

# Christmas Biscotti

Flecked with the red, green and gold of candied cherries and citrus, this cookie definitely looks like Christmas! Its rich base dotted with fruit and subtle hint of liquorice make a lovely alternative to some of the more sweet offerings at this time of year. Slicing them thickly also ensures they have a good heft and chew, not the dry crunch most people might expect and produces a perfect cookie for dunking in hot drinks.

1/2 cup butter, room temperature

Makes: 2 dozen

1 cup sugar

You will need: 1 cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, large serrated knife

2 eggs

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees

1 egg yolk

On a large piece of parchment paper, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

2 1/2 cups all purpose flour

In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment or using a large mixing bowl with a handheld mixer, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add the eggs and egg yolk one at a time, beating briefly after each addition. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Add the anise seed and orange zest and beat to combine.

1 1/2 tsp baking powder

Turn the mixer to low, add the dry ingredients and mix to combine. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.

1 tsp anise seed

Using a wooden spoon or spatula, fold in the chopped cherries and candied citrus.

1/2 tsp salt

Place the dough on the prepared cookie sheet and shape into two logs about 12-inches long and 2-inches wide. I like to use a pencil to mark the back of the parchment with an outline of measurements, which makes it sooo much easier when shaping.

1/2 cup chopped candied red and green cherries

1/2 cup mixed candied citrus peel

In a small bowl, whisk together the egg white and water to make an egg wash. Use a pastry brush to gently coat the top and sides of the dough log. Sprinkle generously with the sanding sugar.

1 tbsp orange zest

Bake in the preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the top is firm to the touch and a wooden skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

1 egg white

Remove from the oven and allow to cool on the cookie sheet.

1 tbsp water

Lower the oven temperature to 325 degrees.

sanding sugar to finish

Keep the log on the parchment paper and carefully transfer it to a cutting board. Use a serrated knife to cut the log on the diagonal into 18 even slices. Lay the sliced cookies on their side on the parchment paper and place it back on the cookie sheet.

Bake in the oven for another 8-10 minutes.

Remove from the oven again and allow the biscotti to cool on the cookie sheet.