

CHERRY-ALMOND SUGAR COOKIES

(from The Bewitching Kitchen)

1 cup (227g) unsalted butter, cubed, cold
1 cup (200g) granulated sugar
zest of half an orange
2 eggs
3 1/2 cups (420g) all-purpose flour
1/2 cup (60g) cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 teaspoon cherry extract (Olive Nation)
1/2 teaspoon almond extract (Olive Nation)
to decorate:
your favorite recipe of Royal Icing (I use Tanya's)
royal icing transfers (butterflies and flowers)
food-safe pen

Heat the oven to 350 F and line baking sheets with parchment. Sift the flour, cornstarch and salt, and set aside. Mix the sugar with the zest rubbing it well to release the oils. Cream the butter with the flavored sugar, just until smooth and combined.

Mix in the eggs and flavoring extracts until incorporated. Add the flour mixture on low-speed, in three portions. The mixture will seem very dry and sandy at first, but after a couple of minutes the mixer it will start to pull away from the sides of the bowl.

Remove the dough from the bowl, cut in two pieces and wrap one in plastic. Roll the second piece of dough out between 2 sheets of parchment paper, to a thickness of 1/4 inch. Cut into rounds, press a detail flower using another type of cutter, and freeze for 10 minutes. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the size of the cookie. I like to have a slight golden tone at the edges.

Cool on a rack and decorate as desired. For the bee decoration you'll need thick consistency Royal icing in cream color for the background, and leaf green for details. A brown food pen with reasonably fine tip, food gel dye in caramel or brown color, vodka, and royal icing transfers of the decorations you feel like adding to the plank.