

Cocoa-Cinnamon Shortbread Cookies

Adapted from the Shortbread Hearts in the original Barefoot Contessa Cookbook, these pretty chocolate cookies have a lovely hint of cinnamon. You'll need some time to refrigerate the dough initially and between batches, so don't make these if you're in a rush.

Yields 4 dozen cookies

3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 pound + 2 tablespoons butter, at room temperature
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla
6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, for dipping

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, cinnamon, and salt. Set aside.

Using an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar on medium speed until blended. Beat in vanilla. Add the flour mixture and beat on low speed until the dough comes together smoothly. Dump onto a floured board and cut in half. Wrap each half in plastic wrap and press into a disk. Refrigerate wrapped disks for a good hour.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Remove one dough disk from the fridge. Roll the dough out to 1/2-inch thickness on your floured board. Cut into circles with a floured cutter measuring 2-1/2-inches in diameter. Place circles on 2 parchment-lined baking sheets as you work. Re-roll any scraps and cut remaining circles.

Place first baking sheets in the fridge while you work with the second dough disk. Repeat with remaining dough, refrigerating cut circles between batches. (Dough circles should be cold and firm before they hit the oven.)

Bake for about 25 minutes, or until cookies are relatively firm to the touch and the edges darken slightly. Cool completely before dipping in chocolate.

To dip, melt 6 ounces of chocolate over a double boiler. Dip cooled cookies halfway into chocolate. Set on wax paper-lined cookie sheets. Allow to set for at least 30 minutes at room temperature or 10 minutes in the fridge before serving.