

SWEETS

Elaborate desserts are not part of everyday Spanish cuisine, at least not for the Spanish immigrants from Spain. There are several sweets that have endured over time and are popular. These are not overly sweet, nor are they moist. One has the distinctive anise flavor while the other uses roasted almonds. Getting the ingredients for the recipes was easy. Getting the directions to make them was not. The directions are as clear as they can be without actually seeing how they are made. Obviously, the best way to make them is to first observe someone else who knows what they are doing. Remember, these recipes are probably over 100 years old and came over with the original immigrants.

Traditionally, they are made at Christmas time and stored in airtight tins. For some reason, they never seem to get stale which is a good thing since dozens are made at one time. It is not uncommon for families to still be eating them in February!

Rosquillos

This recipe was contributed by Juanita Ramos. She cautions that making them during wet weather can affect how they turn out.

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. oil	1 t. anise seed
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. Crisco, melted	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. lemon extract
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. anise extract
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. Sauterne wine (a port or sherry will also work)	3 c. flour
	3 t. baking powder

Melt the Crisco with the anise seed and let it cool, but not too cool. Mix all remaining ingredients together to form a dough. Shape it into a rope - about 5/8" around. Grab a small piece of dough and with a little flour in your hands, roll it a little and shape it into a ring, crossing the ends over each other.

Put on cookie sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes. The Rosquillos will remain white. Let cool for a few minutes and then roll the cookies in superfine sugar. Recipe can be doubled.

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Rosca

Roca is not really a dessert. It is a sweet bread that can be eaten at anytime, usually with a good cup of coffee. Many have memories of company coming over and everyone sitting at the table with a platter of Spanish cookies, a beautiful roca, and coffee served in the best cups the hostess owned.

This recipe was graciously contributed by Anna Martin. She has shared her recipe with many but most say they can never make it as good as she does!

Ingredients:

3 T. yeast powder

2 T. anise seeds

$\frac{3}{4}$ c. sugar

1 oz. bottle anisette extract

$\frac{3}{4}$ c. oil, warm

7 c. flour

2 c. warm water

3 eggs

1 T. salt

Warm a bowl, then add warm water, yeast and salt. Let sit about 10 minutes until bubbly.

In a big bowl, mix flour and sugar. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix with a spoon and then your hands, on a floured board, kneading until a soft dough forms. Let rise at least an hour, until it doubles.

Divide dough into 2 balls (3 balls if you want them smaller). Form into a ball, and then put your fingers into the middle to make a ring. Put on cookie sheets and let rise again for about 30 minutes.

Cut slits on the outside edge of the dough. Sprinkle with sugar. Decorate with blanched almonds or sugar cubes.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 30-40 minutes, depending on their size.

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Polvorones

This recipe was contributed by Juanita Carrion. It is her mother's recipe (Alice Carbahal) and she has shared her cookies and recipe with others for years!

Ingredients:

1 lb. unblanched toasted almonds, ground (to toast, put in 375 oven for 15 minutes, cool, then grind)

1 lb. white flour

1 lb. shortening

1 lb. powdered sugar

1 t. cinnamon

2 t. anisette (can use extract)

Mix shortening and sugar until well blended. Add almonds, then flour, anisette, and cinnamon. Mix well. Take a small part of the dough, form it into a flattened rope (about 1"x1" and 12" long), and cut cookies on the diagonal so that they are diamond shape. Do not make them too large, they should be small. Bake at 325-350 degrees for about 20 minutes. The bottom should not get too brown. Let cool completely before removing from pan, they will set.

(Note: Some recipes use a different shape of the cookie by just putting about a small spoonful of dough in your hand and shaping into a ball, with a thumbprint on top. Some will also dust with a little powdered sugar.)