



ITALIAN PINE-NUT COOKIES

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup all purpose flour
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 (8 ounce) container pure almond paste
2 egg whites
1 to 3 ounces pine nuts
Additional confectioners' sugar as desired
Red or green candied cherries, halved for decorations

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Place a nonstick pads on insulated cookie sheets.
In a medium bowl, combine confectioners' sugar, granulated sugar, flour, and salt; set aside.

Crumble almond paste with your hands into a mixing bowl. Add egg whites; beat until mixture is smooth. Slowly add reserved flour mixture at low speed until well blended.

With floured hands, roll about 3/4 Tablespoon of dough into a 1 inch ball. Place cookies about three inches apart on reserved cookie sheets.

For pine nut cookies: Lightly flatten the top of each cookie with the bottom of a flour dusted glass, forming a round cookie. Press about 4 pine nuts in the center of each cookie. Bake in 300 degreeF oven for about 20 to 25 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes; remove to cooling rack. Dust cookies with confectioners' sugar.

For cherry rosette press cookies: Spoon the cookie dough into a pastry bag or cookie press with a number 6 star tip. Press small rosette cookies about 3 inches apart on the prepared cookie sheets. Cut each candied cherry into about 6 pieces; place a piece of cherry in the center of each cookie. Bake in 300 degreeF oven for 15 to 20 minutes or light brown. Let rest about 5 minutes; remove cookies to rack; cool completely. Store cookies in an air tight container. Yield: about 30 cookies

About this recipe: Your guests see a plate filled with almond paste and pine nut flavored cookies and are amazed how quickly you made two attractive cookie recipes. Of course, we won't tell them that this recipe creates two different styles of cookies with only one recipe. I won't tell – it's our secret recipe.