

Checkerboard Cookies



Though they look complicated, these tender cookies are easy to make if you use a ruler. To ensure an even design, measure the strips of dough carefully. The dough can be made a day or two in advance and refrigerated, or frozen for several weeks.

Directions

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar until well blended, 1 to 2 minutes. Add vanilla extract, lemon extract, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, scraping down sides of bowl.
2. Turn dough out onto a clean work surface; it will be loose and crumbly. Knead dough by pushing small amounts away from you with the heel of your hand for 1 to 2 minutes. Divide dough in half. Sprinkle cocoa powder over one of the halves. Knead until cocoa has been fully incorporated.
3. Place each half of the kneaded dough between two sheets of plastic. Using a rolling pin, shape dough into two 7-inch squares, about 3/8 inch thick. Using a sharp knife and a ruler, slice each square into nine 3/4-inch-wide strips.
4. Whisk together the egg and 1 tablespoon water. Cover work surface with plastic wrap. Place three strips of dough on plastic, alternating white and chocolate strips. Brush tops and in between the strips with egg wash. Gently press strips together. Repeat, forming second and third layers, alternating colors to create a checkerboard effect. Wrap assembled log in plastic. Repeat process for second log, reversing color pattern. Refrigerate 30 minutes, or freeze 15 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. line a baking sheet with a Silpat baking mat or parchment paper. Slice each log into 1/4-inch-thick slices; place on baking sheet. Bake until done, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove baking sheet from oven, and let cookies cool 2 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely. Store cookies in an airtight container up to 2 days.

Ingredients

Makes about 4 dozen.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon pure lemon extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1 large egg