



FROM
ALBUQUERQUE BISCOCHITOS

Biscochitos or Bizcochitos

(bis-co-CHEE-toe)

These spicy, anise-flavored cookies from New Mexico are rich, crisp, and very easy to make. Biscochitos are the holiday cookie staple in New Mexico.

The Bizcochito is New Mexico's Official State Cookie as declared by the New Mexico Legislature in 1989. Biscochitos were first introduced to Mexico by Spanish settlers who brought the recipe from Spain.

Stored in a tightly sealed container, they can be frozen up to six months.

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups lard, chilled*
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
2 eggs
2 teaspoons anise seeds
4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
About 3 tablespoons brandy, apple juice, or milk*
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat lard and 1 cup sugar in a bowl until fluffy. Add eggs and anise seeds, and beat until very light and fluffy. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add to creamed mixture along with the brandy. Mix thoroughly to make a stiff dough. Place dough on a long piece, about three feet of waxed paper at one end. Bring the long end over the top and press to about one inch or slightly less in thickness and refrigerate until chilled.)

Roll out dough between waxed paper to just under ½ inch thickness. Cut with flour dusted cutters into the traditional fleur de lis shape or into 3-inch rounds. Combine the 3 remaining tablespoons sugar and the cinnamon in a shallow bowl; dip unbaked cookies into the sugar-cinnamon mixture on one side. Place cookies on ungreased baking sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until tops of cookies are just firm. Cool cookies on wire racks.

*Notes: Butter or margarine can be substituted for the lard, however the cookies will not be as crisp and moist. Apple juice or milk can be substituted for the brandy, however they are not quite as good.

Makes 4 dozen cookies

Recipe courtesy of Jane Butel's Southwestern Kitchen, www.janebutelcooking.com