



LACE COOKIE

Makes 5 to 6 dozen (2 1/2-inch) cookies

Prep: 25 to 30 minutes

Bake: 10 to 15 minutes per batch

Parchment paper for lining the pans

1 1/3 cups (4 1/2 to 5 ounces/128 to 142 grams) finely chopped pecans

1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar

1/4 cup (30 grams) all-purpose flour

1/3 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick/114 grams) unsalted butter, melted

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 large egg, lightly beaten

Kosher salt or flaky sea salt for sprinkling (optional)

Heat the oven to 325 degrees F, with a rack in the middle. Line two 12-by-17-inch baking sheets with parchment paper.

Place the pecans, sugar, flour, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl and stir to combine. Add the melted butter, vanilla, and lightly beaten egg and stir until smooth.

Drop the dough by teaspoonfuls onto the prepared pans 3 inches apart, 10 to 12 to a pan.

Bake, one pan at a time, until golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on the pan for 3 minutes. Run a metal spatula under them and transfer to a wire rack to cool. Sprinkle with kosher or sea salt, if desired. Repeat with the remaining dough, cooling the pans between batches.

After the cookies cool completely, store in an airtight container between sheets of waxed paper for up to 2 weeks.

About the Recipe:

Secrets

In this deeply nostalgic recipe, which Lee Barnes included in her 1977 *Lee Barnes' Cooking* cook- book, she instructs you to line the baking pans with foil or parchment and drop the dough by “small ice teaspoons” on the pan. Ice or iced teaspoons, those long and slender spoons for stirring sugar into a tall glass of tea, aren't used much anymore. But the idea is to drop just a bit of the dough onto the pan because these cookies have so little flour, they spread while baking. I use the smaller end of a melon ball scoop. I also add a sprinkling of kosher salt once the cookies are cooling, to cut the sweetness of the sugar.

Recipe Story:

Lee Barnes' Creole lace Cookies

Lace cookies are as much a part of Louisiana and Mississippi as the magnolia. With a praline-like flavor, they bake up thin and see-through, like lace. This recipe comes from the files of the late Lee Barnes, who taught cooking in New Orleans from 1974 to 1989 and was a native of Natchez, Mississippi. At first she taught cooking classes out of her apartment, then opened a school, advertising her classes on the sides of streetcars. She taught mostly Creole and French cooking and invited guest chefs Leah Chase, Jacques Pépin, and Paul Prudhomme to teach as well. When she was remembered at a tribute in 2002 by her alma mater, Newcomb College, and Slow Food New Orleans, it was said her greatest gift was helping New Orleans to remember its very own recipes. Barnes died of a brain tumor at forty-one in 1992.

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