

Hot Cocoa Cookies

Emily Hutchinson

Yield: 24 cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or three packets of Swiss Miss hot cocoa mix
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for rolling
- 1 teaspoon aluminum-free baking powder

Directions:

1. Cream butter and salt in a stand mixer with paddle attachment for 30 seconds on medium speed.
2. Mix in sugar and hot cocoa, and cream for 1 minute on medium speed.
3. Next add in egg and vanilla extract. Cream together for about 30 seconds on medium until combined.
4. Mix dry ingredients (flour and baking powder) in a separate bowl with a whisk. You may also choose to sift them. Then, add dry ingredients to wet ingredients.
5. Mix on low speed; your dough will seem dry, but it will all come together. It may take 2 minutes for the dough to form, so just keep mixing. The dough will start pulling off the sides once it's combined, which is your signal to stop mixing.
6. Preheat oven to 375°F. Lay out a sheet of plastic wrap, place dough on top, and form it into a disc shape to allow dough to chill quicker. Wrap and place in refrigerator for at least 15 minutes for dough to firm up a little to prevent spreading.
7. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or lay dough bare on a restaurant grade aluminum baking sheet.
8. Flour your surface. Roll dough out to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch or thicker, don't make them thinner than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Bake for 6-8 minutes, the center will puff up and look matte.
9. Once baked, let sit for 1 minute on the cookie sheet to firm up, then transfer to cooling rack.

***Remember to spoon and level measure the flour. I develop recipes in high humidity. If you're in dry climate, reduce flour by 2 Tbsp-4 Tbsp**

Peppermint Buttercream

Yield: Makes about 3 cups

Ingredients:

½ cup or 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
½ cup or 1 stick salted butter, softened
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 teaspoon peppermint extract
4 ½ cups confectioners' powdered sugar (white powdered sugar)
2-3 tablespoons 2% or whole milk

Directions:

1. Cream your butters in a stand mixer on medium speed for 2 minutes.
2. Once creamed, add your vanilla and peppermint. Mix again for a minute.
3. Scrape down sides and mix again for 30 seconds.
4. Add in powdered sugar. Place a towel over your mixer to prevent a powdered-sugar storm.
5. Once mixed, add in your milk, starting with 2 tablespoons. You can always add more, but you can't take it out. Continue to add more than the recipe states if it's too thick. Remember, temperature and humidity factor in. If you find it's too soft, add in 1/4 cup extra powdered sugar to thicken it up. Be careful because it will begin to taste like straight powdered sugar if you add too much.
6. Mix for 4 to 5 minutes on low to medium speed until light and fluffy. Store unused buttercream in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 3 months.

To Decorate:

Ingredients:

Crushed candy canes
Mini marshmallows
Mini candy canes
Tip 1A and 12
Piping bags and coupler

Directions:

1. Use tip 12 and pipe a circle with the buttercream around the outside of the cookie but don't pipe on the very edge, we want to see the edge of the beautiful cookie. Turn the cookie upside down in the crushed candy cane.

2. Next, use tip 1A or cut a larger hole in a piping bag and pipe a big dollop of buttercream in the center.
3. Take three mini marshmallows and place them in the center.
4. Break the rounded edge off a mini candy cane for the straw to complete the hot cocoa cookie.

Merry Baking, xoxo Em