

AUSSTECHERLE (COOKIE-CUTTER SUGAR COOKIES)

INGREDIENTS

1 cup butter, softened
2 cups white sugar
4 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 tablespoons orange juice
5 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
4 egg yolks
1/4 cup each of roughly chopped walnuts, pecans, raisins, dried cranberries

DIRECTIONS

In mixing bowl, cream together unsalted butter, sugar and egg until light and fluffy. Beat in flour, baking powder, orange juice and vanilla until smooth and well combined. Chill in refrigerator 2-3 hours or until firm enough to be rolled.

Preheat oven to 400F. Roll out half of the dough on a well floured surface to 1/4 inch thickness (be careful to get the surface even, otherwise you will have oddly-browned cookies. Also, do not roll the dough too thin, otherwise you will have hard cookies when they come out of the oven). Separate the eggs into a little bowl, discarding the whites or save for another purpose. Gently coddle the yolks.

Cut with cookie cutters. Place on cookie sheet lined with silpat or onto parchment paper. Brush each cookie with a very light layer of egg yolk and sprinkle with a bit of one of the toppings. Repeat this with other half of the dough.

Bake 8-10 minutes or until golden brown at the edges. Cool on wire rack.