

Baker #9 - Ginger Petersen

Pistachio Drop Cookies

Story:

In younger years my mother made a fussier version of these cookies with Brazil nuts, and I would try to sneak a naked cookie or 2 as they were cooling before they got their powdered sugar bath. I came across this more modern recipe a couple of years ago and was immediately taken with how similar they were to the cookies my mom made all those years ago. A little less sweet than the original version, but still soft and crumbly with the occasional pistachio piece, they're a wonderful two-bite reminder of the holiday. And only one bowl and 30 minutes of dough chilling time needed makes this a quick recipe.

Recipe:

Ingredients for approximately 36 cookies

1 cup (130g) unshelled pistachios (salted or unsalted)

1 cup (2 sticks; 230g) butter, softened to room temp

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90g) powdered sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract or paste

1 teaspoon almond extract

2 and $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (281g) all-purpose flour

Optional: 1-3 drops green food coloring

Optional icing:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (4 tablespoons; 60g) butter

1 cup (120g) powdered sugar

2 tablespoons (30ml) milk or water

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla extract or paste

Directions

1. Pulse pistachios in a food processor or place in a zip top bag and bash with a rolling pin until small crumbs form. You need $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of very finely chopped pistachios. Set aside.
2. Using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter for 1 minute on medium speed until completely smooth and creamy. Add the powdered sugar, vanilla and almond extracts, then beat on medium-high speed until combined. Add the flour, pistachio crumbs, and food coloring (if using) and beat again on medium-high

speed until combined. The dough may not come together at first but keep mixing. The cookie dough will be thick.

3. Cover the dough tightly and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes and up to 3 days. If chilling the dough for over 2 hours let the cookie dough sit at room temp for at least 30-60 minutes before rolling into balls.
4. Time saving tip: Prepare the icing below while the cookie dough chills, while the cookies are baking, or while the dough is coming up to room temp on the counter after being in the fridge overnight.
5. Preheat the oven to 350F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment or silicone baking mats and set aside.
6. Roll the cookie dough into balls, about 1 tablespoon of dough each, place the balls 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. If the cookie dough seems too crumbly, keep rolling and working it with your hands. The warmth of your hands will help bring it together.
7. Bake the cookies until golden brown on the bottom and edges, about 13-14 minutes. Watch closely so they don't over-brown.
8. Let the cookies cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheets, then transfer them to a wire rack to finish cooling. If you are going to ice them make sure they are cool to the touch before dipping in icing.
9. Optional brown butter icing: Slice the butter into pieces and place in a skillet. Melt over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Once melted, the butter will begin to foam; keep stirring occasionally. After 5-6 minutes the butter will begin to brown and you'll notice brown specks begin to form and a nutty aroma. Once browned, remove from heat immediately and allow to cool for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes whisk in the rest of the icing ingredients until smooth. Add more powdered sugar for a thicker texture if desired. Likewise, you can add more milk or water to thin it out if needed.
10. Dip your cooled cookies into icing, or you can drizzle the icing over the top with a spoon. If coated lightly the icing will set after 1-2 hours. Cover the cookies tightly and store at room temp or in the fridge up to a week. Cookies without icing can also sit at room temp up to a week. Unbaked dough or baked and un-iced cookies can be frozen up to 3 months.