THE O ANTIPHONS · DECEMBER 17 TO 23

O Antiphon cookies

Prep 1 hr **Cook** 20 min **Chill** 1 hr **Total** 2 hr 20 min **Makes** About 28 cookies (four sets of seven)
Level Easy

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. Metal cookie cutters can have sharp edges; show children how to press down with the palm. Sprinkles and small candies can be choking hazards for children under 4.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Sprinkles and candy decorations vary, so check their labels. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Cookies

- 2¾ cups (345 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup (225 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 g) sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1½ tsp vanilla extract

Icing

- 2 cups (240 g) powdered sugar
- 2 to 3 tbsp milk
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- Gel food coloring: yellow, green, red, and blue
- Sprinkles (optional)

METHOD

1. Whisk the flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl. In a larger bowl, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes, then beat in the egg and vanilla.
2. Stir in the flour mixture until a soft dough forms. Divide it in half, flatten each half into a disk, wrap, and chill for at least 1 hour.
3. Heat the oven to 350°F (175°C) and line two baking sheets with parchment. Roll the dough ¼ inch (6 mm) thick on a floured surface and cut 3-inch (7.5 cm) rounds, or keys, crowns, and stars if you have the cutters.
4. Bake 9 to 11 minutes, until the edges are set and the bottoms are just barely golden. Cool 5 minutes on the sheet, then move to a rack and cool completely.
5. For the icing, stir the powdered sugar, vanilla, and 2 tablespoons of milk together, adding more milk a few drops at a time until it is thick but pipeable. Tint small bowls of it with food coloring.
6. Spoon each color into a zip-top bag, snip a tiny corner, and draw one symbol per cookie: an open book or a lamp for O Wisdom, stone tablets for O Adonai, a flower on a branch for O Root of Jesse, a key for O Key of David, a sunrise for O Dayspring, a crown for O King of Nations, and a manger or a Chi-Rho for O Emmanuel.
7. Let the icing set for about 1 hour. Each evening from December 17 to 23, read that night's antiphon, sing a verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," and share the cookie.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Cut the shapes with cookie cutters
- Stir food coloring into the icing
- Draw the seven symbols with icing
- Read the antiphon aloud each evening

GOOD TO KNOW

- Bake once and keep the plain cookies in an airtight tin for up to a week. Decorate one each evening, or all seven in one afternoon.
- A Chi-Rho is a P drawn through the middle of an X: the first two letters of "Christ" in Greek (chi and rho). It is easy to pipe, even for young children.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and make our hearts ready for your birth.