

Nutcracker Sweets

Makes about 120 cookies



Ingredients

114 g butter (1 cup), melted
314 g brown sugar
102 g granulated sugar
2 large beaten eggs
4 teaspoons almond flavoring
346 g Cookie Base

103 g chopped almonds (divided into 56g/47g portions)
94 g of oatmeal
1/4 teaspoon table salt
170 g dried cherries (one 6 oz pkg of Trader Joes Dark Sweet Cherries)
170 g semi-sweet chocolate chips (about a half a bag)

Directions

Melt butter, add brown and granulated sugar, and mix until butter is incorporated and there are no lumps remaining. Mix in beaten eggs and almond flavoring.



Chop cherries into raisin (or dried blueberry) size pieces, set aside.



In separate bowl, stir the Cookie Base, 56 g of the chopped almonds, (saving the remainder for topping the cookies), oatmeal, and salt together. Add the dry ingredients to the wet, and mix until incorporated. It will initially look very wet, but don't worry, it will solidify when cooled. Stir in the chopped cherries.

Cover bowl and refrigerate for at least an hour (longer is fine) and roll dough into **11-gram balls** (the large side of a melon baller works great!). This will ensure they fit in the gift box. Cover and freeze balls for at least 1 hour. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees. and place **frozen** cookies on parchment lined sheet pan, leaving about 1.5-2" between cookies. Bake for 11 minutes. Let cool completely on parchment.



Place rack over a sheet pan or a piece of parchment (to catch chocolate drips). Place cookies on rack (with gloved hand or spatula). Melt chocolate in double boiler, or microwave, and place in zip lock bag (or frosting bag with small round tip). If using zip lock bag, cut a **tiny** corner off the bag (as small as you can). Drizzle melted chocolate over the cookies placing 4-5 thin swipes of chocolate over each cookie, letting chocolate drip between cookies. Immediately sprinkle chopped almonds on the top center of the cookies (use about 1/4 tsp per 4 cookies). Let chocolate harden (about 1 hr. at room temp or about 10 min in refrigerator).

Note:

Baking the dough from frozen controls the spread (so they fit in the box). Before removing drizzled cookies from rack, knock off any extra strands of chocolate (a spatula or gloved hand works well), save these for a tasty bite! These cookies freeze well – baked and unbaked. Also, this recipe is delicious with the dried blueberries we use for the Energy Cookie (with or without the toppings!)

Enjoy!