

Lemon Cookies

Makes about 30

- 8 oz. Unsalted butter, (2 sticks, split use) 1 at room temperature and 1 cut into pieces
 - 1/3 c. Fresh lemon juice (approx. 3 lemons if juicy, you can also use Meyer lemons)
 - 3 1/2 tsp. Finely grated fresh *Lemon Zest (or more to taste)
 - 2 c. All-purpose flour
 - 1 tsp. Baking powder
 - 1/2 tsp. Salt
 - 1/2 c. Superfine sugar or substitute sanding sugar for a more decorative effect
 - 1 c. Granulated sugar
 - 1 lg. Egg, room temperature
 - 2 tsp. Pure Vanilla extract
 - 2 tsp. Lemon oil or pure lemon extract
- Optional:
- 1 Tbl. Poppy seeds, plus more for sprinkling

Bring lemon juice to a slow simmer in a small saucepot over medium heat; cook until reduced to about 1/8 c. to concentrate lemon flavor. Add 1 stick of butter and stir until melted. Set aside to cool but don't allow to harden. Re-melt if that happens.

Sift together flour, salt and baking powder (omit salt and baking powder if using self-rising flour but still sift). In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the remaining stick of butter. Scrape down side of bowl, add 1 cup of sugar and cream together on medium speed until well incorporated and a little fluffy. Scrape sides of bowl as needed. Add egg and lemon butter. Mix until pale, about 3 minutes. Add extract(s) and/or lemon oil if using and 2 tsp. (or more to taste) of the *lemon zest. When just combined, add flour mix and the tablespoon of poppy seeds if using. Chill for 1 hour to allow dough to firm for easy handling. At room temperature this is a soft and slightly sticky dough. If you chill over night., let sit out of refrigerator for about 30 minutes before shaping.

Pre-heat oven to 375 ° F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or silpat. Stir together the superfine (or sanding) sugar with remaining *1 1/2 tsp. lemon zest and desired amount of poppy seeds if using. Shape dough into 1 1/4 inch balls, roll them in the sugar mixture and place about 2 inches apart on sheet. Press each with the flat end of a glass that has been dipped in the sugar mixture or use your fingers, also dipped in the sugar mixture until cookies are about 1/4 inch thick and about 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Bake until lightly browned on the edges, about 10 minutes. Cool 1 minute on cookie sheet and with a metal spatula, remove to wire rack and cool completely. Let cookie sheet cool completely before reusing.

Store cookies in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: Omit poppy seeds and change all the citrus flavors to another such as orange, lime, grapefruit, etc. To make a chocolate drizzle for the cookies, melt 6 oz. dark bittersweet chocolate with 3 Tbl. unsalted butter, a pinch of salt and 1 Tbl. liquid (combination of vanilla, chocolate extract, orange extract, caramel extract, brandy or rum flavoring, hot water, etc.) White chocolate might be good with grapefruit. Or make a glaze with powdered sugar and a citrus juice and/or extract. Pour into a pastry bag fitted with a small plain tip or a squeeze bottle and drizzle across cooled cookies. Let cookies set until chocolate or glaze hardens and store in an airtight container. Will keep about 5 days.