

## Calendula Cornmeal Crisps

The cornmeal gives these cookies crunch and color. They are full of nuts and dried fruit; you could vary the nuts—try almonds or pistachios, dried cherries are also delicious or experiment with chopped dried apricots. I added a little whole-wheat flour for nutrition and body, however you can have a more delicate cookie using all unbleached flour.

Makes about 4 dozen cookies

1 cup sugar  
1/2 cup fresh or dried calendula flower petals  
1 cup pecans  
3/4 cup dried cranberries or sun-dried cherries  
1 cup unbleached white flour  
1/3 cup whole-wheat flour  
1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon stone-ground yellow cornmeal  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
Scant 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg  
12 tablespoons softened, unsalted butter cut into 12 pieces  
1 extra-large egg  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Combine the sugar and the calendula flowers in a food processor and process, pulsing until the calendula starts to break down into smaller pieces. Transfer the calendula sugar to a shallow bowl.

Pulse the pecans and dried cranberries in a food processor until coarsely chopped or chop with a knife; combine in bowl and set aside. In a bowl, combine the dry ingredients: unbleached flour, whole-wheat flour, cornmeal, baking powder, salt and nutmeg and toss to mix.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Measure 3/4 cup of the calendula sugar and put it into a food processor with the butter. Process until creamy and blended, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape down the sides if necessary. Add the egg and process, pulsing for about 1 minute; add the vanilla and pulse to blend. Add the dry ingredients process until just blended. Do not over mix.

Transfer the dough into the bowl with the pecans and cranberries and stir them together until the nut and fruit is distributed evenly. Using a spoon or your fingers, scoop about 1 tablespoon of dough and roll it into a ball. They should be about an inch in diameter or slightly bigger. Roll the balls in the remaining calendula sugar and place them on baking sheets about 2-inches apart.

Using a flat-bottomed glass, gently press on the balls pressing them to about 1/4-inch thickness. You will need to dip the bottom of the glass into the sugar every now and then so it doesn't stick to the dough.

Bake until the edges are barely browned, about 14 minutes. If baking 2 sheets at once, change the position of the sheets halfway through baking time.

Remove the cookies from sheets immediately, and cool on racks. If the cookies are left on the sheets to cool, they will harden and break when removed. Store in a tightly covered tin.

