

Pistachio Shortbread Cookies

½ cup shelled unsalted pistachio nuts (if you can only find salted pistachio nuts, rinse them under cold water and then dry them thoroughly)

¾ cup granulated sugar, divided

1⅔ cups all-purpose flour

¼ cup cornstarch

¼ teaspoon salt

¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter

1 large egg yolk

2-inch fluted or scalloped round cookie cutter

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 325°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper or foil.
2. Place the pistachios and ¼ cup of the sugar in the bowl of a food processor and process until the nuts are finely ground, about 30 seconds. Add the flour, cornstarch, and salt and pulse until blended. Set aside.
3. In the bowl of an electric mixer, using the paddle attachment, beat the butter and remaining ½ cup of sugar at medium-high speed until light, about 2 minutes. Add the egg yolk and mix at low speed until blended, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add the dry ingredients, mixing until combined.
4. Scrape the out onto a work surface and knead it a few times, until smooth. Divide it in half and shape each half into a disk.
5. Place one of the disks on a large piece of waxed paper, place another piece of waxed paper over it, and, using a rolling pin, roll it out to a thickness of ⅛ inch. Carefully peel off the top piece of waxed paper, then replace it loosely and flip over the dough. Peel off the second piece of waxed paper. Using a 2-inch fluted or scalloped round cookie cutter, cut out as many cookies as possible from the dough. Arrange the cookies ½ inch apart on the prepared baking sheets. Gather up the scraps and reroll them between the sheets of waxed paper. Bake the cookies, one sheet at a time, for 13 to 16 minutes, until just lightly colored around the edges. Watch the cookies carefully, as their color will change very quickly. Transfer the cookies to a wire rack and cool completely. Repeat with the remaining dough.

Notes:

I've found that if you roll the dough to ¼ inch rather than ⅛ inch, the cookies handle much better as they're moved onto the baking sheet and then onto the wire rack. Also, it saves a lot of time, both in rolling and in baking.