

## Almond Paste & Toasted Almond Chocolate Chip Cookies

This recipe begins at the beginning: with the classic Tollhouse recipe on the back of the yellow bag. Then things veer off the rails, with an almond triumvirate adding chew, crunch, and a mellow almond flavor that makes you want to grab the cookie jar, hug it close, and hide under a table in a far-off room. Dipping them in milk = a fine idea.

Makes about 30 cookies

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1/4 cup granulated sugar  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
1 egg  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract  
2/3 cup mini chocolate chips  
3/4 cup toasted whole almonds, chopped (or more, or less)  
2 ounces almond paste (eyeball it: it's a bit less than a third of a 7-oz tube)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Line two baking sheets with parchment or silicone liners.

In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, soda, and salt.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and two sugars. Add the egg, then the almond extract, beating well. Add the flour mixture in two additions, beating just until incorporated. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Fold in the mini chips and chopped nuts.

Pinch off bits of almond paste and roll them into balls. See the above photo for a visual, but you can make the balls as large as you like. Gently fold them through the batter.

I like these cookies small, so I use a 1-1/2 inch scoop to dole out the dough. Bake for 10-14 minutes, rotating the sheet pans halfway though, and checking the undersides carefully to ensure they don't burn. (For best texture, consider under-baking them rather than the alternative.) Stored airtight, they'll keep a good 5 days.