

## Cookie recipes

Jovita, e-mail message to Michael Miller

I wanted to share the cookie recipes with you that have been the staple of every Christmas I ever knew. I've been able to continue the tradition since my move to England but mom's still taste better. Sorry for the delay in sharing these, I misplaced my notebook where all my favorite 'mom recipes' are kept.

Both of these cookies store really well in airtight containers in a cool place. In fact almost too well. At home, we always start our Christmas baking after St Nick and go like crazy for weeks. Of course they tasted too good to wait for the holidays, so my mom got into the habit of hiding them. One year, she hid them so well that come the week before Christmas we were at it again, baking like crazy. That was the first year we had Christmas cookies for Easter.

Spritzelbakenes --- Now I'm pretty sure this is spelled incorrectly from my more recent knowledge of German. I think it should be spelled 'Spritzgebakenes.' Either way the pronunciation is phonetically -- shpritz-geh-bok-en-es. I'm not sure if that will help or not, but good luck.

The recipe -- 2 sticks softened butter or margarine, 1-1/4 Cups Sugar, 2 eggs, 1/2 tsp vanilla (my recipe says optional but I wouldn't make them without it) and 4 Cups flour.

Mix in the above order, creaming the butter and sugar, then adding the eggs one at a time and beating well after each. Then the vanilla and flour. Chill for 2-3 hours before shaping them. These will bake at 375 for about 8 minutes on an ungreased baking sheet.

Now comes the slightly difficult bit, as you'll need a meat-grinder to make this cookies properly -- and a special attachment for the front which creates the shapes. You crank the cookie dough through and cut them to whatever length you prefer. I remember this being quite a science when I was growing up. Of course this is also where they acquired the name 'cranker cookies' by those of us who couldn't quite handle the proper pronunciation. Now for those of you who have a meat grinder but know attachment, that's where I can help. After years of searching in the states to no avail, my choice of husband has definitely helped in this area. If you'd like an attachment just let me know and we can order it through my mother-in-law or I can pick it up when we spend Christmas with them. Alternatively you can roll walnut-sized balls and flatten them with the bottom of a drinking glass dipped in sugar, but somehow they don't taste the same as those out of the grinder.

### **Pfefferneusse (pepper nuts)**

Put 4 Cups sugar, 3 Cups honey and 1 C shortening (butter or margarine) in a pan and bring to a rolling boil, then cool.

Add:

6 eggs

1-1/2 cups strong coffee

3 tsp baking soda

2 tsp baking powder  
3 tsp salt  
2 tsp pepper  
2 tsp cinnamon  
2 tsp allspice  
4 tsp anise  
16 Cups flour

This dough works best when its not too hard so only chill for 1/2 an hour or so, or chill longer but let it warm up a bit on the counter before trying to roll it (it will keep for a week or so if you don't get around to baking them). I also find greasing my hands help because it can be very sticky.

Roll into walnut size balls but don't squish them. Bake at 375 for 15-20 minutes, remove from oven and shake in powdered sugar while still warm. And enjoy!!!! This recipe makes about 450 cookies.