

Hazelnut Meringue Cookies

These are not your usual meringue cookies. They are thick, dense and chewy, more like a macaroon. My French girlfriend calls them macaroons. Over the years I have reduced the amount of sugar in them, so I would not put less sugar than is in this recipe. I played with the topping and this time I added chocolate chips. A whole Hazelnut is another option. The ground hazelnuts provide a distinctive nutty flavor. You could also substitute ground almond meal, available at Trader Joe's. Since I have never made them with ground almonds, let me know how they taste.

These cookies are easy to make and will last for a week. I often don't roast the hazelnuts. Just grind the hazelnuts, trying to rub off some of the black skin before grinding them. This will produce a moister cookie, since roasting removes moisture from the nuts. I prefer the cookies that are made with roasted nuts.

Ingredients:

35 to 40 cookies
2 cookie sheets
Parchment paper

2 1/2 cup hazelnuts (12 ounces)
1 cup fine sugar
3 egg whites

Directions:

Roast the Hazelnuts on a cookie sheet in a preheated oven at 350° for about 10 to 15 minutes. A light golden brown is all you want them to be, otherwise they will turn bitter. Immediately after removing them from the oven rub them in a kitchen towel to remove the skin. Put the peeled nuts in a bowl and roast the nuts where the skin did not come off for a couple more minutes and rub them in a towel again. Not all the skin will come off. The peeled nuts make a great snack and taste fabulous in salads, so roast some extra.

Beat the egg whites in a stand up mixer until stiff, slowly add the sugar and continue to beat until the mixture becomes glossy, a minute or so. Add the ground hazelnut and mix well. Use two spoons to put the dough on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper that has been sprayed with canola oil. You will have two baking sheets of cookies. I added a chocolate chip on top of half of the cookies. Bake the cookies for 20 to 25 minutes at 325° in the middle of the oven. Loosen the cookies from the paper and let them cool.

Guten Appetit
Recipe from Sunnycove Chef

