

# Recipe: Anise, Orange and Pine Nut Biscotti

SUSAN RUSSO

*Italian Pine nut nuts, are prized for their sweet flavor. They're available at Italian specialty markets as well as most supermarkets. Though made with sugar, these biscotti lean toward the savory side and make a tasty companion to Italian deli meats such as prosciutto and salami, and cheeses such as asiago and pecorino-romano.*



*Susan Russo for NPR*

*Makes about 22 biscotti (3/4-inch-wide cookies)*

*Ingredients*

- 1 cup unsalted Pine nut nuts (Pine nut nuts)
  - 1 cup granulated sugar
  - 2 teaspoons baking powder
  - 2 cups all-purpose flour
  - 3 large eggs, plus 1 egg, lightly beaten, for brushing tops of loaves
  - 1 tablespoon anise seed, crushed
  - 1 tablespoon anise extract
  - Zest of 2 large oranges (1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons)
1. Position rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
  2. Place Pine nut nuts in a single layer on a baking sheet and toast in the 350-degree oven for 8 to 10 minutes, or until just golden and aromatic. Remove and set aside.
  3. In a large bowl, hand mix toasted Pine nut nuts, sugar, baking powder and flour.
  4. In a small bowl, whisk eggs. Crush the anise seeds using a mortar and pestle. If you don't have one, then place anise seeds in a small Ziploc bag and seal. Place on the countertop and lightly roll over the bag with a rolling pin. Place crushed seed in a small nonstick skillet over low heat. Warm 3 minutes, or until just aromatic. Remove from heat and add to the eggs along with the anise extract and orange zest. Whisk until well blended. Add to the flour mixture. Stir a few times. Work the batter together with lightly floured hands. The mixture will be sticky, but persevere. Keep squeezing the batter with your hands until a dough starts to form. Once the dough is firm, form a ball. Divide the ball into 2 equal pieces.

5. On a lightly floured surface, place 1 piece of dough, and using your hands, roll into a log shape that is approximately 10 inches long, 3 inches wide, and 3/4 of an inch high. If it's sticky, simply dust your palms with more flour. Repeat with remaining piece of dough. Place both logs on the baking sheet. Brush loaves all over with lightly beaten egg.
6. Bake for 40 minutes, turning the pan around halfway through, or until the tops of the loaves are shiny and deep golden. Cool on a rack for about 20 minutes before slicing.
7. Place a loaf on a cutting board. Using a large serrated knife, cut 3/4-inch-thick slices, either straight or on the diagonal. Use a sawing motion to prevent crumbling. Each loaf should yield 10 to 12 cookies. If the cookie is crumbling, then let it cool a few more minutes. Don't let it rest too long, however, or it could become too hard to slice.
8. Place slices on their sides back onto the baking sheets. Reduce oven temperature to 200 degrees, and bake biscotti for 20 minutes, until toasted and crisp. If you desire, you can turn off the oven and let the biscotti stay for up to an hour. The longer they stay in the oven, the harder they will become. Remove from oven and cool completely before storing in an airtight container, preferably a tin, which helps keep them crisp. Stored properly, biscotti will last up to a month.