

Cardamom Cream Cheese Linzers

This lightly spiced dough is a dream to work with. It rolls beautifully, holds its shape when baked, and best of all, tastes more delicious than ordinary sugar cookies, thanks to a hint of ginger and cardamom.

DOUGH

½ cup (92g) vegetable shortening
8 tablespoons (113g) unsalted butter, softened
1 ½ cups (298g) granulated sugar
4 ounces (113g) cream cheese, softened
1 large egg
1 teaspoon Pure Vanilla Extract
½ teaspoon ground Ginger
½ to 1 teaspoon ground Cloud Forest Cardamom
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
4 cups (480g) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour

FILLING AND TOPPING

jam or preserves of your choice
confectioners' sugar, for sprinkling

For the dough: In a large bowl, beat together the shortening, butter, sugar, and cream cheese until smooth. Mix in the egg and vanilla. Add the spices, baking soda, salt, and flour and mix until the dough comes together.

Divide the dough into quarters and place each one on a sheet of parchment. Roll the dough to a rough 9" x 13" rectangle, about ½" thick. Stack the pieces of parchment on a baking sheet, cover with plastic, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

To cut and bake: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment.

Lightly flour your work surface. Working with one piece of dough at a time, roll out the dough to ⅛" thick and cut into rounds about 3 ½" in diameter. Gather, reroll, and cut any scraps. Cut a 1" hole (any shape) in the center of half the rounds; these will be the top cookies. Transfer all the cookies to the prepared baking sheets. (Save the cutout scraps to bake and enjoy separately, if desired.) Repeat with remaining pieces of dough.

Bake the cookies for 8 to 10 minutes, until the edges just begin to brown. Remove from the oven and let cool on the pan for 5 minutes before transferring to a rack to finish cooling completely.

To assemble: Place 2 teaspoons of jam on each of the solid cookies. Dust the remaining cookies with confectioners' sugar. To finish, center the sugar-dusted cookies on top of the jam-topped cookies pressing down gently.

Yield: 20 to 22 large sandwich cookies (3 ½") sandwich cookies



