

VALENTINE'S DAY SCRABBLE LETTER COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

For the Cookies

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
2 cups white sugar
4 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt

For the icing

2 large egg whites
8 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
3 cups confectioners (powdered or icing) sugar, sifted
black food coloring

DIRECTIONS

Using a piece of graph paper, I would highly suggest figuring out the words that you want to write, in the Scrabble pattern. Alternatively, you can just make all the letters from the Scrabble set, but I don't think that would quite work out to your benefit. Count up the tiles that you will need and how many of each letter.

To make the tiles: in a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt. Cover, and chill dough for at least one hour (or overnight). Preheat oven to 400F/200C. Roll out dough on floured surface 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Using a square 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inch cookie cutter, cut out the number of tiles required. If you haven't got a square cookie cutter, you can use a ruler and a pizza cutter to cut 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inch squares. Place cookies 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 6 to 8 minutes in preheated oven. Cool completely.

To make the icing: in the bowl of your electric mixer, beat the egg whites with 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice until combined. Add the sifted powdered sugar and beat on low speed until combined and smooth. The icing needs to be used immediately or transferred to an airtight container as royal icing hardens when exposed to air. Split the batch in half, reserving one half and covering with plastic wrap. Add the remaining 6 tablespoons of lemon juice to the icing to make the "white" icing looser.

To decorate: using a food-safe paintbrush, paint each of the tiles completely white. Alternatively, you can simply dip the top side of each cookie tile in the icing, but make sure to let any excess run off. Let tiles dry, preferably overnight but at least 2-3 hours. To the reserved icing, add a significant amount of black food coloring -- you want this to be completely black -- and mix until completely combined. Using a #1 tip, carefully letter the tiles.