contrast to traditional cookies.

Canestrelli

Consider canestrelli, crumbly flower-shaped cookies dusted with

powdered sugar. Their unique texture and buttery flavor make them a lovely addition.

Pizzelle

Include pizzelle, traditional Italian waffle cookies that can be flavored with anise or vanilla. Their crispiness and intricate designs are sure to impress.



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