



## **BRAIDED GREEK EASTER BISCUITS**

*(Koulourakia Lambriatika)*

Greek home cooks do all their Easter baking on Holy Thursday. These crunchy, butter braids are a constant at the Easter table.

6 sticks unsalted butter  
1/3 cup vegetable shortening  
1 1/3 cups sugar  
4 large eggs  
1/3 cup fresh strained orange juice  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
2 tablespoons brandy  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
7-7 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
4 tablespoons water

Combine butter, shortening and sugar in large bowl and whip vigorously with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add 3 eggs, one at a time, beating after each, for a total of 10 or more minutes. Mix the orange juice with the baking powder and pour into whipped butter. Add the brandy and vanilla. Mix well. Gradually add the flour, mixing by hand until a soft, smooth dough forms. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes.

Line several cookie sheets with parchment paper and preheat the oven to 350°F. To form the cookies, take a golf-ball size piece of dough and roll into a 7-inch rope. Fold the rope in half and twist together. Place 1 inch apart on the cookie sheets. Lightly beat the remaining egg with 2 tablespoons water and brush over the cookies. Bake for 15 minutes or until pale gold in color. Brush again with the egg and water and continue baking another 7-10 minutes, until golden. Remove, cool on racks and serve.

Yield: About 5 dozen