



OAT SHORTBREAD

Ingredients to make 32 small fingers or two rounds

*8oz unsalted butter at room temperature
5oz light brown sugar*

*11oz plain white flour
4oz fine oatmeal
1oz medium oatmeal
1 level teaspoon fine salt*

Method

Beat the **butter**, **sugar** and **medium oatmeal** together until soft and creamy. Mix the **fine oatmeal**, **plain flour** and **salt** together then add to the softened butter. Rub the flour and butter/sugar through your fingers until they are evenly combined. If you are making rounds, turn the mixture out onto a lightly floured surface and knead very briefly until it will stay together. For rounds, divide the mixture in two then transfer each half to an oiled baking tray. Shape into rounds between quarter and half an inch thick, pinch the edge between finger and thumb to make the traditional sunburst pattern, score segments if you want. Prick all over with a fork and it's ready for baking or leave this till the cakes come out of the oven.

To make fingers line a tray (approx 9" x 12") with baking paper which sticks up about one inch at the edges in order to prevent burning. Pat the mixture lightly and evenly into the tray. You will get lighter shortbread fingers if you do not knead at all.

Bake at 140°C for 80 minutes. Sprinkle with sugar, divide into fingers/segments and prick each one with a fork while still soft then allow to cool a little before moving to a cooling rack.

Some recipes use all plain flour or 50/50 plain flour and self raising flour, others use 4oz of rice flour or semolina where my recipe has oatmeal. The ratio of flour to butter to sugar here is the standard 4/2/1 but Delia and others suggest 3/2/1 which makes it even more of a Scottish health food! Also many people say no salt but that's not to my taste. Finally, should you knead the dough? If you don't knead it at all the dough is more difficult to shape but it is lighter. If you knead too much it gets tougher, so just knead enough to hold the shape you want. Have fun experimenting to find your perfect shortie.