

## gluten-free vanilla-bean butter cutouts with cream cheese glaze

*Thin, crisp, and melt-in-your-mouth but-tery, these scrumptious gluten-free cookies are every bit as delightful as their traditional counterparts. This dough keeps very well in the refrigerator or freezer, so fresh cookies can always be on hand. For best results, keep all the ingredients as cool as possible during the process. For an alternative glaze and decorating ideas, see p. 93. Makes about 48 cookies*

- 2 vanilla beans**
- 2 large egg yolks, refrigerator cold**
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 14 oz. (2½ cups) gluten-free flour, such as King Arthur Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour (see p. 100)**
- 4¾ oz. (¾ cup) dark brown sugar**
- 2 oz. (½ cup) confectioners' sugar; more for dusting**
- 2 tsp. xanthan gum (see p. 100)**
- ½ tsp. fine sea salt**
- 8 oz. (16 Tbs.) cold salted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes and chilled**
- 2 tsp. ice water; more as needed**
- Sanding sugar (optional)**
- Cream Cheese Glaze (recipe at right)**

With a paring knife, halve the vanilla beans lengthwise. With the spine of the paring knife, scrape the vanilla seeds into a small bowl. Add the yolks and vanilla, and whisk until smooth.

In a food processor, combine the flour, sugars, xanthan gum, and salt. Process until well combined, about 10 seconds. Scatter the butter pieces over the flour, and pulse, scraping down the bowl as needed, until the mixture resembles coarse cornmeal, 15 to 18 pulses.

With the processor running, add the egg mixture, and process just until the dough begins to come together, about 10 seconds. (Don't let the mixture form a ball around the food processor blade.) Add 2 tsp. of the ice water, and pulse until the dough comes together around the blade. (If it doesn't come together, add more ice water, 1 tsp. at a time.) The dough will be soft, but not sticky.

Spread a large piece of plastic wrap on a work surface. Turn the dough onto the plastic wrap, drape more plastic wrap on top, and pat the dough into a mass. Divide the mass into three equal-size pieces. Place each piece onto a large sheet of plastic wrap, top with another sheet of plastic wrap, and gently press and shape into a 6-inch-diameter disk. Wrap each disk in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until the dough is firm, about 1 hour or overnight. (The dough can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days and in the freezer for up to 2 weeks; defrost in the fridge before using.)

Roll out one of the disks, keeping the others refrigerated, between two large sheets of plastic wrap or parchment to a thickness of about ¼ inch. (To prevent sticking, peel the top sheet of wrap or parchment off the dough, lightly dust the dough with confectioners' sugar, and put the wrap or parchment back onto the dough.) Flip the dough over, and repeat the process with the second sheet. Slide the dough, still nestled between the parchment or plastic wrap, onto a baking sheet, and refrigerate until firm, about 20 minutes. Repeat with the remaining dough.

When ready to bake, position a rack in the center of the oven, and heat the oven to 375°F. Line two baking sheets with silicone baking mats or parchment. Working with 1 sheet of dough at a time, peel off the top piece of parchment. Using a variety of cookie cutters, cut shapes as close together as possible. With a thin-bladed metal spatula, transfer the cutouts to the prepared baking sheets, spacing the cookies about 1½ inches apart. Decorate with sanding sugar, if you like, or leave plain if you intend to glaze later. Combine, reroll, and rechill dough scraps as necessary. (If the dough has softened a lot during this process, place the baking sheet into the refrigerator for about 10 minutes to firm up the dough before baking.)

Bake the cookies, one sheet at a time, until firm to the touch and golden brown, about 12 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

### cream cheese glaze

- 1¼ cups heavy cream; more as needed**
- 1 Tbs. cream cheese, at room temperature**
- 1 Tbs. corn syrup**
- 9 oz. (2½ cups) confectioners' sugar; more as needed**
- Food coloring (optional)**
- Sanding sugar (optional)**

In a medium bowl, whisk the cream, cream cheese, and corn syrup until free of lumps and very smooth. Whisk in the confectioners' sugar and food coloring, if using, until smooth. The glaze should be thick yet easy to spread. If too thick, add cream, ½ tsp. at a time. If too thin, add more confectioners' sugar.

Working with one cookie at a time, use a spoon to drizzle and spread the glaze. (The glaze should settle into a smooth surface in about a minute or so. If it doesn't, the glaze is too thick.) Add sanding sugar or other sprinkles, if you like. Let the glazed cookies dry for about a half-hour. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

—Kimberly Y. Masibay

