

Serious Eats: Recipes

Cook the Book: Hazelnut Poppy Seed Cookies

Posted by Caroline Russock, February 10, 2010



[Photograph: Caroline Russock]

Sometimes you are just on a roll and yesterday my roll involved baking copious amounts of cookies. After I finished baking [Thomas Keller's Chocolate Chip Cookies](#), I decided to use my preheated oven to bake up another batch, this time **Hazelnut Poppy Seed Cookies** from [The Grand Central Baking Book](#) by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson.

The first order of business was to toast and peel the hazelnuts, which proved to be easier said than done. I had opted to buy the less expensive hazelnuts (also sold as filberts) with their skins still intact. As per the book's instructions I laid them out on a sheet pan and roasted them at 350°F for 15 minutes. The skins are supposed to slip off easily after this toasting but mine were pretty stubborn. Lots of tedious peeling made me think that next time I'll bite the bullet and invest in the pre-peeled nuts.

With my cup of hazelnuts peeled I assembled the rest of the dough, which is nothing more than a simple shortbread with the addition of poppy seeds. The dough is rolled into logs and refrigerated for a few hours before it is sliced and baked. I find that shortbread works best using this log method; rolling the dough tightly in parchment paper and chilling it ensures that even the crumbliest of shortbread cookies won't fall apart before they make it into the oven.

The cookies baked up beautifully—**crisp, crumbly, and buttery, but not overly sweet, as shortbread should be**. The hazelnuts were toasty and nutty—flavors made more intense by the baking—and the poppy seeds were a fantastic textural addition that made these cookies breakfast-worthy.

Win *The Grand Central Baking Book*

As always with our Cook the Book feature, we have five (5) copies of *The Grand Central Baking Book* to give away this week. [Enter to win here »](#)

Hazelnut Poppy Seed Cookies

- makes about 4 dozen cookies -

Adapted from [The Grand Central Baking Book](#) by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson.

Ingredients

3 cups plus 3 tablespoons (1 pound) all-purpose flour
1/4 cup (1.25 ounces) poppy seeds
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups (12 ounces, or 3 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 cup (7 ounces) granulated sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup (4 ounces) hazelnuts, lightly toasted and skinned

Procedure

1. Combine the dry ingredients: Measure the flour, poppy seeds, and salt into a bowl and whisk to combine.
2. Cream the butter and sugar and add the vanilla: Using a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat the butter and sugar together on medium speed until very smooth, about 3 minutes. Add the vanilla, then reduce the mixer speed to low.
3. Add the dry ingredients and hazelnuts: Add the dry ingredients and mix just until they disappear into the dough. Fold in the hazelnuts with a sturdy spatula.
4. Shape and chill the dough: Shape the dough into two logs 2 inches in diameter, then chill for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days (or freeze for up to 3 months).
5. Slice and bake the cookies: Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Slice the cookies 1/4 to 1/2-inch thick and place them about 1 inch apart, in 3 by 4 rows, on the prepared pans. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, rotating the pans halfway through the baking time. The cookies should be firm to the touch.

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