

Chocolate Linzer Bars

By Marissa Rothkopf

The Secret Life of Cookies

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What You'll Need:

- 1 1/2 cups hazelnuts, toasted, skinned and ground fine (method below)
- 3 ounces semisweet chocolate, ground fine
- 10 ounces/14 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 3 large egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest (orange is fine if you don't have lemon)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 12-ounce jar good quality raspberry jam (do not use a no-sugar added jam)
- 3 ounces semisweet chocolate (to be melted for the topping)

What You'll Do:

First, roast hazelnuts: In a 300-degree F oven, roast the hazelnuts for about 10 minutes, until they start to darken slightly. Please don't walk away while this is happening. The nuts can burn quickly. Remove from oven, let cool for a minute or two, then pour the hazelnuts onto a cloth kitchen towel, fold half the towel over and rub to remove the skins as best you can. Let cool completely before grinding. When cool, grind in a food processor until fine.

Then....

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Grease a 13 x 9-inch pan and line it with a parchment or aluminum paper sling, so after baking you can easily remove the bars for cutting.
2. With a hand or stand mixer (or with a wooden spoon like Grossmütti used to do), beat the sugar and butter until light and fluffy.
3. Add the egg yolks, lemon zest and cinnamon and beat until incorporated, stopping occasionally to scrape down the bowl.

4. Add the flour and mix until the dough starts to form into large crumbs. Add the ground hazelnuts and chocolate and beat until just incorporated.
5. Press 3/4 of the dough into the prepared pan, then spread all of the jam across the dough. Here you have a choice: You can roll the remaining dough into long strips and create a traditional lattice pattern across the top. Alternatively, you can roll out the remaining dough on a well-floured board and cut out shapes of your choosing (I used an antique heart-shaped cookie cutter that was my mom's.), then decorate the top of the tart with those. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the hearts begin to turn slightly darker. The edges of the bars will be browning and the jam will be bubbling. Cool on a rack.
6. If you have remaining dough, you can make little linzer cookies and dip them in chocolate. (The cookies will need to bake for 10-15 minutes, until light brown.)
7. If you wish to add chocolate to the top of the bars, melt 3 ounces of good-quality semisweet with 1 teaspoon neutral oil. Fling, pour or spatter the chocolate across the cooled bars in whatever pattern brings you joy.
8. When cool, cut into individual servings. If you want to honor my Austrian forebears, you will serve these with whipped cream, aka 'schlag.'
9. These are the kind of cookies that keep well and will be at their best a day or two after making.