



Brown Sugar Milk Tea Cookies

Makes 18 cookies

Total Time 1½ hours, plus 1 hour sitting and cooling

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: This chewy, rich, black tea-scented cookie takes inspiration from the incredible flavor of brown sugar milk tea, a boba shop favorite. In this popular drink, a deep-brown sugar syrup made from Taiwanese sugar is drizzled on the insides of the glass (earning its moniker “tiger milk tea”) before chewy tapioca pearls (boba), bathed in the same syrup, are added to the bottom. Then, a mix of creamy milk and fragrant black tea is poured in. Although we couldn’t incorporate boba into the cookies (the pearls harden), we were able to approximate the super deep, dark Taiwanese sugar, by adding molasses to a dark brown sugar cookie base for lots of extra depth and chew. Infusing the butter with tea leaves gives the most pronounced tea aroma and flavor to counterbalance the sugar. A final milky glaze brings the concept together for a surprising treat that milk tea enthusiasts and newcomers alike will savor.

For the best tea flavor, use a high quality, loose leaf English breakfast tea, or equal parts Assam and Ceylon loose leaf teas. Do not use bagged tea as the cut of the tea leaves is too fine.

Cookies

- 16 tablespoons (228 grams) unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons English -breakfast tea leaves
- 2 cups (284 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups packed (297 grams) dark brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon molasses

Glaze

- 3 tablespoons milk, plus extra as needed
- 1 tablespoon English breakfast tea leaves
- 1 ounce (28 grams) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup (113 grams) confectioners' sugar

1 For the cookies: Heat butter in medium saucepan over medium-low heat until melted. Stir in tea leaves and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low to maintain bare simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let sit for 30 minutes to extract flavor from tea leaves.

2 Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Strain butter-tea mixture through fine mesh strainer into large bowl, pressing on tea leaves to extract as much butter as possible (you should have about ¾ cup melted butter). Discard tea leaves. Whisk flour, salt, baking soda, and baking powder together in second bowl.

3 Add sugar, eggs, and molasses to cooled butter, whisking until smooth. Stir in flour mixture until just combined.

4 Working with 2 heaping tablespoons of dough at a time, roll into balls and space evenly on 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets (9 balls per sheet). Bake cookies, 1 sheet at a time, until edges are set but center is still puffy, 12 to 14 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking (cookies will look raw between cracks and seem underdone). Let cookies cool on sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to wire rack. Let cookies cool completely before glazing.

5 For the glaze: Microwave milk until steaming, 30 to 45 seconds. Add tea leaves and let steep for 5 minutes, then strain milk mixture through fine mesh strainer, pressing on tea leaves to extract as much milk as possible; discard tea leaves. (You should have about 2 tablespoons milk tea).

6 Whisk cream cheese and 2 tablespoons milk tea in medium bowl until smooth, then whisk in sugar. (Glaze should be thick and pourable. Add extra milk, drop by drop, if needed, to achieve desired consistency.)

7 Drizzle glaze attractively over cooled cookies. Let sit until glaze is set, about 15 minutes, before serving.

Storage: 3 days at room temperature