refrigerator cookies with lemony frosting

recipe: adapted from Betty Crocker's Cookbook (1979)

Yields about 7 dozen cookies.

For the cookies:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste (or vanilla extract)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest (optional)
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

For the frosting:

- 1 tablespoon butter, room temperature
- 1 cup icing (confectioner's) sugar
- 4 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- lemon zest for garnish (optional)

Note: the above listed quantities for the frosting will yield enough frosting to decorate ONE of the logs of cookie dough (you will have three logs).

To make the cookies:

In a medium sized bowl, whisk together the flour, salt and baking soda. Set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, on medium speed, mix together the sugar, margarine, vanilla, eggs and lemon zest until well combined. Add the flour mixture, and mix until well combined.

Divide the dough into three equal parts. Shape each mound of dough into a log/roll (about 1.5 inches in diameter and 7 inches long). Wrap, and put in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours before baking. You can keep the dough in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

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To bake the cookies:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Cut dough log into 1/4 inch slices, and place onto prepared baking sheets about 1 inch apart. Bake for 8-10 minutes, until the edges start to turn golden. Allow to cool on cooling racks.

Note: the dough logs can be frozen. To bake, slice as above (from frozen) and add a little extra time onto your bake time.

To make the frosting:

In the bowl of a stand mixer, on low speed, combine the butter, icing sugar and 2 teaspoons of the lemon juice, mixing until the icing sugar is combined. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons of lemon juice and mix until no lumps of butter or icing sugar remain. If the icing is too thick, add a few drops of warm water at a time, until desired consistency is achieved.

Spread the icing onto the tops of cookies and garnish with lemon zest.