

Italian Pistachio Butter Cookies

Biscotti al Burro con Crema al Pistacchio

Prep Time	25 minutes	Chilling Time	30 minutes
Bake Time	12-14 minutes	Yield	18-20 sandwich cookies

Ingredients

For the Butter Cookies

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened (8 oz / 226 g)
- 2/3 cup powdered sugar (80 g)
- 1 large egg, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract, optional
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (270 g)
- 1/4 cup cornstarch (30 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2-3 tablespoons whole milk, only if needed

For the Pistachio Filling

- 3/4 cup pistachio cream (about 7 oz / 200 g)
- 2 tablespoons mascarpone, optional

For Decorating

- 18-20 green candied cherries or candied green cherry halves

Instructions

1. Cream the butter. Beat the softened butter and powdered sugar for 3-4 minutes, until pale, creamy, and fluffy.

2. Add the egg and flavorings. Add the egg, vanilla extract, and almond extract, if using. Beat until fully incorporated.

3. Add the dry ingredients. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, and salt. Gradually add them to the butter mixture. Mix only until a soft dough forms. If the dough is too stiff to pipe, add milk 1 tablespoon at a time.

4. Pipe the cookies. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Transfer the dough to a piping bag fitted with a large open-star tip. Pipe small circular rosettes about 1 3/4-2 inches wide.

5. Add the candied cherries. Press a green candied cherry or half a cherry into the center of half of the cookies. Leave the remaining cookies undecorated.

6. Chill. Refrigerate the trays for 30 minutes so the cookies hold their piped shape during baking.

7. Bake. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Bake for 12-14 minutes, or until the edges are just beginning to turn golden. Do not overbake.

8. Cool. Let the cookies rest on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack and cool completely.

9. Prepare the filling. Use the pistachio cream as is, or mix it with the mascarpone for a softer, lighter filling.

10. Assemble. Turn the undecorated cookies upside down. Spread or pipe 1-2 teaspoons of pistachio cream onto each one. Top with a cherry-decorated cookie and press together gently.

Storage

Store the assembled cookies in an airtight container. If using only commercial pistachio cream, keep them in a cool room for 3-4 days. If mascarpone is added, refrigerate and enjoy within 3-4 days. Let refrigerated cookies sit at room temperature for 15-20 minutes before serving.

Nonna's Tips

- Use very soft butter, but never melted butter.
- Do not overmix once the flour is added.
- Chilling the piped cookies is essential for keeping the ridged shape.
- Use a large open-star piping tip for the traditional Italian bakery look.
- Fill the cookies only after they have cooled completely.