



Says –a–me Cookies

Yield: almost 2 ½ dozen. OK, I ate some of the raw dough ... forgive me. After all, it doesn't contain raw egg.

Ingredients:

- 1 stick (1/2 cup) salted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup well-stirred Tahina - room temperature (I use Joyva brand roasted Tahina)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose unbleached flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder (aluminum free double acting)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup or a little more sesame seeds to roll the cookies

Instructions:

In a small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.

With an electric mixer, beat the butter until light and fluffy, about one minute. Add the sugar and keep mixing for another two minutes until pale yellow. Add vanilla and Tahina and continue beating for another 30 seconds.

Reduce speed to low and add flour mixture in two batches, mixing until combined. Transfer dough to a sheet of plastic wrap and press into a disk--cover with plastic wrap. The dough should come together well and feel like soft play dough. Chill dough for 15 minutes in the refrigerator.

Remove the dough and form smooth, 1-inch balls of the dough and roll each ball in sesame seeds - ensuring each cookie is coated all over. Place the formed, rolled balls onto a waxed paper lined small tray, cover well with foil and refrigerate another hour.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper.

Place dough balls (they will now be firm) onto the cookie sheets, leaving three inches between the balls. I fit 12-15 on each cookie sheet.

Bake, with racks in the middle of the oven and switch the position of the two sheets halfway through baking. The cookies should be puffed and starting to crack, 12 to 15 minutes total.

Remove from the oven and cool on cookie sheets 10 minutes (cookies break easily), then transfer from parchment to a rack to cool completely. Eat and enjoy.

Note: If you have a convection mode on your oven, bake the cookies at 330 convection for 14 minutes. You won't need to switch the position of the cookie sheets with this feature.

The cookies keep for up to five days in a sealed container at room temperature or can be frozen for up to two months.

If the Tahina has separated when you open the jar or can, try to whisk it to emulsify. If you are impatient (like me) you can also dump the contents of the can into the food processor to combine.

For added depth of flavor, toast the sesame seeds before rolling the cookies.