

Chocolate Hazelnut Cookies

1 cup cocoa
4 cups confectioners' sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 cups of hazelnuts

3/4 cup egg whites
1 tablespoon vanilla
2 teaspoons almond extract

Preheat oven to 350°. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

If the hazelnuts are already blanched, toast them on a separate baking sheet for a few minutes. If not blanched, toast them till the skins begin to blister, then rub off as much of the skin as possible in paper towels. Chop coarsely.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, sift in the confectioners' sugar, then sift the cocoa. Whisk together with the salt. Add the chopped nuts. Mix on low speed for a minute or two.

With the mixer still running, slowly add the room-temperature egg whites, the vanilla, and the almond extract. Increase the mixer speed to medium, and mix for about 4 minutes, until the batter begins to thicken. Batter should begin to hold its shape, but don't over mix.

With a half-filled ice-cream scoop, place batter on the prepared cookie sheets, leaving ample space between the cookies to allow for spreading.

Place the sheets on two oven racks, and lower the oven temperature to 320°. Bake for about 15-18-minutes or until small cracks appear on the surface of the cookies. Reverse the baking sheets halfway through the baking process.

Remove the cookies along with the parchment paper onto cooling racks. Let the cookies cool thoroughly before removing them from the parchment paper.