

EASTER EGG AND FLOWER SUGAR COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

For the Cookies

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
1 cup white sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 tablespoon orange zest
2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

For the icing

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

DIRECTIONS

To make the cookies: in a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg, orange zest, orange juice 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. Roll out dough on floured surface 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Using a egg/petal shaped cookie cutter, cut out cookies. To make the "stem", using a knife or pizza cutter, cut freehand. 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 into the number of colors you wish to use and add in food coloring.

To decorate: Using a #3 tip, carefully decorate the eggs/petals with the patterns of your choice. They should look like Easter eggs, of course, or alternatively, like flower petals (or both).