

- 1 cup almonds -- whole, unblanched
- 2 cups unbleached flour -- unsifted
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 pinch salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

This recipe makes about 4 dozen very crunchy biscotti. I've never put chocolate on the biscotti. You need two 12x15 inch (approx.) cookie sheets. Butter and flour ONE of the cookie sheets. The oven should be at 350 to roast the almonds, and 300 to bake the biscotti. Total baking time for the biscotti is about 2 hours. You also need to have handy and ready a surface for kneading the biscotti dough and a surface for cutting the baked biscotti. Roast the almonds in a 350 degree oven until lightly browned (10-15 minutes). Cool nuts completely. Lower the oven temperature to 300. In a medium bowl, stir together the dry ingredients (flour, sugar, baking soda, salt) just to mix. Separate out about 1/2 cup of this mixture, and spread SOME of the reserved 1/2 cup onto your kneading surface. In a small bowl or measuring cup, lightly beat together the eggs and vanilla. Make a well in the flour mixture in the medium bowl and pour in the egg/vanilla mixture. Stir the flour into the egg mixture from the outside of the well. Continue combining until the mixture is too stiff to stir. Turn the mixture out onto your kneading surface, which should already be floured with some of the reserved dry ingredients. With floured hands (use some of the reserved dry ingredients for this if you want), fold the dough over itself until it coheres. Use the rest of the reserved dry ingredients for your hands and the work surface, if necessary. Press the nuts into the dough and keep folding the dough over itself until the nuts are evenly distributed. Let the dough sit a few minutes so the flour absorbs the liquid completely, making the dough less sticky. Divide the dough into 3 equal pieces. Roll each piece with your hands so that the pieces are elongated into strips about 1" wide and 12"-14" long.

*** Place the strips on the buttered/floured baking sheet, leaving about 4" between each strip. If you want somewhat wider strips, flatten the strips with your hands to a width of 2". Bake for about 50 minutes at 300. Let the strips cool for 5 minutes, and then remove them with a spatula to a cutting surface. Using a sharp knife and making downward strokes, cut the strips into diagonal bars about 1/2" wide. Lay the cut biscotti on their sides on the two baking sheets. Toast 35-50 minutes, depending on how dark (and crunchy?) you want them. *** To make much wider strips, divide the dough into two strips, same length (12"-14"). Each cookie will be about 6" long. This should make about 2 dozen cookies.