



### **First American Cookey (Cookies)**

First U.S. printed recipe for cookies 1796 Amelia Simmons

#### **Recipe Adapted: for unavailable ingredients and decreased quantity**

1-1/4 cups granulated sugar  
1/2 cup water  
3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour, divided  
1 Tablespoon ground coriander  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1/4 cup buttermilk or sour milk  
4 Tablespoons butter  
Additional all-purpose flour as needed

**Cook Sugar Syrup:** Combine sugar and water in a medium sized saucepan; cook to boiling; reduce heat to medium low; cook to dissolve sugar and form clear sugar syrup, about 5 to 7 minutes; stir occasionally. Set aside to cool.

**Before Starting:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line cookie sheets with nonstick silicone baking pads.

**Form Cookie Dough:** Place cool sugar syrup in mixing bowl, add 1 cup flour and coriander. Stir baking soda to dissolve in buttermilk; mix into cookie batter; mix in butter. Stir in remaining flour until very thick cookie dough forms.

**Cut Out Cookie Shapes:** Remove to lightly floured pastry sheet. Remove one third of dough; cover remaining dough to stay moist. Roll dough into  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thickness. Using any desired 2-1/2-inch cookie cutter; cut out shapes; place on prepared cookie sheet. If desired, sprinkle cookies with white or colored granulated or decorating sugar. The original cookies didn't have any sugar sprinkles.

**Bake Cookies:** Bake in preheated 350-degree F oven for 12 to 15 minutes or lightly golden. Let cool about 5 minutes; remove to wire rack to cool completely. Yield: about 37 cookies

**From:** The First American Cookbook-American Cookery 1796  
by Amelia Simmons

It is not only the first in American cookbook, but a historic document. It reveals a rich variety of food Colonial Americans enjoyed, their tastes, cooking and eating habits, and even their colorful language.

**Heartwarming Story:** Amelia Simmons, an American orphan, felt that she lacked the education sufficient to prepare the recipe work for the press. She worked as a domestic in Colonial America and gathered her cookery expertise from first-hand experience. Her book points out the best ways of judging the quality of meats, poultry, fish, vegetable etc. and presents the best methods of preparing and cooking them. Here are the first uniquely American recipes using corn meal, Indian pudding, Johny cake, pumpkin pudding, winter squash pudding and brewing spruce beer. The words "cookie" and "slaw" made their first published appearance in this book.

**About the Recipe:** The puffy little cookies have both crunchy and soft textures. It's perfect to serve with some fruit jam since it isn't very sweet. The dough is easy to roll and cut out the shapes. We sprinkled our cookies with a little sugar and even added a candied cherry half on the top of some of the cookies as a holiday decoration. The recipe is amazing!

### **The Original Recipe from The First American Cookbook 1796**

#### **Cookies**

One pound sugar  
1/2 pint water  
2 tea spoons pearl ash  
Milk  
2-1/2 pound flour  
4 ounces butter  
2 large spoons finely powdered coriander seed

One pound sugar boiled slowly in half pint water, boil well and cool, add two tea spoons pearl ash dissolved in milk, then two and half pound flour, rub in 4 ounces butter, and two large spoons of finely powdered coriander seed, wet with above; make rolls half an inch thick and cut to the shape you please; bake fifteen or twenty minutes in a flat oven—good three weeks.

#### **Powdered coriander seed**

Coriander powder is produced from whole ground coriander seeds. It is today an essential part of many cuisines around the world, especially in Asia. In a country like India, there are, in fact, very few dishes that are prepared without adding a pinch or two of this aromatic powder. Coriander has been known as one of the oldest spices in history, and it is considered to be both a spice and an herb. It is derived from the *Coriandrum sativum* plant and is a close relative of celery, parsley, and surprisingly, carrots. Coriander powder is known to have many health benefits, from relieving bloating to helping indigestion

#### **Pearl ash**

An alkaline salt, pearlash (chemically known as potassium carbonate ( $K_2CO_3$ )) reacts with water or an acid such as sour milk, fruit juice, or molasses to create carbon dioxide. This gives baked goods lift. Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) all but replaces it in modern recipes for traditional German baked goods.