

Cardamom cookies

When I made these little biscuits for my third Secret Kitchen they were gobbled up greedily, despite the preceding four course dinner. I based the recipe on one from Tartine, our favourite café in San Francisco. (And everyone else's, judging by the 'line' running down the sidewalk every Saturday morning.) You can create your own recipe by substituting different nuts and spices, as you like.



Makes: 80-100 little cookies

255g plain flour, sifted

1tsp ground cardamom seeds (discard pods and ribs)

¼ tsp baking powder

150g unsalted butter, in chunks, at cool room temp

130g + 150g sugar

1 large egg + 1 large egg yolk

85g pistachios and/or blanched almonds, chopped

1 tbsp double cream

salt



1. Mix flour, cardamom and baking powder and set aside.
2. Beat butter and 130g sugar until light and creamy. Use a mixer if you have one, with paddle attachment.
3. Beat whole egg with pinch of salt and beat into butter mix.
4. On low speed, mix in flour and nuts.
5. Turn out dough onto work surface and swiftly shape into 2 logs, each about 1½ inches fat. If too sticky to work, chill dough first. Wrap logs in clingfilm and chill for 4 hours or overnight. (If you want, freeze one for another day. There is no need to defrost the log before proceeding.)
6. Heat oven to 170C (340F) and line 2 baking sheets.
7. Mix yolk with cream and paint carefully and evenly all over an (unwrapped) log. Add a good pinch of salt to the 150g sugar and sprinkle half of it all over the log, making sure all sides are coated.
8. With a sharp knife slice log into thin disks (3mm thick) and lay on baking sheets. They will expand a little in the oven, but not much.
9. Bake until edges are golden brown but centres still pale, c.15 mins. Transfer cookies to a rack to cool. Now egg-wash, sugar, slice and bake the second log. The cookies will keep at least a week in an airtight container.