

Chocolate Chip Maraschino Cherry Shortbread Cookies

Ingredients

2 cups margarine, softened (I used butter)
2 cups powdered confectioner's sugar
2 ½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract (or 1 teaspoon pure almond extract)
½ teaspoon salt
4 ½ cups all-purpose flour
12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips
16 oz. maraschino cherries, drained, chopped
Optional – ½ cup chopped pecans

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, cream margarine (or butter) for 1 minute.
3. Gradually add powdered confectioner's sugar.
4. Beat in vanilla (or almond) extract and salt.
5. Gradually add flour, ½ cup at a time, mixing between each addition just until flour is blended. Dough will be stiff.
6. Mix in chocolate chips. Slightly mix in chopped cherries (and pecans if adding).
7. Cookie Shapes as follows (line cookie sheet with parchment paper):
 - > Round Cookies – use a cookie scoop, about 1 ½ tablespoons, to make round shaped cookies; slightly press in top of each cookie before baking.
 - > Drop Cookies – non-uniform shapes. Simply use a spoon to drop dough on baking sheet. Slightly press in top of each cookie before baking.
 - > Flat Slice'n Bake – divide dough in half. Place dough on wax paper in the shape of a log. Roll dough to create a uniform log. Refrigerate at least an hour or longer to hold shape. Slice and bake cookies. Make dough log 2.5 inches thick/wide and 9 inches long (mine was longer). Some dough may crumble; make into drop cookies. (most of mine crumbled and I made into a drop/round cookies).
8. Space cookies about 2 inches apart on parchment paper lined cookie sheet. Bake 15-17 minutes (I like them a little undercooked).
9. Let cool for 5-10 minutes and then remove cookies to a wire rack to completely cool before storing.

*Can refrigerate dough for a couple of days before baking. Can also freeze the dough.

Makes 4 ½ dozen cookies

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