



# Christmas Wreath Shortbread Cookies

Makes: 24 servings

Prep Time: 1 hour Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 40 minutes

## Ingredients

### Cookies:

- 8 ounces unsalted butter, very soft
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 & 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup cornstarch

### Glaze:

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 4-5 tbsp half and half
- 1/4-1/2 tsp peppermint extract
- green liquid food coloring, two shades

### Fondant Bows: (optional)

- red buttercream fondant
- fondant bow mold

## Instructions

### Cookies:

Line 2 sheet pans with parchment paper. Set aside.

Place soft butter in a medium-size mixing bowl. Stir with a wooden spoon or sturdy spatula until nice and smooth. Add powdered sugar and vanilla. Mix together by hand for about 30 seconds until well blended. Add the flour and cornstarch. Stir until dry ingredients are mostly incorporated. The dough will be a little shaggy.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and gather into a ball. Knead 5-6 times until fairly smooth and all the small pieces are worked in. Form into a ball again and flatten with your hand

to form a flat disk.

Turn the disk to coat both sides with flour. Roll out the dough to an approximate ¼-inch thickness. Keep work surface, dough and rolling pin lightly dusted with flour.

With a round scalloped or fluted cookie cutter, cut out circles of dough and transfer them to the prepared pans with a thin, metal spatula. Re-roll scraps as many times as needed to use up the dough. Center a smaller round scalloped or fluted cookie cutter on each larger circle and cut out the center or “opening” of each wreath. Do not try to remove the centers at this time (It’s easy to mess up the dough if you try to remove the centers now.) Place cutouts in the refrigerator for at least one hour or up to 24 hours.

Once cookies are chilled, slip your finger underneath and push out the centers. Place them on the sheet pan and bake along with the wreaths for pretty little bite-size cookies.

When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350°F. Bake for 12-14 minutes, or until just beginning to turn golden at the edges. Repeat with the second pan of cutouts. Cool on a wire rack before icing.

#### For the Glaze:

Combine powdered sugar, 4 tablespoons half and half (or milk) and extract in a medium-size bowl. Mix until smooth. The glaze should be fairly thick, but pourable. Add a little more half and half (or milk) if it's too thick, a little more powdered sugar if it's too thin. Taste the glaze and add more extract, if a more intense flavor is desired.

Transfer the glaze to a small shallow bowl (a little larger than your cookies). Using two shades of liquid green food color, add two drops of each to the icing. Swirl greens together with a toothpick until most of the white has disappeared and the surface of the icing is a swirled green.

Hold onto the edges of a cookie and dip the top surface into the glaze, being sure all of the surface touches the glaze. Pull cookie straight up out of the glaze and over to the drip bowl. Allow excess glaze to drip for about 15-20 seconds. When dripping slows down, quickly flip the cookie to the right side up and give it a gentle jiggle to allow the glaze to flow evenly over the surface. Sprinkle cookies with nonpareils.

Repeat with remaining cookies. Place cookies on a cooling rack and add the fondant bows, if desired. Allow the glaze to dry for at least an hour before transferring to a storage container.

## How to make a Fondant Bow:

Fondant comes in a small container or a pouch (for smaller amounts) with a lid for easy storage. When you open the container the fondant may feel hard and stiff. A 10-second stint in the microwave is all it takes to make it soft and easy to work with.

Pull off a small piece of fondant about the size of two peanuts. Knead it with your fingers for 10-15 seconds until it's nice and pliable. Fill the openings of the mold with fondant until they are overflowing (see picture above). It will look like a mess at this point but that will soon change.

Using a sharp knife parallel to the mold, cut off the excess fondant.

You don't have to wait for the fondant to harden. Just bend the mold and pull out the bows. With a toothpick, dab a bit of icing on the back of the bow then "glue" it to the wreath.

*Recipe from The Cafe Sucre Farine*