



**Peanut Butter Sandwich Cookies aka “The Nora Ephron” (Tested)
Makes about 24 sandwich cookies, 3 inches in diameter**

Since Senegal may well be the foremost peanut producing country in the world I thought it only fitting to bring you the very best peanut butter cookie *in the world!* for dessert. Apparently Nora Ephron thought so too, because when she expressed to Tom Douglas (who created these cookies) how much she loved these, he named them after her.

Fortunately for me, The Dahlia Bakery where the famous “Nora Ephron” cookie is made is located in Seattle, (or unfortunately, depending on how you view this),

and I can have these cookies anytime I want them. But it's good to know that if I want them at midnight I don't have to get in my car, I just need to turn on my oven!

Peanut Butter Sandwich Cookies aka "The Nora Ephron"

From *The Dahlia Bakery Cookbook*, by Tom Douglas and Shelley Lance

Makes about 24 sandwich cookies, 3 inches in diameter

We use two different peanut butters in this recipe. Skippy creamy peanut butter makes the filling smooth and creamy. Adams crunchy peanut butter, which like other natural peanut butters must be very well mixed before measuring to evenly distribute the oil, has just the right almost-runny consistency and crunchy bits of peanuts to give the cookies the perfect texture. We prefer moist brown sugar, from a resealable plastic bag rather than from a box.

This recipe requires a 2 hour or longer chill of the shaped cookie dough, so plan accordingly.

Since you can only bake 8 cookies per baking sheet, and the cookies must be double panned, you'll have to bake them in batches. Be sure to cool the baking sheets between batches before re-using them.

The amount of salt in the filling is a perfect balance to the creamy peanut butter, but if you are substituting table salt for the kosher salt called for in the recipe, be sure to cut the amount in half.

For the peanut butter filling:

1½ cups creamy peanut butter, such as Skippy

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

2 tablespoons honey

1 teaspoon kosher salt

For the peanut butter cookies:

1½ cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

1 2/3 cups rolled oats, such as Quaker Old Fashioned
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
1/3 cup chunky peanut butter, such as Adams, well mixed
¾ cup sugar
2/3 cup packed brown sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

To make the peanut butter filling, combine all the filling ingredients in a bowl using a whisk. Cover and chill the mixture until you are ready to fill the cookies.

To make the peanut butter cookies, in a bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Stir in the oats and the salt. Set the dry ingredients aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer with the paddle attachment, combine the butter, chunky peanut butter, and sugars and cream on medium-high speed until very fluffy and pale, at least 3 minutes, scraping down the mixing bowl as needed.

Turn the mixer to medium-low and add the eggs, one at a time, beating to incorporate each egg, and scraping down the bowl as needed. Beat in the vanilla extract. Add the dry ingredients on low speed in three to four additions and mix until just combined. Do not over mix. Remove the bowl from the mixer and scrape down the bowl with a rubber spatula, going all the way to the bottom of the bowl to mix in the dry ingredients well.

Use an ice cream scoop to portion all the cookies in one ounce scoops (or use about a heaping tablespoon per cookie), placing the scoops on a parchment lined baking sheet. You should have about 48 cookies. (You can place all the cookies close together for the chilling step- you will space them for baking later.) Chill the scooped cookies for at least 2 hours or longer.

When you are ready to bake the cookies, preheat the oven to 375°F. Arrange 8 cookies, spaced evenly apart and staggered, per parchment lined baking sheet. Note: Do not flatten the cookies; they will flatten as they bake.) Set the baking sheet inside another baking sheet to “double pan,” and place it in the oven. Bake until evenly golden, about 12 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through the cooking time. Remove the pan from the oven and cool on a wire rack about 10

minutes before removing the cookies with a metal spatula. Allow the cookies to cool completely before filling them.

To make a cookie sandwich, turn one cookie flat side up and spread with a little less than 2 teaspoons of filling. (If you have a one-ounce scoop, you can slightly under-fill it to portion the filling, or under-fill a tablespoon.) Top with another cookie, flat side down, pressing gently. Repeat until all the cookies are assembled into sandwiches.

Photo credit: Ed Anderson



Lemon Chicken (Yassa Poulet)

Serves 8 -10

The method for preparing Yassa is to first pre-cook the chicken and then to finish it in the sauce. Grilling is traditional, but you can use whatever works for your cooking circumstances. Broiling or browning on top of the stove will do the trick.

Ingredients

1/3 cup oil
½ cup fresh lemon juice
½ cup cider vinegar
2 large onions, about 2 pounds, thinly sliced
3 large cloves garlic, smashed
1 tsp. kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp. red chile flakes
1 jalapeno pepper, sliced lengthwise in quarters
handful fresh thyme sprigs
2 large bay leaves, crumbled
1 4-pound chicken, cut into several pieces, or the equivalent weight of chicken parts
½ cup chicken stock

Add all the ingredients to a very large bowl, except chicken stock, and marinate overnight.

Remove the chicken from the marinade and brown the pieces in a hot pan, turning, until almost halfway done. Set the chicken aside on a platter and leave any remaining oil in the pan.

Drain the onions from the marinade (save the marinade) and sauté in the same pan you cooked the chicken, making sure to scrape up all the delicious brown bits in the bottom of the pan. When the onions have softened considerably add the chicken pieces back into the pan, nestling them in among the onions. Add the chicken stock and the remaining marinade, and simmer, slightly covered, until the chicken is done, 20 to 30 minutes, depending on how big the pieces are and how done they were to begin with. An instant read thermometer should read 160 degrees.

Remove the chicken to a platter, and simmer the onions a bit longer if it looks too soupy. Now would be a good time to pick out any bay leaves and thyme sprigs from the onions while you stir them. Serve the sauce on the side, or pour over the chicken and accompany with steamed white rice.

Recipe source and photo credit: Linda McElroy



Black-Eyed Pea and Rice Salad (Saladu Nebbe) (Tested)

Serves 6-8

In doing research on recipes for Senegal I came across a Saveur magazine link to a Senegalese feast. One of the dishes featured was this black-eyed pea salad, and I thought that it sounded like a perfect accompaniment to the Yassa Poulet that is featured this month in The Proven Platter.

I did change several things about the recipe, based on what I had in in the fridge that needed to be used up. I also greatly reduced the amount of oil called for, because, after all, wouldn't we rather save our calories for dessert?

But the biggest change I made was when I was putting away the leftovers and scraped the leftover rice into the black-eyed pea salad. Oops! I didn't have a chance to take a picture of the salad yet and now there was rice in it. And as such, a new dish was born! The rice and the black-eyed pea salad were bound to get mixed up together on the plate anyway, right?

So here is my recipe, now adapted to include the rice. If you would like to make this salad without the rice simply decrease the lime juice and olive oil to 3 tablespoons each.

Ingredients

1 cup dried black-eyed peas (cooked yield about 2 cups) or the equivalent amount of canned peas
¾ cup basmati rice, uncooked
1 orange bell pepper, diced in ½" squares
½ large cucumber, diced in ½" cubes
¼ cup diced red onion
¼ to ½ cup roughly chopped cilantro
4 tbsp. fresh lime juice
4 tbsp. olive oil
1 tsp. kosher salt (or ½ tsp. fine salt)
freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Soak the peas in cold water for 4 hours, then cook until done, about 20-30 minutes, drain and set aside. Likewise, cook one cup of basmati rice and set aside. Cool, and combine the rice and peas. Meanwhile, chop the bell pepper, cucumber and red onion into dice about the size of the black-eyed peas. Place into serving bowl with the cooled rice and peas, lime juice, oil, cilantro and salt.

If you would like to prep the salad the night before that's fine, just be sure to let the salad come to room temperature and wait to dress the salad until about an hour ahead of time, this way the flavors stay brighter.

Recipe source and photo credit: Linda McElroy