

Sugar Christmas Cookies a la Tarragon

Makes about 36 - 4 inch cookies.

3 and 1/2	cups	all purpose flour
1/4	teaspoon	salt
1	teaspoon	baking powder
1	cup	unsalted butter
1 1/2	cups	granulated white sugar
2		large eggs
2	teaspoons	vanilla extract

Preparation

In the bowl of your electric mixer,
beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
Add the eggs and vanilla extract and beat until combined.
Add the flour mixture and beat until your dough is smooth.
Divide the dough in half and wrap each half in plastic wrap.

Refrigerate about an hour or until the dough is firm enough to roll.

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and place rack in center of oven.
Line your baking sheets with parchment paper.

Remove one half of the chilled dough from the refrigerator and,
on a lightly floured surface,
roll out the dough to a thickness of 1/4 inch (1 cm).
(Keep turning the dough as you roll,
making sure the dough does not stick to the counter.)

Cut out desired shapes using a lightly floured cookie cutter
and transfer cookies to the prepared baking sheet.

Place the baking sheets with the unbaked cookies
in the refrigerator for 10 to 15 minutes
to chill the dough which prevents the cookies from spreading
and losing their shape while baking.

*Note: If you are not going to frost the baked cookies, you may want
to sprinkle the unbaked cookies with crystal or sparkling sugar.*

Bake cookies for about 10 minutes
or until they begin to brown on the edges.
Remove the cookies from oven
and let them cool on baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring
to a wire rack to finish cooling.
Frost with royal icing, if desired.
Be sure to let the royal icing dry completely before storing.