



Recipes from Murder at the Christmas Cookie Bake-Off



Cherry Thumbprint Christmas Cookies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F., place rack in middle position.

Prep time 20 minutes. Chill time: 30 minutes. Cook time 12 minutes.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granular sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup cherry preserves (or your favorite fruit preserves)

Glaze:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole milk

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter until fluffy. Add granulated sugar and salt. Beat until well blended. Stir in all-purpose flour and almond extract, being careful not to over mix. Cover dough and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Roll dough into 1-inch balls. On a parchment lined baking sheet, place each ball 2-inches apart. Press your thumb in the middle of each ball just enough to create a depression. Spoon preserves into each indent, being careful not to overfill*. Bake for 12 minutes or until cookies just start to turn golden. Remove from oven and transfer to a wire rack. Cool completely.

In a small bowl, stir together the powdered sugar and enough milk to make icing a nice drizzling consistency. Dip a fork into the icing and drizzle over each cookie, making a gentle sweeping motion. You can also place the icing in a small plastic baggie and snip off one corner. Either method works great. Once the icing sets, enjoy!

*Note: If cookies come out of the oven looking a little flat and the jelly has seeped out (which can sometimes happen if they haven't chilled enough), just place a little spoon of cold jelly into depression and let the cookie cool. Drizzle with icing as directed. This is a little trick to make the cookies look as great as they taste.