

Walnut Cookies

Although baking is not a common Chinese cooking method, cookies of all kinds are quite popular now in China. The most famous is the almond cookie in the south, but walnut cookies are equally delicious. They can be served alone or with fresh fruit. Although I prefer to make these using lard for a fuller flavor, butter is now quite common in Hong Kong and China, and will work well here.

MAKES ABOUT 12 BISCUITS

12 walnut halves
7/8 cup (210ml) all-purpose flour
2 tsp (10ml) baking powder
2 oz (50g) butter or lard
1/4 cup (120ml) sugar
2 eggs

Immerse the walnut pieces in a saucepan of boiling water for about 5 minutes. Remove them with a slotted spoon, pat dry with paper towels and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Put the flour and baking powder into a large bowl and rub in the butter or lard until it is well mixed. Add the sugar and 1 egg and mix to form a thick paste. Divide the mixture into 12 balls and press them into flattish cookie shapes about 2 in (5cm) in diameter. Put them on a non-stick baking sheet or a plain oiled baking sheet. Press a piece of walnut onto each cookie. Using a pastry brush, glaze the tops with the remaining beaten egg.

Put the cookies into the oven and bake for 20 minutes. Remove when cooked and put them on a wire rack. Once cooled, the cookies can be stored in an airtight jar, where they will keep for about a week.

