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Popular Article

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Cookies & Biscuits: Centre for all Celebrations

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India is a country of festivals and celebrations. They are a part of the rich cultural legacy of India. Festivals play important roles in maintaining relationships live within and outside the family. There are festivals for each season and each occasion in India. Celebrations of various occasions cannot be completed without serving foods especially sweets. Various types of sweets are prepared in the celebrations of various occasions. Indian sweets are popularly known as a “*mithai*”. Most of the Indian traditional sweets are made out of milk, flour, sugar, jaggery with addition of few condiments such as cardamom, nutmeg and saffron. Now days, bakery sweets such as cookies, cakes, biscuits etc are widely prepared during various occasions. One of the major reasons for the popularity of bakery sweet products is their shelf life. Traditional sweets made out of milk and flour which have short shelf life and need refrigeration for the long-time storage. Bakery sweets are made out of flour, shortening and sugar. They don't have too much moisture and therefore can be easily stored at room temperature for longer period. Another reason for their popularity is variety of taste. One can prepare various kinds of bakery products with altering some ingredients and flavor which is not possible in case of milk sweets. Among bakery products cookies/ biscuits are used in every household during routine days as well as special days like festivals.

Making cookies at home is very easy. Biscuits and cookies are generally prepared by two methods, namely *creaming* and *rubbing*, which are illustrated below. However, one has to use either of them as mentioned in the procedure of particular product.

➤ **Creaming Method:**

1. Add all the dry ingredients like baking powder, baking soda, ammonia, custard powder, corn flour, milk powder, salt etc. (whichever is mentioned in formula) into flour and sieve twice to mix thoroughly and remove impurities.
2. Cream hydrogenated oil/ shortening till get light and fluffy.
3. Add sugar gradually, continuing the creaming process, till the mixture become light, bright and fluffy.
4. If formula contains egg, whip it with beater in a clean, greaseless vessel to a stiff consistency. Then gradually add to sugar/shortening mixture. Mix egg with straight finger. Then again whip the egg, and mix. Follow the procedure until eggs are mixed. Mix any essence or color if formula contains. If cold egg or excess egg is added, it will curdle with mixture. Add little flour to overcome that defect.
5. Add milk/water/curd in sufficient quantity and mix lightly. Add essence and color, if eggs are not used. Add any fruits or dry fruits after proper treatment (i.e. chopping, dicing, and soaking in water). However, for cake preparation it should be added at last stage of mixing.
6. Now add flour (already mixed with dry ingredients). Mix lightly and make smooth dough. It is advisable to divide flour into 2-3 parts and add one after another.

➤ **Rubbing method:**

1. Mix all the dry ingredients into flour and sieve twice.
2. Add shortening and rub thoroughly.
3. Add sugar and mix lightly.
4. Add dry fruits, fruits, color, essence etc, if formula contains.
5. Now add egg gradually as similar to creaming method, if formula contains.
6. Finally mix water/milk/curd and make into smooth dough.

Recipe of Nankhatai

Ingredients

Refined wheat flour: 100gm

Hydrogenated oil/ Vanaspati ghee: 60g

Sugar: 50g

Ammonium bi carbonated: 0.75 g

Baking soda: 0.5g

Cardamom and nutmeg powder: 1.5g

Milk/ water: 5-10 ml



Method:

- Sieve flour twice.
- Make smooth cream of Vanaspati Ghee.
- Add sugar in parts while creaming, until it becomes shining white and fluffy.
- Add Cardamom-nutmeg powder and milk to it and mix well. Now, take small quantity of flour and mix it to the creaming.
- Add ammonium bi carbonate, baking soda to the cream and mix well.
- Add the remaining flour and make the dough soft.
- After the dough is prepared, make round small balls out of it and put it in baking tray and bake it at 165 C for 20-22 minutes.

Recipes of Nut Cookies

Ingredients

Refined wheat flour: 100gm

Hydrogenated oil/ Vanaspati ghee: 60g

Sugar: 50g

Peanut/ Almond: 20g

Vanilla Essence: 1g / 5-10 drops

Baking Powder: 1g

Milk/ water: 15 ml

Salt: 0.25g

Method:

- Sieve flour twice and add groundnut to it
- Cream shortening.
- Add sugar in parts while creaming, until it becomes shining white and fluffy.
- Add milk and vanilla essence and salt to it and mix well (if you have taken egg then add essence in it and beat it properly and then add to the creaming). Now, take small quantity of flour and mix it to the creaming.
- Add baking powder to the mixture.
- Do the same for the remaining flour and make the dough soft.
- After the dough is prepared, make rectangular shaped dough and keep it in fridge till the dough gets hard. (around 30 min,)
- After the dough gets hard, cut it with a knife (you can also brush the biscuits with egg or milk)
- Put it in baking tray and bake it at 165 C for 20-22 minutes.

