

Pignola Cookies

This recipe from Ginny Nugent of Apex tied for first place in the drop cookie category. Pine nuts can be expensive; Nugent recommends buying them at Trader Joe's where she has found 8 ounces for \$7.99.

3 egg whites

1 cup sugar

1 cup powdered sugar

1 pound (16 ounces) almond paste, cut into 1/4-inch slices

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 teaspoon almond extract

1 1/2 to 2 pounds pine nuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place egg whites in a large bowl or the bowl of a mixer; beat on low speed for about 1 minute. Add sugars slowly until blended. Break almond paste into small pieces and drop into batter while blending. Add vanilla and almond extracts.

Place pine nuts in a medium bowl. Set aside.

The batter is very sticky so use an ice cream scoop to pick up batter and form into teaspoon-sized balls. Drop balls of dough into pine nuts and roll to thoroughly coat. Place on baking sheet. Bake for 10-15 minutes; check at 10 minutes and remove before they turn light brown.

Yield: about 36 cookies.