



Signature Cut-Out Cookie Recipe

This buttery, vanilla-almond cookie is soft and chewy with crisp edges. It bakes up beautifully and holds its shape without spreading, making it ideal for cut-outs.

INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{3}{4}$ C. Unsalted Butter, room temp (170g)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ C. Vegetable Shortening- such as Crisco (52g)
- 1 C. Light Brown Sugar (200g)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ C. Granulated Sugar (100g)
- 2 large eggs, room temp (100g)
- 2 t LorAnn Vanilla Bean Paste (10ml)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ t LorAnn Almond Bakery Emulsion (2.5ml)
- 3.5-4.0 C. All-Purpose Flour (480-560 grams)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt – I prefer pink Himalayan sea salt, but regular salt works just as well (4g)



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DIRECTIONS

In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the butter, shortening, brown sugar, and granulated sugar on medium speed until smooth and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Be sure to remove or break up any lumps in the brown sugar to avoid dents in your baked cookies.

In a separate bowl, mix eggs, vanilla bean paste, and almond bakery emulsion. Cold eggs can cause the butter to seize and may lead to a curdled mixture. Pour the mixture into the creamed butter and sugar and mix on medium speed for 2 minutes, or until fully combined.

In a third bowl, whisk together 3 1/2 cups of flour and salt. I typically start with 3 1/2 cups (480 grams) of flour.

With the mixer on low speed, gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture. Continue on low until everything is combined. If the mixture is sticky, you can add additional flour, 1/4 cup at a time, until the dough is soft but no longer sticky.

Roll the dough between two sheets of parchment paper to your desired thickness. Transfer the dough, still on the parchment, to a large zip-top bag. Chill in the refrigerator overnight or freeze for later use. Well-chilled dough is much easier to work with and cuts cleanly.

When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350°F. Remove dough from the refrigerator and cut into shapes on a lightly floured surface. Place on baking sheets lined with parchment paper and bake for 10–12 minutes, or until the bottoms are just barely golden.



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TIPS

- Using a butter and shortening blend helps cookies hold their shape better while baking and gives a softer texture.
- Shortening bakes up lighter and prevents spreading, while butter keeps the rich flavor and crisp edges
- Almond extract brings a warm, bakery-style flavor that complements royal icing beautifully.
- Mix the dough just until the flour is incorporated to prevent tough cookies.
- Always chill the dough for the best results
- Store finished cookies in an airtight container for up to one week or freeze for longer storage.
- You can freeze dough sheets in advance and simply move them to the refrigerator the night before baking. This gives the dough plenty of time to thaw slowly while staying chilled and ready to cut.
- You may substitute Vanilla Extract for the Vanilla Bean Paste.

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