



Chocolate Peanut Butter Shortbread Cookies

Contrasting flavors of peanut butter and chocolate in buttery shortbread

Shortbread Cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup natural peanut butter, stir well
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups all-purpose flour

Chocolate Ganache Frosting

4 ounces heavy cream
3 ounces sweet dark chocolate, chopped

Garnish: Sliced almonds; small round candies; salt optional

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper; set aside.
- In large mixing bowl, mix butter and natural peanut butter until combined; add brown sugar, vanilla, and salt. Beat on medium speed until combined and fluffy. Gradually beat in flour on lower speed until combined into cookie dough.
- Using a 2 Tablespoon scoop for each cookie, form cookie dough into about 24 balls using lightly floured hands if needed. Place about 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. With the palm of your hands, lightly flatten each cookie to about 1/4 inch thickness.

- Bake in preheated 350-degree F. oven for about 12 minutes or lightly browned. Let cool for about 10 minutes; remove to wire rack; cool completely.
Yield: about 24 cookies

Prepare Chocolate Ganache Frosting: Place heavy whipping cream in microwave safe container, cook on high power about 20 seconds or just until hot but not boiling. Pour it over a bowl of chocolate pieces. Let the cream sit on the chocolate for a minute. Stir the ganache until the cream and the chocolate are fully combined and smooth.

Decorate Cookies: Top each cookie with a round circle of chocolate glaze leaving about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch cookie edge. Top each cookie with about 5 sliced almonds forming a five-petal flower design and place round white candies in the center. Lightly sprinkle with sea salt if desired. Yield: 24 cookies

Cook's Note: If desired, use natural almond butter in place of natural peanut butter. I placed cookies in the refrigerator to quickly chill the soft chocolate. I used the back of the spoon to spread the chocolate into a bigger circle. If you use regular peanut butter, the cookies will have a soft texture. We also used tweezers to accurately place each sliced almond piece.

About the Recipe: After seeing this decorating idea in a *Better Homes & Garden* magazine, I thought that peanut butter and chocolate would make a delicious contrasting flavor combination in a buttery shortbread cookie, and I loved the flower decorations that were made using sliced almonds. These melt-in-your-mouth shortbread cookies are perfect for your summer cookie dessert tray.