

Christmas Wreath Spice Cookies

(Espécies de São Jorge)

Source: Shade Montague (www.madebyshade.com)

Servings: 20 **Prep Time:** 1 hour 50 minutes **Cook Time:** 25 minutes **Chill Time:** 8 hours

EQUIPMENT:

- Hand-mixer / Stand-mixer
- Thermometer
- Wheel pastry cutter / Small knife
- Small paintbrush

INGREDIENTS:

Almond Pastry Dough:

- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 tbsp butter, room temp
- 1 tsp almond extract
- Green food dye
- 3 ½ to 4 ½ cups flour
- 1 cup water, warm

Spice Filling:

- 2 cups plain fine breadcrumbs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- Zest of 1 orange
- ½ cup butter
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp aniseed, finely ground
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp allspice
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp cloves
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- Red food dye

INSTRUCTIONS:

Almond Pastry Dough (20 minutes + 8 hours chilling)

In a large bowl, with a hand-mixer or stand-mixer, beat the egg, sugar, salt, butter, almond extract, and green food dye together.

Add 3 ½ cups flour and while mixing, gradually pour in the water.

If needed, gradually mix in more flour until dough is slightly tacky but no longer sticky.

Shape into a ball, then cover with plastic wrap and chill in the fridge overnight.

Meanwhile, prepare the spice filling.

Spice Filling (30 minutes + 10 minutes cooking + 8 hours chilling)

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Place the breadcrumbs onto a baking sheet and bake, stirring every few minutes, for about 10 minutes or until lightly toasted. Set aside to cool.

In a large pot, combine the sugar, water, and orange zest, and bring to a boil over medium heat.

Cook until mixture registers 220° F, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Assembly:

- Red edible food pen
- Yellow gel food dye
- 1/8 tsp edible gold dust

Mix in the butter, spices, and half of the toasted breadcrumbs.

Add the remaining breadcrumbs and red food dye.

Cover with plastic wrap and chill in the fridge overnight.

Assembly (1 hour + 15 minutes cooking)

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

With greased fingers, roll the spice filling out into long tubes, about 1/3" in diameter (dime size) and 7" in length. Set aside.

On a liberally floured surface, roll 1/3 of the dough out at a time into a long, oval shape, about 3" wide. Roll very thin, until nearly translucent.

Cut the dough into 8" long strips.

With a wheel pastry cutter or a small knife, cut 1/4" slits about 1" apart down the center of the dough strips.

Place the rolled filling right on these cuts and fold the dough over to surround the filling, making sure there are no air pockets, and pinch the seams together.

Shape the strips into wreaths and pinch the excess dough at each end together to seal.

Transfer the cookies to a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes.

Set aside to cool completely.

With a red food pen, draw little bows on the cookies where the ends were pinched together.

In a small bowl, mix together a few drops of yellow gel food dye and $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp edible gold dust.

With a small paintbrush, paint little dots of gold dye on the cookies in between the red spice filling.

Serve immediately. Leftovers may be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to a week.

Enjoy!