

CHOCOLATE BISCOTTI

MAKES ABOUT 40 COOKIES

Being known as an Italian pastry chef, I've had to make my fair share of biscotti. The thing that I love the most about this recipe is that it's so versatile. I've added dried cherries to this one, but really, you can get as creative as you want and the results will always be great. Try cranberries instead of cherries, for example. Or for a mocha-java version, add 1 teaspoon instant espresso powder along with the flour; and for an orange-chocolate version, add 1 teaspoon grated orange zest and 1 teaspoon orange extract (in place of the vanilla) and omit the dried fruit. Play around to find what you like and make it your own unique creation!

1/2 pound (2 sticks) + 3 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed

1 1/2 cups sugar

5 large eggs

2 large egg yolks

2 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for shaping

1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted

2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 cup dried cherries

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a 10 x 15-inch baking sheet with parchment paper or a nonstick silicone liner.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Reduce the speed to low and beat in the whole eggs, egg yolks, and

vanilla, making sure they are incorporated fully. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt. Beat the flour mixture into the dough on medium speed, then beat in the cherries and chocolate chips.

To achieve that famous biscotti shape, divide the dough into two portions and roll each into a log about the length of the baking sheet. It's okay to use more flour on the surface to help shape the logs, as the dough will be sticky. Place the logs on the baking sheet and gently pat down the tops of the logs to square them off.

Bake for 10 minutes, then rotate the pan front to back and bake for 15 minutes more. Take the pan out of the oven; leave the oven on but turn the temperature down to 325°F. Allow the logs to cool slightly, still on the pan.

Slice the logs crosswise into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick slices and lay them flat on the baking sheet. Bake for 6 minutes. Flip the biscotti over and bake 6 minutes longer. Transfer to wire racks to cool.

chef it up!

Melt dark or white chocolate chips with vegetable shortening (this gives the chocolate a glossy effect). Use 1 teaspoon shortening per cup of white chocolate and 2 teaspoons per cup of dark. Dip one end of the finished biscotti into the melted chocolate.

