

WITCHES HATS COOKIES, FOR HALLOWEEN

INGREDIENTS

for the cookies

2 3/4 cups all purpose flour
3/4 cup unsweetened Dutch processed cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
1 3/4 cups granulated white sugar
2 large eggs
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

for the decoration

55-60 Hershey's Dark Chocolate Kisses, unwrapped
4 ounces dark chocolate
1 tablespoon vegetable shortening
"Halloween" sprinkles (optional)

for the frosting (the orange band on the hat)

1/2 cup (8 tablespoons) vegetable shortening
pinch of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 1/2 to 3 cups confectioners' sugar or glazing sugar
2 to 4 tablespoons milk
orange food coloring

You will also need: a 1 1/2 inch round cookie cutter, a very fine piping tip and a piping bag

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, salt, and baking powder. In the work bowl of your stand mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy (about 3 to 4 minutes). Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the vanilla extract and beat until combined. Add the flour mixture and beat until you have a smooth dough. Divide the dough in half and wrap each half in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for about one hour or until firm enough to roll.

Preheat oven to 350F. Prepare cookie sheets with parchment paper or silpat.

Remove one half of the chilled dough from the refrigerator and, on a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to a thickness of 1/4 inch. Cut with the round cookie cutter, transfer cookies to the prepared baking sheet. Place the baking sheets with the unbaked cookies in the refrigerator for 10 to 15 minutes to chill the dough which prevents the cookies from spreading and losing their shape while baking.

Bake cookies for about 10 or until they are firm around the edges. Remove from oven and let cookies cool on baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to finish cooling.

In a metal bowl set over a simmering pot of water, melt the chocolate and vegetable shortening. Line the counter or cookie sheets with wax paper, then dab a little bit of the chocolate on the center of the cookie and attach a Hershey's kiss. Let harden completely. I usually let them sit a good long while, like a few hours, before moving on to the next step.

In the work bowl of your stand mixer, beat shortening until fluffy. Beat in the salt and vanilla. Add the confectioners' and 2 tablespoons of the milk, and beat until smooth. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl. Add food coloring, just a drop or dab (if using gel kind) at a time and mix again. Adjust the consistency of the frosting as needed by adding more confectioners' sugar or milk. Add more food coloring if needed. Affix the piping tip and fill piping bag with orange frosting. Frost at the base of the Kiss, where it adheres to the cookie, emphasizing the hat, and sprinkle with a few sprinkles, gently patting them on. Repeat with all the hats.