



ANSON MILLS

Spritzgebäck (Piped Butter Cookies)

Yield

About 4 dozen 2-inch cookies

Time

About 45 minutes active time, plus at least 4 hours or up overnight to chill the piped cookies, and about 20 minutes to bake

Baking Remarks

For best results, pipe the cookies out onto silicone baking mats and refrigerate them for 4 hours or up to overnight before baking. A preheated pizza stone combats oven spread and distributes heat for richly colored and evenly browned cookie bottoms.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale, two baking sheets, two silicone baking mats (preferably) or parchment paper, a fine-mesh sieve, a large bowl (or two if using a hand mixer), a paring knife, a hand mixer or a stand mixer with the flat-beater attachment, a rubber spatula, a kitchen towel (if using a stand mixer), a large pastry bag, a large star tip, a pizza stone, and two wire racks.

Ingredients

10 ounces Anson Mills French Mediterranean White Bread Flour

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

2 large eggs

8 ounces unsalted European-style butter, cool room temperature

1 plump, fragrant vanilla bean (preferably Bourbon)

6 ounces confectioners' sugar, sifted

Directions

1. Line 2 baking sheets with silicone baking mats (preferably) or with parchment paper. Sift the flour and salt through a fine-mesh sieve into a large bowl and set aside. In a small bowl, whisk the eggs and measure out 3.5 ounces; discard the remainder.
2. Put the butter in a large bowl if using a hand mixer or in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the flat-beater attachment. Using the tip of a paring knife, split each vanilla bean in half lengthwise, scrape out the seeds from each pod half with the knife blade, and drop the seeds into the butter. Beat the butter on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes, scraping down the bowl with a rubber spatula midway through. With the mixer running on low speed, stream in the sugar. Increase the speed to medium and continue to beat until the mixture is light and aerated, about 3 minutes, pausing once to scrape down the bowl. With the mixer running on low speed, drizzle in the egg and beat until well combined. With the mixer

continuing to run on low speed, add the flour in a slow, steady stream and mix until the dough just begins to come together. If using a hand mixer, fill a slightly larger bowl with a few inches of warm water and lower the bowl containing the dough into the water; if using a stand mixer, soak a kitchen towel with very warm water, wring it out, and wrap it around the mixer bowl. Beat on low speed just until the dough becomes soft and pipeable, about 10 seconds. Knock the dough off the beaters or flat-beater.

3. Fit a large pastry bag fitted with a large star tip. Holding the tip of the pastry bag at a 45-degree angle to the baking sheet, pipe 2-inch shells in rows, allowing about 1 inch between cookies. Refrigerate the baking sheets, uncovered, for at least 4 hours or up to overnight.

4. Adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position. Place a pizza stone on the rack and heat the oven to 350 degrees; allow the pizza stone to heat for at least 1 hour. Bake one baking sheet at a time on the pizza stone until the edges of the cookies are deep brown but the centers are straw-colored, 8 to 10 minutes, rotating the baking sheet halfway through. Let the cookies cool completely on the baking sheet on a wire rack. Store the cookies in an airtight container for up to 1 week. (If the cookies lose their crispness, they may be crisped in a 200-degree oven for 10 minutes.)