

SQUIRREL AND TREE STUMP CARAMEL MOONCAKE

INGREDIENTS:

FOR FILLING (200g Lotus Paste):

150g dried lotus seeds (4½ cup)
125g sugar (0.6 cup)
125g oil (½ cup)
15g maltose (2 tsp)

FOR CARAMEL MOONCAKE:

60g cooked glutinous rice flour (½ cup)
7g wheat starch, sifted (2 ¾ tsp)
20g shortening (1.5 tbsp)
30g icing sugar, sifted (¼ cup)
65g cold water (0.6 cup)
2 teaspoons LorAnn Caramel Bakery Emulsion (10g)
LorAnn Brown Liquid Gel Food Coloring



DIRECTIONS:

FOR FILLING (200g Lotus Paste):

1. Place soaked lotus seeds (without the bitter cores) in a large pot and cover with water to about 1-inch above.
2. Bring to a boil and then simmer for one hour until seeds are soft. Blend the seeds in a blender. Cook the pureed seeds with sugar and maltose. Add in oil in three additions till well-combined.
3. Allow the paste to cool down and keep in the refrigerator (up to 2 weeks).

FOR COOKED GLUTINOUS RICE FLOUR:

1. Place the glutinous rice flour in a baking pan. Cover with foil and steam for 45 minutes.
2. After steaming, microwave on high at one minute intervals with stirring until the flour turns pale yellow in color.
3. Set aside to cool. Transfer to an airtight container.

FOR CARAMEL MOONCAKE:

1. Sift the glutinous rice flour, wheat starch, and icing sugar together.
2. Rub in shortening till thoroughly mixed.

3. Add cold water and caramel flavoring and knead into a soft pliable dough.
4. Divide dough into 3 portions: plain (30g), dark brown (60g), light brown (90g). Add brown food coloring to respective portion and knead till the dough further till soft, smooth and uniform. Cover the dough with clingwrap and let them rest for ten minutes before they are ready for wrapping.
5. Divide lotus paste into one 100g, and two 50g portions.
6. Next you will make the "wooden stump." Line the base of a 200g mooncake plunger with baking sheet to cover the pattern on the plunger.
7. Roll out the light brown dough into 1/8" thick. Use a 2.5" round cutter to cut a light brown circle corresponding to the base of the mooncake plunger. Cut out thin stripes from dark brown dough and stick them onto the light brown circle in circular patterns. Place the light brown circle into the base of the plunger.
8. Roll out the dark brown dough into 1/8" thick. Cut a 2" strip and line the sides of the plunger.
9. Place the 100g lotus paste filling into the mooncake plunger and cover with another piece of dark brown dough larger than the plunger.
10. Push down the plunger and cut away excess dark brown dough.
11. Push out the mooncake and peel off the baking sheet.
12. Next you will make the squirrel. Cut a 4.5" circle from the rolled out brown dough. Use two small and one large oval cutters to cut away brown dough for the squirrel eyes and cheeks. Replace the gaps with rolled out plain dough and roll the dough again to smoothen the gaps.
13. Place a 50g lotus paste filling into the middle and roll up into a ball for the squirrel's head.
14. Repeat the steps without the plain dough to make the squirrel's body.
15. Cut out stripes of light brown dough to make the squirrel's limbs. Make small balls from plain dough for the squirrel's paws.
16. Shape remaining light brown dough into two ears and one bushy tail. Assemble the squirrel.
17. Decorate eyes, cheek bones, and mouth with colored white chocolate (use powdered food coloring in to color chocolate). - optional