
♦ Pecan Crescent Cookies ♦

INGREDIENTS

2 cups whole pecan chopped fine
optional: substitute any amount of pecans with walnuts
2 cups bleached all purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound unsalted butter softened (2 sticks)
1/3 cup superfine sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
confectioner's sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Adjust oven racks to upper and lower middle positions and preheat to 325 degrees.
2. Mix 1 cup chopped nuts, flour, and salt in medium bowl and set aside.
3. In food processor fitted with a steel blade, process remaining chopped nuts until the texture of coarse cornmeal, 10 to 15 seconds (do not overprocess); stir into flour mixture and set aside.
4. In bowl of an electric mixer at medium speed or by hand, beat butter and sugar until light and creamy, about 1 1/2 minutes with an electric mixer or 4 minutes by hand; beat in vanilla.
5. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl with rubber spatula; add flour mixture and beat at low speed until dough just begins to come together but still looks scrappy, about 15 seconds. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl again with rubber spatula; continue beating at low speed until dough is cohesive, 6 to 9 seconds longer. Do not overbeat.
6. Working with about 1 tablespoon dough at a time, roll and shape cookies into balls.
7. Bake until tops are pale golden and bottoms are just beginning to brown, turning cookie sheets from front to back and switching from top to bottom racks halfway through baking, 17 to 19 minutes.
8. Cool cookies on sheets about 2 minutes; remove with metal spatula to wire rack and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Working with 3 or 4 cookies at a time, roll cookies in confectioner's sugar to coat them thoroughly. Gently shake off excess. Before serving, dust cookies again with confectioner's sugar.