

EMPIRE BISCUITS

These are the PERFECT Christmas cookie. But I wouldn't say no to them any time of year. Thanks, Kat, for another keeper of a recipe; and thanks, Kat's grandma, for keeping the tradition alive. Makes about 36 cookies. Store in an air-tight container or eat immediately, whichever you prefer.

BY: THE SHORTLISTS

Cookies

½ cup butter

½ cup icing sugar

1½ cup flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

1 egg

about 1 cup good-quality raspberry jam

Icing

¾ cup icing sugar, or more

¼ teaspoon (4 drops) almond extract

2 teaspoons water (or a bit more)

Red Glace (Maraschino) Cherries, chopped into 6ths

Cream butter and icing sugar in large mixing bowl with electric beaters. Add baking soda then gradually mix in flour. Beat the egg into a small bowl. Gradually add the egg until you can easily form the dough into a ball with your hands. Form into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap. Chill dough for ½ hour.

On a lightly floured surface with more flour on hand in case dough sticks, roll out (1/8 inch thick) and cut into 1½ inch rounds (I used a shot glass. What?). Reroll out whatever scraps you have until you've used up all the dough.

Bake at 300F/160C for 8 – 10 minutes, making sure that cookies are very lightly baked and appear white & crisp.

To assemble, put ½ teaspoon of jam on one round and top with another round. Put 1 teaspoons (or less) of icing on top of each cookie, and while the icing is still wet, place a piece of a red cherry on top. Stored in an air-tight container, they'll keep for upwards of a week, longer if you keep them in the fridge.