

Chocolate Mint Sandwich Cookies

Chocolate Cookies

Yield: 1 dozen sandwich cookies

1 ¾ cups	all-purpose white flour
1/3 cup	unsweetened Dutch-process cocoa powder, sifted after measuring
1 tsp	baking powder
2/3 cup	unsalted butter, softened
2 Tbsp	canola oil or other flavorless vegetable oil
¾ cup	granulated sugar
1	large egg
2 tsp	vanilla extract
Pinch of salt	

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder and baking powder and set aside.

In the large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat together the butter, oil and sugar at medium speed until the mixture is light and fluffy. Add the eggs, vanilla and salt and mix until well incorporated. Adjust the mixer speed to low and add the flour mixture until just combined.

Divide the dough in half and place each portion between 2 sheets of wax paper. Roll dough to an 1/8" thickness and refrigerate on a baking sheet for at least one hour and up to 24 hours (still between wax paper), until chilled and firm, but not too hard. Let dough warm up slightly before cutting.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Working with one portion of dough at a time, remove the wax paper from both sides of the dough and place on a lightly floured surface. Using a 2" fluted round cutter (or any cutter of your choice) cut the dough and place rounds on the prepared baking sheet. You can re-roll any leftover scraps, but chill again before cutting. Chill all of the cut cookies until firm again before baking.

Bake for 15-18 minutes or until set. Let cool on baking sheet for about 5 minutes and transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.

Mint Buttercream Filling

½ cup plus 2 Tbsp	non-hydrogenated solid vegetable shortening or unsalted butter, room temperature
¼ tsp	peppermint extract
¼ tsp	vanilla extract
2 cups plus 3 Tbsp	powdered sugar, sifted
¼ cup	egg whites, pasteurized

In the large bowl of a stand mixer, add the shortening, peppermint extract and vanilla extract and mix at medium speed until blended. Adjust the mixer speed to low and slowly add the powdered sugar, egg whites and the pinch of salt. Increase the speed to medium to fully incorporate the ingredients, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary.

Chocolate Ganache

½ cup	bittersweet or semisweet chocolate chips
3 Tbsp	heavy whipped cream

Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium low heat until slightly simmering (the edges start to bubble). Be careful not to boil the cream too long or it will scald. Remove the pan from the heat and add the chocolate chips, stirring until well incorporated. Let the chocolate mixture sit and cool until it becomes a spreadable consistency, about 30 minutes.

Assembling the cookies

Pair the cookies so that the sizes match as closely as possible. Using a pastry bag fitted with a small or round metal piping tip, pipe about a tablespoon of the mint buttercream onto the bottom cookie. Pipe using another pastry bag, or spread with an offset spatula, a thin layer of the chocolate ganache onto the other cookie. Sandwich the cookies together allowing the filling to ooze just a bit at the edges of the cookie. Let set for about 10 minutes. These cookies can be kept at room temperature in a sealed container for a couple of hours, but refrigerate for longer storage. Make sure to bring back to room temperature before serving.