

Mesquite Cookies

Mesquite Trees are common in Arizona. They have ferny, bright green leaves, long pale yellow seedpods, and trunks that separate into branches just above the ground. They grow well in Arizona because they need a lot of sunshine and not much water.

When the seedpods ripen and fall of the trees, some people think they are litter. However, there are others who are excited at the sight of fallen seedpods because they turn these pods into flour in order to make delicious treats, like cookies.

Prepare Beans:

- Rinse beans under running water to remove dirt and rocks
- Pick out anything that is not a mesquite bean
- Place beans in an oven-proof container or on a foil-lined oven rack
- Make sure water is not dripping off the beans and collecting in the bottom of the pan
- Cook at 150° F until crispy dry-may take-2 to 4 hours (The beans should not actually cook-they may caramelize if cooked at too high a temperature due to high sugar content)

Prepare Flour:

- Place about 15 beans into a blender
- Blend for approximately 20 to 30 seconds (if ground too long, the seeds will be ground up as well and they are VERY bitter)
- Sift through strainer to separate larger pieces of the seedpods from the fine powder, which is the mesquite flour
- Place the mesquite flour in a bag and store in the freezer until needed

Or purchase mesquite flour at Native Seeds Search, 526 N. 4th Ave. Tucson, AZ 85705, www.nativeseeds.org

You Need:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup margarine
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mesquite flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 eggs

Step 1: Cream sugar and margarine together.

Step 2: Add eggs and mix well.

Step 3: Sift mesquite flour, flour, and cinnamon in and mix.

Step 4: Bake on greased cookie sheet at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes.