

Shortbread Cookies

By Wendi Hamilton

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted European-style butter (82-85% butterfat)
- 2/3 cup (142g) granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp (5g) kosher salt
- 2 cups (284g) all-purpose flour, sifted

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Prep the sugar & salt:** For an extra-fine texture, grind the sugar and salt separately using a clean coffee or spice grinder, if available.
2. **Cream the base:** In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine butter, sugar, vanilla, and salt on low speed-Increase to medium and cream until light and fluffy—about 1 minute. Scrape the bowl halfway through. *Do not overmix.*
3. **Incorporate the flour:** Add half the sifted flour and mix on low until just combined. Add the remaining flour and continue mixing on low until the dough becomes crumbly. *Avoid overworking the dough.*
4. **Shape the dough:** Press the dough into a parchment-lined 8x8-inch baking pan or sheet pan to about ¼ inch thick. Use a small rolling pin or press with a flat object over parchment for an even top. * *Optional: For individual cookies, use a 1.5 inch round cutter, but handle dough gently.*
5. **Chill & preheat:** If making bars, prick the surface evenly with a fork or toothpick. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and chill in refrigerator for 30 minutes—*do not skip this step!* * Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).