

Gato Napolitaine

Ingredients:

For the Shortbread biscuits:

500g Plain Flour

360g Butter or spread

Pinch of salt

For assembly:

Jam (traditionally strawberry)

Icing Sugar

Whole Milk (or milk alternative, you could use water but it doesn't go as glossy)

Food Colouring (traditionally Pink)

½-1 teaspoon of rose water (traditional, but you can substitute for another flavouring)

Hundreds and thousands

Method:

Biscuits:

Preheat the oven to 170-180 degrees C, (reduce the heat if your oven is particularly powerful)

In a large mixing bowl combine the butter and flour together with your fingers until it becomes crumbly, then squeeze together in your hand to form a dough.

Split the dough into 2 sections, wrap in clingfilm, and rest in the fridge for 10 minutes.

Roll out the dough to about 1cm thick – careful not to tear the dough, and then using a small glass or round cutter, cut out as many circles as you can and place on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Roll out the remaining dough until it is all used up. Make sure you have an even number of circles.

Bake in the oven until they are a pale golden colour (8-15 minutes depending on your oven), then set aside to cool.

Icing:

Sift the icing sugar into a large bowl

In a mixing jug have some milk, then using a cocktail stick place some food colouring in and mix until it turns pink, keep adding until you reach your preferred brightness, remembering that it will look slightly lighter as icing than in the milk. Add your flavouring and mix.

Add a few spoons of the coloured milk to the icing sugar and mix, when that combines add a little more. Don't let it go sloppy or it will not be usable.

Place the biscuits on a wire rack in rows and spoon a small amount of jam on one row of biscuits, take a biscuit from the next row and sandwich together, making sure that the jam does not leak out of the side. Repeat for all biscuits.

Drizzle the icing over the biscuits, it should look thick and glossy and cover the top and side completely. From the catch tray, scoop up the icing with a spoon and drizzle back over the biscuits. If the icing is too thin it just run off, you may need to wait for a layer to set and then repeat. If the icing is too thick it won't drizzle.

Traditionally they are finished with dried rose petals, or freeze dried strawberry pieces, but we like hundreds and thousands.

Why not try using different colour and flavour combinations and see what you can create!

Although this recipe is made with butter and milk it is one that can easily be adapted to a vegan recipe, just make sure that your pink/red colouring is vegan and doesn't contain carmine.

