

HERMIT COOKIES

(from Geoffrey Zakarian)

Yield: about 18 cookies

for the cookies:

2 cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon fine salt
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup unsulfured molasses
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 large eggs
Zest of 1 orange
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips

for the glaze:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 large egg whites
1 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped out

Whisk together the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, allspice and ginger in a medium bowl and set aside.

Beat the butter, brown sugar and molasses together in a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the vanilla, eggs and orange zest. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and mix until incorporated. Add the spiced flour mixture and beat until the dough just comes together. Fold in the chocolate chips.

Scoop the dough into large balls (about 1.5 inches in diameter) and refrigerate on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper until firm, about 1 hour. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 325 degrees F. Bake the cookies until the tops of the hermits are no longer glossy and the edges are firm, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheets for a few minutes and then transfer to a rack to cool completely.

For the glaze: While the cookies cool, mix the confectioners' sugar, egg whites and vanilla seeds in a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until smooth and shiny. Transfer the glaze to a piping bag or zip lock bag with a corner cut, and pipe stripes onto the cooled hermits. Store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 3 days.