



Norwegian Brown Sugar Butter Cookies with Cardamom & Black Pepper

By Chef Therese Gorsich

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into cubes
½ cup packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon orange flower water (optional)
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons cornstarch
½ teaspoon ground cardamom
a few grinds of black pepper (about ¼ teaspoon)

Prepare dough:

Add the butter, brown sugar, vanilla extract, orange flower water (if using), and the salt to a food processor fitted with the metal blade.

Blend the ingredients until they are well combined and become a light fluffy paste.

Combine the flour, cornstarch, ground cardamom and black pepper in a medium bowl, stirring well.

Add the flour mix to the butter mixture in the food process and pulse the mixture until the dough begins to clump together.

Dump the mixture back into the medium bowl and form into a rough ball, kneading a bit as necessary to bring together.

For round slice & bake cookies: Shape the soft dough into a log about 1½ inches wide, roll log up in plastic wrap and roll on the counter a few times to even the shape. Refrigerate until firm, at least one hour. Alternatively, you can refrigerate the dough up to 2 weeks or freeze for 2 months.

To bake: Preheat oven to 325 F.

Using a thin knife, slice the chilled log into ¼ inch thick slices and arrange on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Bake in the middle of the oven about 15 to 20 minutes, or until tops are firm and edges lightly brown.

For Shortbread -style wedges or squares (can be baked immediately): Press or roll the dough onto the bottom of a (lightly floured) tart pan. Alternatively, roll out onto parchment paper and place in square pan.

With the tines of a fork, prick the dough a few times to prevent bubbles.

To bake, preheat oven to 325F, bake 20-30 minutes, or until faintly brown. Immediately cut into wedges or squares.

Note: If you do not have a food processor or a stand mixer, or just want a simpler method, melt the butter (or even brown it for more flavor) whisk it well with the brown sugar and proceed. The cookies will come out less tender, but chewier and still delicious!