

CHOCOLATE AND VANILLA "GLITTER CONVERSATION HEARTS" COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

for the chocolate

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
1/2 cup confectioners sugar
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
4 tablespoons milk
various colored sugar sprinkles or edible glitter

for the vanilla

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup white sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons orange juice
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup confectioners sugar
3 tablespoons lemon juice
various colored sugar sprinkles or edible glitter

You will also need the "conversation heart cookie cutters" (<http://www.amazon.com/Chicago-Metallic-CMB032-Conversation-Cutters/dp/B00CH5PC68>) and a food-safe mini paint brush

DIRECTIONS

For the chocolate cookies: 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 and imprint with the "conversation heart" cookie cutters, 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 – 12 minutes (depending on size) 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.

To decorate, whisk together milk, cocoa and confectioners sugar in a small bowl. Using a food safe paint brush, brush the backs of the cookies with the sugar "glue" and then sprinkle with sugar sprinkles or glitter.

For the vanilla cookies: In mixing bowl, cream together unsalted butter, sugar and egg until light and fluffy. Beat in flour, baking powder, salt, orange juice and vanilla until smooth and well combined. Chill in refrigerator 2-3 hours or until firm enough to be rolled.

Preheat oven to 400F. Roll out half of the dough on a well floured surface to 1/4 inch thickness (be careful to get the surface even, otherwise you will have oddly-browned cookies. Also, do not roll the dough too thin, otherwise you will have hard cookies when they come out of the oven).

Cut and imprint with the "conversation heart" cookie cutters. Place on cookie sheet lined with silpat or parchment paper and carefully slide a toothpick in the end, so that one or two sticks out the bottom. Bake 12-13 minutes or until golden brown at the edges. Cool completely on a wire rack.

To decorate, whisk together lemon juice and confectioners sugar in a small bowl. Using a food safe paint brush, brush the backs of the cookies with the sugar "glue" and then sprinkle with sugar sprinkles or glitter.