

David's Halvah Cookie

From marissarothkopf.substack.com

A very chocolatey cookie, made better with halvah.

Yield: 2 dozen 3-inch cookies

What You'll Do:

1/2 cup (4 ounces) butter, softened

1/2 cup (4 ounces) light brown sugar

1/2 cup (about 3 1/2 ounces) white sugar

2 large eggs, cold

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

2/3 cup (3 ounces) whole wheat flour

1/4 cup (2 ounces) Dutch process cocoa powder (not cocoa drink mix!)

1 1/2 cups (5 ounces) all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons kosher salt

1 3/4 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

11 ounces bittersweet chocolate chips (I used a bag of Ghirardelli's)

About 5.5 ounces of halvah. (I used Joyva marble), cut into 1" x 1/2" by 1/4" pieces

What You'll Do:

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the flours, cocoa, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Set aside.
2. In a stand- or with a hand-mixer, cream the butter, white sugar and light brown sugar until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Scrape down the sides.
3. Add the vanilla and beat until just combined.
4. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating until the eggs look absorbed into the batter. Scrape down the sides of the bowls and the paddle.

5. Add the flour-cocoa mixture and mix until the flour mixture is just moistened. Add in all those chips and mix on low speed until combined.
6. Refrigerate the dough for 2 hours, or ideally, 8 hours to let the flours hydrate. If you are like me, however, you will bake some of the dough right away. Just promise me you'll leave the rest to chill in the fridge, so you can see what a difference chilling the dough makes.
7. When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350 degrees and line baking sheets with parchment paper. Shape dough into balls about 3 1/2-inches in diameter for large cookies, 2 inches for smaller. Use your thumb or two fingers to make a generous indentation in the cookies. Fill each with one chunk of the halvah. Bake cookies for about 13 to 16 minutes for large balls, 12 to 15 for smaller ones. The exterior should look dry. Oven temperatures vary, so keep tweaking your timing until you are pleased.
8. Let cool on the baking sheet for at least 5 minutes before removing to a cooling rack.

NOTES:

- But, where can you get halvah? You can find it sold by the chunk in Jewish delis and Middle Eastern food purveyors, but I barely had to stray from home and found bars of Joyva halvah in the section of my local Acme supermarket devoted to foods from the Middle East.
- I like to make these cookies large (3-ounce balls of dough...about 3 1/2-inches in diameter), but smaller 2-inch balls works fine, too. Just adjust the size of the halvah chunk.
- I ask for cold eggs, because the recipe calls for a long creaming time. Cold eggs prevents the dough from turning into a melty pool of dough.
- I used a mixture of whole wheat flour and all-purpose flour to help tone down the sweetness of the cookie. You can use just all-purpose flour, or make them gluten-free and use 4 ounces of oat flour and 4 ounces almond flour instead of the usual all-purpose white flour.