

Danish Pastry

Modified from a recipe found on Epicurious 2016

INGREDIENTS

Danish Pastry

- 3 ½ cups King Arthur bread flour (send away for it; higher protein and loftier yeasted breads)
- 3 sticks CHILLED salted butter (needs to be firm so it doesn't melt into the flour)
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- ½ cup warm water
- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ tsp (rounded) freshly crushed cardamom (I couldn't find fresh, used Spice islands from store)
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 eggs room temperature, well beaten
- ½ cup sugar
- Small package of sliced (not slivered) almonds for sprinkling on top

Almond Filling

- ½ stick butter (save other ½ for icing)
- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- ¼ tsp almond extract
- Two generous dashes cinnamon
- 1 cup finely pulverized almonds (Almond "flour" that's 100% almonds is perfect)
- 1 7 oz stick of almond PASTE (not marzipan which is too sweet)
- 1 egg white

Egg Wash

- 1 slightly beaten egg
- 2 tbs milk (I used one water, one heavy cream)

Icing

- ½ stick butter, browned slightly
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2-3 tsp water

PREPARATION

Read the whole recipe first then make your shopping list and gather kitchen tools (including waxed paper). The dough will sit overnight so plan accordingly.

DAY 1

Pastry

- Measure flour into large bowl. Cut the chilled butter into ¼" thick slices and add flour. Cut the butter into the flour until approximate size of peas. (*Watch YouTube videos on cutting butter into flour if you have never done this*) You don't need a food processor and it doesn't take that long to do.
- In another med size bowl, dissolve/gently stir yeast in warm water. Let stand 5 min. Stir in the cardamom, 2 TB milk, salt, sugar and (already beaten) eggs.
- Pour this mixture into the flour. With rubber spatula, mix just until dry ingredients are well moistened. Cover with saran wrap and refrigerate 4 hours, overnight or up to 4 days. *I went overnight.*

DAY 2

Roll the dough

- Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface/mat. Dust with flour. Let sit a few minutes (to soften just a bit) and then pound and flatten to make a 16-20" rectangle.
- Fold each short side toward the middle, making two layers. Flip over, roll out, and fold again. Repeat one more time. Dough should be firm and pliable.
- Wrap and chill the folded dough 30 minutes (overnight at latest).

Make the Filling

- In a skillet, on low to medium heat, lightly brown/toast the almond meal. Stir frequently as the toasting point will happen quickly. As soon as you see brown appearing, stir rapidly to evenly brown, and remove from heat before it gets too brown. *Let cool a few minutes. Toasting brings out the nut flavor. You can skip this part if you blow it. Have extra almond meal on hand.*
- Cream butter and sugar until light; blend in almond extract, cinnamon, and only 5 OZ OF THE softened almond paste. Eat the rest later.
- When well blended, add the egg white and the cooled almond meal.

Make the Shapes

- Line two baking sheets with waxed paper. *I used one and did half the recipe at a time to see what I wanted to change on the second go around.*

- Unfold the dough on a lightly floured surface. Cut in half lengthwise. Put one back in fridge til you're ready for it.

PREHEAT OVEN to 400

- Roll the first HALF into a rectangle 12 " x 6".
- Spread 1/2 the filling all the way to the edges. *It may be rough but gently work it around with the spatula or your hands.*
- Roll up, like you're making pinwheels, from the short side.
- Use your fingers to pinch, blend edges lengthwise so it doesn't open.
- Slice 1" thick slices and place on waxed paper baking sheet.
- With a knife, gently cut into the sides about half way to the middle of each roll, going around like you are making 5-6 flower petals. Instead of a smooth, round roll, this will give you the bear-claw like effect of more brown, crunchy edges. *After baking you will see if you did this right or not and can correct the second time.*
- Let rolls rise about 15-30 minutes til slightly puffy. They will not double.

Wash the Rolls

Make egg wash and brush generously on rolls, sprinkling (as many as you want) sliced almonds on top. You can press them in a teensy bit. *The egg wash will make the nuts stick and give a nice brown to the cooked dough.*

Bake

15 minutes or until golden. The sliced almonds will toast just right.

Frost

- Meanwhile (or made ahead) brown the butter lightly.
- Cool slightly. Blend with powdered sugar, vanilla, and water as needed to make a thick but spreadable consistency. It should *form a slight "shell" when cool so that the rolls are not goopy to touch.*
- As soon as they come out and are still warm, frost with a BRUSH so that the icing will melt. Dab so as not to loosen nuts, and dab around the edges with the frosting.
- Let cool slightly then enjoy!
- Repeat with the second ½ of the dough.

Freeze

OR place the filling in the second half, roll it up, and freeze (double wrapped) for later. When you use the second half, let it come to chilled temperature in the fridge before using (not right out of the freezer). *Should be good for a few weeks or so.*

Variations

Next time I will use some cherry or raspberry preserves instead of the almond filling, and someday I will try a cream cheese filling.

Rose