

# Biscochitos

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## SUMMARY

**Cook Time:** ~ 2 hours

**Yields:** ~ 4 dozen small or 2 dozen large cookies

## Ingredients

- 3 cups unbleached all purpose flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 - 1 ½ teaspoons ground anise<sup>[1]</sup>
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ pound lard, softened
- ½ cups plus 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons brandy<sup>[2]</sup>
- ¼ cup sugar and ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon for the topping<sup>[3]</sup>
- *Optional:* Orange zest<sup>[4]</sup>

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## Method

1. Sift together the flour, baking powder, anise, and salt and set aside.
2. Beat the lard in an electric mixer, gradually adding the sugar, and beat until extremely fluffy and light<sup>[5]</sup>, about 8 minutes (mileage may vary).  
**Don't shortcut this step.** Stop the mixer every couple of minutes and scrape the sides of the mixing bowl.
3. Add the egg, followed by the wine, and mix until incorporated.
4. Mix in the dry ingredients, adding about one-third of the mixture at a time. Stop the mixer as you make each addition, and beat no longer than

necessary to incorporate the dry ingredients. A stiff pie-crust type of dough is what you're seeking.<sup>[6]</sup>

5. Chill the dough for about 15 minutes for easy handling.
  6. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
  7. Roll out the dough ¼-inch thick on a floured work surface and cut with a paring knife into a fleur-de-lis, or cut with a small cookie cutter.<sup>[7]</sup> Avoid handling the dough anymore than necessary, it's one of the keys to the melt-in-your-mouth texture.<sup>[8]</sup>
  8. Transfer the cookies to ungreased cookie sheets.
  9. Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes, until just set and pale golden.
  10. While the cookies bake stir together the topping in a bowl.
  11. When the cookies are done, dunk them in the topping. The topping will stick better if the cookies are still warm.<sup>[9]</sup>
  12. Transfer to paper towels or cooling rack to finish cooling.<sup>[10]</sup>
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1. Fresh ground anise seeds in a mortar and pestle or a coffee grinder is best. ↩
2. Alternatively you can use rum, sweet white wine, or apple/pineapple juice. ↩
3. I usually double this and coat the whole cookie. ↩
4. I've seen some recipes call for orange zest, but I've never added it myself and my cookies turn out great. If you would like to try, just add it along with the eggs and brandy. ↩
5. The lard and sugar will also increase in volume slightly and will become slightly whiter. ↩
6. The cookie dough at this point will put some strain on your mixer. This is normal, no need to add liquid, just go low and slow. ↩
7. I use a glass to cut my cookies. A wine glass for large and a champagne glass for small. The dull edge of the glass adds a beveled edge to the cookie. This is just to say, cut 'em however. ↩
8. When reforming the dough to roll out for a second time, just push it all together into a lump to roll out. Don't be too concerned about overworking the dough as I haven't noticed a difference between the first, second, or third roll out. ↩
9. I try to do this right when they get out of the oven and use a fork to transfer and coat them. ↩
10. Biscochitos get better after they have cooled completely and in the coming days. So, whilst fresh baked cookies are great, give these some time to really come alive. ↩