

Hazelnut Chocolate Chip Cookies

If you love hazelnuts like I do, you'll adore these cookies. They are addictive! The hazelnuts are not mixed into the dough in this recipe but rather pressed onto the exterior of the dough ball. I love the appearance this gives and the way the nuts are roasted to full flavor. It is best if you refrigerate the dough overnight, or prep the dough in the morning and bake in the afternoon.

Yields 20-24 cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 12 ounces bittersweet chocolate - diced into small chunks (or bittersweet chocolate chips)
- 8 ounces hazelnuts - roughly chopped

Preparation of Cookie Dough:

1. Pre-measure and stage all of your ingredients (except hazelnuts). The French call this *mis en place*.
2. Using the paddle attachment on your mixer, cream together the butter and the two sugars on low speed.
3. Add the eggs one at a time. Wait until the first has been incorporated before adding the second.
4. Mix in the vanilla, salt, and baking soda.
5. Add the flour 1 cup at a time until just incorporated. Add the chocolate chips (or chunks) and mix until distributed.
6. Form the dough into a log. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for a minimum of 6 hours. Longer is better.

Final preparation and Baking:

1. Place your two oven racks two levels apart in the middle of the oven. Pre-heat oven to 350 F.
2. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper or non-stick silicone baking mats.
3. Place chopped hazelnuts in a shallow bowl.
4. Portion the dough into 2 ounce balls (about the size of a golf ball).
5. Press each side of the dough balls into the hazelnuts. Coat well on all but the bottom side (which will be the side facing down on the cookie sheet), and press the nuts firmly into the exterior of the dough.
6. Place the dough balls on the cookie sheets, 3 inches apart. Lightly press down.
7. Bake 12-15 minutes until the edges are golden-brown and the center is light and puffy. For even baking, switch the cookie sheet positions after 6 to 7 minutes.
8. Cool on a wire rack for 5 to 10 minutes. Enjoy warm for maximum pleasure!

