Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Usborne Christmas Baking for Children

Written by

Abigail Wheatley, Fiona Patchett

Published by

Usborne Publishing Ltd

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Ⓑ ✻ You can replace the butter with dairy-free spread.

Christmas cookies

These vanilla cookies are very simple to make. Cut them into Christmas shapes and decorate them with icing and sugar sprinkles.

Ingredients:

125g (4½oz) butter, softened

50g (2oz) icing sugar

1 medium egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

225g (8oz) plain flour

For the icing:

225g (8oz) icing sugar

2½ tablespoons warm water

You will also need:

some shaped cookie cutters

sugar sprinkles to decorate

❄ Makes around 35 cookies.



1 First, grease two baking trays. Then, put the butter in a large bowl. Beat it until it is smooth. Use a sieve to sift in the icing sugar. Beat again.



2 Break the egg into a small bowl. Add the vanilla extract and beat well with a fork.



3 Add the eggy mixture to the large bowl, a little at a time. Beat well between each addition.



4 Add the flour and stir the mixture until it starts to form a dough. Then, use your hands to mix the dough and squeeze it into a ball.



5 Wrap the dough in plastic foodwrap and put it in the fridge for 30 minutes. Heat the oven to 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4.

Dust the surface and a rolling pin with flour.



6 Unwrap the dough and put it onto a clean surface. Roll it out until it is just thinner than your little finger. Use the cutters to cut out lots of shapes.



7 Put the cookies onto the trays. Squeeze the scraps together and roll them out again. Cut out more shapes and put them on the trays.



8 Bake for 10-12 minutes until golden. Leave on the trays for 5 minutes, then put on a wire rack to cool.



9 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and mix it with the warm water. Spread onto each cookie with a blunt knife. Scatter sugar sprinkles on top.

These will keep for up to 5 days in an airtight container.



You could add different flavours to your cookies. Here are some suggestions. Leave out the vanilla and, at step 4, add:

- ❄ 1 teaspoon of ground cardamom or cinnamon
- ❄ 2 teaspoons of ground ginger or orange zest

Lemon cinnamon stars

These delicious and chewy biscuits are flavoured with cinnamon and lemon. They are popular in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, where they are known as 'Zimtsterne', meaning cinnamon stars.

Ingredients:

- 2 lemons
- 250g (9oz) icing sugar
- 400g (14oz) ground almonds
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 medium eggs

For the lemon icing:

- 125g (4½oz) icing sugar
- 1½ tablespoons lemon juice

You will also need:

a small star-shaped cutter

❄ Makes around 40 stars.



1 Heat the oven to 200°C, 400°F or gas mark 6. Line a baking tray. Grate the zest from the lemons.



2 Sift the icing sugar into a large bowl. Mix it with the lemon zest, ground almonds and cinnamon.



You don't need the yolks.

3 Separate the eggs. Put the whites into a large, clean bowl. Whisk them until they are really thick. They should make stiff peaks, like this.



4 Gently fold the almond mixture into the egg whites to make a stiff dough. If it's too sticky, add more ground almonds.

Dust the surface and rolling pin with icing sugar.



5 Put the dough onto a work surface and roll it out until it is as thick as your little finger.



6 Use the cutter to cut out star shapes and put them on the baking tray.



7 Bake for 5-6 minutes. Leave on the tray for a few minutes, then put them on a wire rack to cool.



8 For the icing, cut the lemon in half. Squeeze the juice into a small bowl. Sift over the icing sugar and mix. Spread onto the stars.



You could decorate these biscuits with lemon zest. Use a zester to get long curls of zest.

These will keep for up to 5 days in an airtight container.