

These little clusters are bursting with nuts and are delicious. They will be a permanent addition to my Christmas "goodie" boxes.

Pignolata-Strufloi - Pine-Nut Clusters

- 2 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups peanut oil
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tbs. pine nuts
- 1 tbs. colored candied confetti
- 1/2 cup sugar

Place 1 cup of flour on board; break in eggs; add salt; knead together gently. Gradually add enough flour to make medium soft, easily molded dough. Texture becomes soft with kneading. When very smooth, cut in half.

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Roll out dough in circular piece about ¼ inches thick on lightly floured board. Cut into strips about ¼ inches wide. Mold each strip gently to resemble a small rope about ¼ inches. Each bit of dough resembles a grape or small marble. Distribute on lightly floured board to prevent sticking.

Heat oil in deep saucepan. When very hot, gradually add small pieces (about 6 tablespoons at a time), stirring constantly with wooden spoon. Brown lightly for 1 or 2 minutes; remove with perforated spoon. Drain on absorbent paper.



Mixing chopped nuts, dried fruit, or other additions with a little of the flour called for in the recipe will keep them from sinking to the bottom as they bake.

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Blend sugar and honey in a deep skillet; stir constantly. Heat about 5 minutes over low flame. When very smooth, add all browned pieces, stirring constantly with wooden spoon. When covered with the honey mixture, remove quickly; place on 2 large platters. Mold with spoon into desired forms (as bunches of grapes or small clusters). Top each form with pine nuts; sprinkle with colored confetti. Allow to cool.

Serve by breaking off individual pieces with cake fork. Pignolata-strufloi keeps fresh for 2 weeks when placed in a cake box. Serves 8 to 10.