

MOM'S RUGELACH

My mom is not much of a cook and she'll be the first to admit it. But, thanks to her sweet tooth, there are a few things she can bake. Her repertoire is small, but the few things she does make are top notch. Although this recipe first came to her through a German friend, she's adapted it to her liking. It takes a little muscle to beat the cream cheese and butter, so get ready for some upper-arm strength training.

PASTRY INGREDIENTS

8 ounces Cream cheese, room temp

8 ounces Unsalted butter, room temp

2 cups All-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

FILLING INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup raisins, chopped

1/2 cup walnuts, finely chopped

3/4 teaspoon cinnamon

jam or preserves

PREPARATION

Beat together cream cheese and butter until light and smooth. (NOTE: Butter should be a little harder than the cream cheese. When combined, mixture should be cool to touch.) In a separate bowl combine flour, salt and baking powder. Add to cream cheese/butter mixture and mix well. Divide dough into four

portions and shape like large hamburger patties. Wrap individually and chill over night.

The next day, mix together sugar, raisins, walnuts & cinnamon – set aside. Remove one portion of dough at a time. (Let start to come to room temp, but it should still be on the cold side.) On lightly floured surface, roll out each ball to a 10-inch circle. Smear on jam in a thin layer. Using a sharp knife, cut into 12 wedges. Sprinkle with 1/4 of the filling. Roll up each wedge, starting at the wide end, into a crescent.

Place on ungreased cookie sheets and bake at 350 degrees for 25 – 30 minutes or until pastry is set or starting to brown.

Makes about 48 pieces.