

King Arthur Flour's Easiest Stollen

Makes 2 loaves

Dough

2 1/4 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 tablespoons (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, cold, cut into small chunks
1 cup ricotta cheese, part-skim milk type
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon lemon extract, optional
1 cup mixed dried fruit, such as golden raisins, currants, dried cranberries
1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted and cooled

Topping

6 tablespoons butter, melted
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly grease baking sheet or line with parchment. Whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in mixing bowl. Blend butter into flour mixture to form uneven crumbs. In separate bowl, mix together cheese, egg, vanilla, and lemon extract.
2. Toss fruit and almonds with flour mixture until evenly distributed. Then combine wet and dry ingredients, mixing until most of the flour is moistened.
3. Turn dough out onto lightly floured work surface, and knead it two or three times, until it holds together. Divide it in half. Roll each piece of dough into 8" x 7" oval about 1/2" thick.
4. Fold each piece of dough roughly in half lengthwise, leaving edge of top half about 1/2" short of edge of bottom half. Use the edge of your hand to press dough to seal about 1" in back of the open edge; this will make the traditional stollen shape. (It's also the familiar Parker House roll shape, if you've ever made them.) Place shaped stollen on prepared baking sheet.
5. Bake stollen until very lightly browned around edges, about 40 minutes. Cake tester inserted into center should come out clean.
6. Transfer stollen to wire rack. Brush each with 2 to 3 tablespoons melted butter. Sprinkle heavily with confectioners' sugar. Allow stollen to cool, then brush with butter again, and sprinkle with sugar again. Wrap in plastic wrap until ready to serve.

*Please bring 1 loaf, wrapped, on a plate, and bring the label from a bag of King Arthur Flour.