

Portugal Cakes

Approximately 20 small cakes or 12 larger ones

Ingredients

½ cup dried currants, soaked in warm water to plump
2 cups almond flour (all-purpose flour may be substitute)
1 cup sugar
½ heaping tsp Kosher salt
1 cup cold, unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
5 large eggs, separated
1 tbsp rose water, or orange-flower water (if neither available use 1 tbsp orange juice and the finely grated rind of ½ orange)
1 tbsp sweet sherry or port
Powdered sugar for dusting

Heat oven to 325°. Line small cake or muffin tins with paper liners; lightly spray liners with oil. Soak currents in warm water to plump, and set aside. Combine almond flour, sugar, and salt in food processor with butter. Pulse mixture for a few seconds until butter forms small, pea-size crumbs. Remove and place in large bowl. Rub mixture lightly with fingers until it resembles large bread crumbs.

In a stand mixer, whisk egg yolks until pale yellow and doubled in volume, about 5 minutes. Add rose or orange water, and sherry, whisking for a few seconds until well incorporated. Combine the egg and flour mixtures with a spoon; batter will be stiff. Rinse, drain, and dry currants onto a paper towel; stir into batter. In a separate bowl, beat eggs whites until stiff. Take 2 large spoons of egg whites and mix them into the batter until well incorporated. Then carefully fold in rest of egg whites until thoroughly combined.

Fill muffin cups or molds halfway. Bake the cakes for 30–35 minutes; 25 minutes if using small muffin tins. Cakes are done when golden brown on top and spring back when touched. Remove cakes from tins and cool on a rack. When cooled, dust with powdered sugar before serving. Cakes can be kept for 2 days in a cookie tin.