

Double-Vanilla Meringue Cookies

SOURCE: Cooking Light, AUGUST 2000

Add vanilla bean seeds at end of beating process - their natural oils prevent egg whites from beating to stiff peaks. When baked long and slowly, stiffly beaten egg whites turn crisp, as they do in these cookies. Bake 10 minutes less for a cookie that's slightly chewy on the inside. Store cookies in airtight containers for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 3 months.

INGREDIENTS:

1 C sugar, divided
1 vanilla bean
3 large egg whites (at room temperature)
1/4 tsp cream of tartar
1/4 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 325° F.

Place 1/4 C sugar in small bowl - scrape seeds from vanilla bean - add seeds to sugar - discard bean - stir well with whisk.

Beat egg whites, cream of tartar + salt at high speed of mixer till foamy. Gradually add 3/4 C sugar, 1 TBS at a time, beating mixture till stiff peaks form. Gradually add vanilla bean mixture + extract - beat till just combined (Stiff peaks will take on the consistency of marshmallow cream).

Cover baking sheet with parchment paper - secure to baking sheet with masking tape - drop batter by level tablespoonfuls onto prepared baking sheet. Bake at 325° F 35 minutes or till crisp. Cool on pan on wire rack. Repeat procedure with remaining batter, re-using parchment paper. Store in airtight container.

Yield: 2 1/2 dozen (serving size: 1 cookie)

NUTRITION PER SERVING: CALORIES 28 (0.0% from fat); FAT 0.0g (sat 0.0g, mono 0.0g, poly 0.0g); PROTEIN 0.3g; CARB 6.7g; FIBER 0.0g; CHOL 0.0mg; IRON 0.0mg; SODIUM 25mg; CALC 0.0mg