

Sylvia's Mondel Brot (Mandel Bread)

For those who don't know, this is something like Jewish biscotti. The best results are a smallish, ½ inch high, crispy cookie that doesn't fall apart when you eat it. So far, no one in our family has gotten it to work on the first try, so be patient.

Ingredients:

2 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
2 t baking powder
pinch of salt
¾ cup sugar
¾ cup vegetable oil
2 eggs
1 t vanilla
1 cup chopped walnuts

How to make it:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add the sugar, oil, eggs, and vanilla. Mix to combine. Fold in the nuts. The dough will be extremely oily
3. You should use your hands to shape the dough. Turn it out onto the counter, and shape tightly into an oblong log-type shape, about 4-5 inches wide and at most an inch thick. It is important to make sure the dough comes together here, otherwise it will crumble in the oven.
4. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Place dough on sheet and bake for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove from the oven and slice the dough into finger-sized pieces with a sharp knife. This is the moment of truth. The cookies should slice without crumbling. If they do crumble, no worries, you will just have tasty, awkwardly-shaped shards of mandel bread.
5. Here's the tricky part. After slicing, turn each piece on its side and pop back into the oven to toast. After a couple minutes (My aunt does this by literally standing in front of the oven with the door open a bit), they will brown. Flip them over, and toast the other side for another few minutes, until brown.
6. Let cool before eating.

You can also add 1 cup of chocolate chips to this recipe along with the nuts.