

AUSTRIAN ALMOND HEARTS

1 cup almonds, toasted to light brown
3 cups flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup softened butter
1 cup sugar
1 large egg
2 tsp. vanilla



Whisk together flour and salt in a mixing bowl and set aside. In your food processor, add nuts and 2 tablespoons of the flour. Pulse until nuts are finely ground. Add the nut mixture to the flour mixture and blend. Cream together butter and sugar until fluffy. Add egg and vanilla and mix until blended. Add the flour/nut mixture slowly until thoroughly mixed into a smooth dough.

Chill dough and then roll out into approx. 1/4" thick or a little thinner. Using your favorite heart cutter, (I have several) cut two hearts for each cookie. Using a tiny heart shaped cutter, cut a heart in the middle of the second cookie. Save these tiny hearts and bake for the dolls in your house.

Bake cookies for 12-16 minutes at 350 degrees or until just golden. Cool cookies completely before sandwiching together with fresh strawberry jam.

I find the strawberry has the best contrast with the almonds but raspberry or apricot is fine. A little confectioners sugar sprinkled over the top or a drizzle of melted chocolate adds even more flavor and drama.