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FORTUNE COOKIES

- 2 egg whites
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tbsp. (or more) water

Type and print out fortunes and cut into strips. They should be no longer than 3 inches (you can fold them). Preheat oven to 300 degrees and grease two baking sheets.

In a medium bowl, lightly beat the egg white, vanilla and oil until frothy but not stiff. Stir together the flour, cornstarch, salt and sugar and sift the mixture into the egg white mixture. Stir in water until batter is smooth. The batter should not be runny, but should drop easily off a wooden spoon.

Place two tablespoons of batter on one cookie sheet, spacing them far apart. With the back of a spoon, spread the batter into a 4-inch circle. The batter should be very thin.

Bake until the outer 1/2-inch of each cookie turns golden brown and they are easy to remove from the baking sheet with a spatula (14 to 15 minutes). Just the outer rim of the cookie should be golden. The center of the cookie should still be very pale.

Working very quickly, remove a cookie with a spatula and flip it over in your hand (Wearing clean cotton gloves makes this process easier). Place a fortune in the middle of a cookie. To form the fortune cookie shape, fold the cookie in half, then gently pull the edges downward over the rim of a glass, wooden spoon or the edge of a muffin tin. Place the finished cookie in the cup of the muffin tin so that it keeps its shape. The cookie hardens in 20 seconds, so a second person must fold the second cookie disk while you fold the first. Continue with remaining batter, using a cool cookie sheet for each batch.

An alternative method, which I used, is to thin the batter with two more tablespoons water and spread and bake in a waffle iron fitted with smooth grids. The texture of the cookies is better when baked in the oven, but the waffle iron is faster and practically fool-proof. I made 25 cookies from the recipe with the waffle iron method.