

Savory Fennel Parmesan Biscotti

Makes about 64 biscotti

1/2 cup (2 1/2 ounces) pine nuts or walnuts
2 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
1/4 cup cornmeal
3 tablespoons Pecorino Romano cheese
2 teaspoons fennel seeds
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 cup buttermilk
2 large eggs



Preheat the oven to 375° F. Put the pine nuts in a pie pan and roast, tossing them occasionally, until fragrant, about 7 minutes. Let cool and finely chop. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, Parmigiano Reggiano, cornmeal, Pecorino Romano, fennel seeds, salt, baking powder, sugar, baking soda, black pepper and cayenne. Stir in the chopped pine nuts and make a well in the center. In a small bowl, whisk the buttermilk with the egg and pour into the well. Stir with a fork until a crumbly dough forms.

Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth but still slightly sticky. Divide the dough into four parts and cover with plastic wrap. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time and keeping the rest tightly wrapped, roll the dough into a 1-inch diameter (about 14 inches long). Repeat with the remaining dough. Put the logs on 2 baking sheets, spacing them 2 inches apart. Bake on the top 2 shelves of the oven for 20 minutes, or until golden; shift the pans from top to bottom and front to back halfway through baking. As the logs bake, the tops may split down the middle. Let the logs cool on the baking sheets for 5 minutes.

Turn the oven down to 200° F. Transfer the logs to the work surface. Using a serrated knife and a sawing motion, slice the logs on sharp diagonal, into 1/4 to 1/3-inch thick slices. Arrange the slices cut side up on the baking sheets and place in the oven. Bake for 40 minutes, until hard to the touch but not browned. Turn the biscotti over and bake 40 minutes longer until they are dry and crisp. Set the biscotti aside to cool and dry further several hours or overnight. The biscotti will keep several weeks in an airtight container.

Part of [Homemade Holiday Gifts from Sally Schneider](#)

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