

MAPLE PECAN

Biscotti

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Although in general I am not someone who enjoys a “not very sweet” sweet, I make an exception for biscotti and so should you. Biscotti are oblong-shaped, Italian biscuits. They are twice-baked and have a dry and crunchy texture. They are the ultimate “dunking” cookie – be it in coffee, tea or hot chocolate (or milk) – but honestly, I even dig them straight up, no accompanying beverage necessary.

My relationship with biscotti

I first made biscotti about a decade ago when I worked in a professional bakery – the bakery was essentially my “culinary school,” as it were. And though I grew fond of them there, I had not actually made them from scratch since those days in a professional kitchen. But lucky for you, recently I decided to do something about that.

Biscotti flavored with maple syrup and deeply toasted pecans seemed seasonally appropriate, not to mention delicious. A little biscotti “research” revealed that traditionally the cookie is made without butter or oil. But the ones we always made at the bakery called for butter, which adds a lovely richness and depth of flavor to the crispy crunchy funny-shaped treat that is the biscotti. Thus, butter seemed the right direction to take – plus, is it even a cookie if it doesn't have any butter in it?

Another ingredient choice

I used brown sugar instead of the usual granulated, as it compliments the pecans and maple syrup so well, and a little bit of vanilla and salt to bring it all together. And if you can

find it, maple extract will make the maple flavor really pop. I toasted the pecans for longer than one might think necessary, until they were super fragrant – and I think you will find the resulting biscotti comforting and tasty, and as special for dipping, as they are for nibbling on their own.

Ingredients:

3 cups all-purpose flour
2 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
3/4 cup table salt
1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
1 1/4 cups light brown sugar
3 eggs, room temperature
1 to 1 1/2 tsp maple extract, optional
1/3 cup maple syrup
2 cups pecans, toasted and chopped

For the egg wash:

1 egg
pinch of table salt

Turbinado sugar for sprinkling

And here's what you'll do:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a baking sheet with cooking spray or softened butter and line with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and soda, and the salt. Set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, fitted with the paddle attachment, or with a hand held mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about three minutes.

On low speed, add the eggs, one at a time, scraping down the bowl as needed. Add the maple extract, if using. If not, substitute vanilla extract. Add the maple syrup and mix just to combine; do not over mix.



Add the dry ingredients and pecans and mix only until a few streaks of flour remain. Finish mixing by hand with a rubber spatula.

To make the egg wash, whisk the egg and salt together in a small bowl.

Divide the dough in half and transfer the two halves to the prepared pan. Dampen your hands, as the dough will be sticky, and shape it into two logs approximately 14x2-inches. If it is too sticky to work with, lightly flour your hands. Make sure there is space between the two logs, as they will spread. Brush with egg wash once shaped and sprinkle generously with Turbinado sugar.

Bake until firm and golden, about 30 to 35 minutes, rotating at the halfway point. The two logs will spread while baking. Do not worry. Once you remove them from the oven, use a stiff spatula or knife to separate the logs and using a dish towel and your hands, gently mold the logs back into shape.

Reduce the oven temperature to 325 degrees. Let biscotti cool until just warm to the touch and then slice the biscotti about 1/2 inch thick, set-

ting the slices cut side down on your prepared baking sheet.

Bake the sliced biscotti for 25-30 minutes, rotating at the halfway point and flipping the slices over onto the other cut side, until both sides of the biscotti are nicely browned.

Let cool to room temperature before dipping in coffee (or hot chocolate) and enjoying. Biscotti will keep tightly covered on the counter for up to three days. Freeze them in a zippered plastic bag to keep them fresh longer. •

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.