

Pansy Shortbread Cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ½ cups flour
- ½ cup corn starch
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 225g butter
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pansy flowers, your choice of colours
- Egg beaten with 1 teaspoon cold water glaze

METHOD:

1. Line 2 sheet pans with parchment paper. Combine flour, corn starch and salt in a medium size bowl and set aside.
2. Beat butter until fairly smooth. Don't beat till super light and creamy, with shortbread you don't want to introduce too much air into the batter. Add sugar and beat again until well incorporated, about 30 seconds.
3. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until all flour is incorporated.
4. Place a sheet of plastic wrap on a flat work area. Scrape dough onto plastic wrap and form into a ball. Fold plastic wrap over dough and flatten slightly into a disk. Refrigerate for about one hour.
5. Remove from refrigerator and allow to sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes to soften slightly. On a lightly floured surface, with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough to about ¼ inch thickness. Cut with round or fluted cutters, placing cookies on prepared pans as you cut them. Re-roll scraps of dough and cut out as many cookies as possible.

*** Use flour as needed to keep dough from sticking to counter and rolling pin but try to keep it as minimal as possible. Using a lot of flour will make dough tough. If dough gets too soft as you're rolling, just return it briefly to the refrigerator then proceed with rolling.

6. Place pans in freezer for 10 minutes or refrigerator for 20 minutes. Chilling the unbaked dough will keep your cookies from spreading out as they begin to bake.
7. Bake 165°C for 14-18 minutes (depending on size) or until cookies are beginning to turn light golden at the edges and on the bottom. Cool on cookie sheet for 2-3 minutes, then remove to cooling rack to cool completely. Leave oven on.
8. While cookies are baking, gently wash pansies in cool water and drain well. Place face down on a clean kitchen towel. Snip off stems as close to base of flower as possible. Just experiment with how close you can cut. Allow pansies to sit upside down for about 15 minutes, then flip over to finish drying completely.



9. To apply pansies to shortbread, place cookies on a clean, dry work surface. Brush top of one cookie with egg white wash. Place a prepared pansy on cookie. Brush pansy all over with egg wash. I like to hold pansy in place by gently pressing the centre of the flower with one finger while I paint the egg wash on.
10. Add more pansies, if desired, depending on size of flowers. Pansies will shrink a bit during baking so it's fine to cover most of the surface of the cookies.
11. Sprinkle cookie with either regular sugar for a smooth finish or sanding sugar for a sugary finish. Repeat with remaining cookies.
12. Return cookies to sheet pan when completed and bake for another 5 minutes, then transfer to cooling rack.