

Italian Rainbow Cookies

Actually if you turn them upside down they would be Hungarian rainbow cookies but since they are deeply rooted in Italian patisserie I will not muddy the waters today. The first time I had these was at a baby shower for a Cuban friend. Her father had sent them from New York . I had never seen them before but I was enchanted by their colors and adorable size. When I asked my friend what they were called she said she didn't know, just that they came from a New York bakery. Well, it didn't take much research to uncover the deets (can I still use that word if I am 45?). These are a new favorite in my family and I love that I can give just one piece to each of my children and make them feel they are getting a special cake!

Italian Rainbow Cookies



- 200 g sugar
- 8 oz almond paste
- 340 g unsalted butter (softened)
- 4 eggs (separated)
- 60 g whole milk
- 2 tsp almond extract
- 240 g all purpose flour
- 6 drops red food gel
- 6 drops green food gel
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raspberry jam
- 130 g semisweet chocolate or dark chocolate, chopped

(melted)

- 1 tbsp unsalted butter (optional)
- 2 tbsp heavy cream (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 325F and grease three quarter sheet cake pans (9"x13") with baking spray and line with parchment paper. [I had only one quarter sheet pan and one half sheet pan so I created a divider in the half sheet pan using a thick piece of foil covered by parchment paper].
2. In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the sugar, almond paste and 113 g of the butter (one stick). Mix until smooth then add the remaining butter and continue to mix until smooth.
3. Gradually add the egg yolks, followed by the milk and almond extract. Mix until combined. Add the flour and mix until combined, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed.
4. In a separate bowl, whip the egg whites until they form stiff peaks. Fold the egg whites into the flour mixture in three parts – gently so as not to deflate the meringue. Divide equally between 3 bowls. Add red gel to one bowl and green to another bowl.
5. Pour batter into prepared pans and use a spatula to gently even out the surface. Bake 12-14 minutes or until set then cool completely.
6. Turn out red layer onto a cake board or serving platter and spread half of the jam evenly over top. Repeat with white layer then top with green layer. [I found it easier and neater to layer the cakes in my sheet pan].
7. Cover the cake with plastic wrap and top with another sheet pan or a heavy book. Refrigerate for at least 4

hours.

8. Remove the weights and plastic wrap. Spread the melted chocolate over top and refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes. Alternatively, you make a ganache with the heavy cream and butter. This will make a softer chocolate layer that you can easily cut through. To do this: bring the heavy cream to a boil and pour over chocolate. Let sit for 5 minutes then add butter and gently whisk until smooth.
9. Once set, trim $\frac{1}{4}$ " off each side of the cake to get even edges. Cut the cake into $1\frac{1}{2}$ "x $\frac{3}{4}$ "rectangles.
10. These will keep at room temperature for a week in an airtight container.