

Shortbread Cookies

<u>Ingredient</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Instruction</u>
salted butter	1 cup = 8 oz.	softened
unsalted butter	½ cup = 4 oz.	softened
white sugar	¾ cup = 6 oz.	
Choose one of these flavor profiles:		
- fresh rosemary	1 scant TBLSP	finely chopped
- citrus		use a microplaner
orange zest	2 tsp	
lemon zest	3 tsp	
lime zest	1 tsp	
- chai spice		
ground cinnamon	4 TBLSP	
ground cardamom	2 TBLSP	
ground ginger	1 ½ TBLSP	
ground nutmeg	2 tsp	
ground cloves	½ tsp	
ground black pepper	½ tsp	
- almond vanilla		
almond extract	½ tsp	
vanilla extract	1 tsp	
all-purpose flour	3 cups = 14 oz.	
If using cookie molds:		
powdered sugar	½ cup or so	
cheesecloth	6 sq. in.	

- In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter, sugar, and flavor profile ingredients together until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes.
- Mix in the flour a little at a time until well mixed and solid enough to knead.
- Knead the dough in the bowl by folding it in half and pressing down, then rotating ninety degrees and repeating until the dough feels elastic and can hold its shape in a ball.
- Wrap the dough ball in plastic wrap, put it back in the bowl, and refrigerate at least two hours. Put the wooden cookie mold into the freezer.
- When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Using a cookie mold: (if not, then skip down to Not using a cookie mold.)

- Spread a piece of parchment paper out on the countertop, the size of your cookie sheet.
- The cheesecloth will be your cookie mold duster. Put the cheesecloth into a shallow dish so the powdered sugar doesn't go everywhere, and place a large handful of powdered sugar into the middle of the cheesecloth.

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- Gather up the edges of the cheesecloth and tap it across the surface of the cookie mold to generously dust the entire cavity with a good dose of powdered sugar. This keeps the dough from sticking.
- Use a pastry scraper or a knife to cut a quarter inch slice of cookie dough. Press it into the cookie mold. Push the sides toward the middle to define the perimeter shape. Use the pastry scraper or knife to cut away excess dough from the top. You want the dough to be only slightly higher than the edge of the mold cavity.
- Holding your hand at the top of the mold, with the dough-filled cavity facing down, slam the bottom edge of the mold against the parchment paper on the countertop to release the cookie. The angle is about twenty degrees. You may need two or three slams. OR press the pastry scraper against the dough in the mold to pull it out.
- When you have enough cookies to fill the cookie sheet, slide the parchment paper onto the cookie sheet.

Not using a cookie mold:

- Roll out the chilled dough between two sheets of parchment paper to a one quarter thickness.
- Cut shapes using cookie cutters or use a pastry scraper or pizza cutter to slice the dough into rectangle shapes. If choosing rectangle shapes, gently poke a fork into the tops to make decorative indentations.

Continue:

- The cookies should not touch each other on the cookie sheet, but they need no expansion room.
- Bake 11 minutes at 350 deg F. They don't need to brown.
- Put remaining dough back into the refrigerator while the cookies are baking.
- Leave the cookies on the cookie sheet for five minutes before removing to racks to cool completely.
- Store in airtight containers after the cookies are completely cooled.

NOTES: Julia suggested adding rosemary to the shortbread. Our cookie mold was hand carved by Gene Wilson in Illinois. He retired from carving in 2020, but his nephew continues the tradition. www.CookieMold.com

Recipe makes about 28 cookies.