

Sourdough Sugar Cookies with Royal Icing

Prep: 1 hour • Cook: 10 minutes

Soft, buttery cut-out sugar cookies with a gentle sourdough tang, tender centers and delicately crisp edges. Perfect for decorating, they balance sweetness with subtle fermentation notes.

Ingredients

- 1 cup unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup sourdough discard
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 6 tablespoons water (room temperature)
- 3 tablespoons meringue powder

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F (unless long fermenting).
2. In a stand mixer with a paddle attachment, cream the butter and granulated sugar for a few minutes until light and fluffy.
3. Add the eggs one at a time and mix until well incorporated.
4. Add vanilla and sourdough discard and mix until just combined, scraping down the sides as needed.
5. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt.
6. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients about 1/3 at a time, mixing until just incorporated.
7. Divide the dough into two discs and wrap with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days for long fermentation.
8. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/4 inch thickness between two sheets of parchment paper.
9. Use cookie cutters to cut out shapes and transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet.
10. Bake for 8–10 minutes, or until the edges just begin to turn golden.
11. Allow cookies to cool completely before icing.
12. To make the royal icing: Add powdered sugar, water, and meringue powder to a stand mixer or large bowl.

13. Using a whisk attachment (or hand mixer), whip until peaks form.
14. Adjust consistency as needed: add water 1 teaspoon at a time if too thick, or add powdered sugar 1–2 tablespoons at a time if too thin.
15. Transfer icing to a piping bag (or zip-top bag with a small corner snipped) and decorate the cooled cookies.

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