Pi cookie cutters

The pi cookie cutters have been designed so that the shape tiles the plane; in principle they can thus be used to cut cookies from a large rolled-out sheet of dough without unused dough between the cut-outs.

In practice, the cutters, as fabricated out of sheet metal, deviate ever so slightly from the design. They nevertheless can be used to cut out pi-shaped cookies without any wastage of dough between the cut-out shapes, using the instructions below. This procedure also has the nice feature that the cookie cutter is used for only one cut-out in two, on average ...

For the cookie dough you can use your favorite sugar cookie recipe; it should produce a dough firm enough to roll out and be cut into shapes that can then be lifted away to the baking sheet, and result in cookies that hold their shape and don’t swell too much while baking. (An example recipe is provided below; this is the one that was used for the pictures, using cacao powder to flavor the cookies, making the dough a little browner than if e.g. vanilla extract were used.)

Roll out a sheet of dough on a floured surface, and mark a straight line on it.
Cut a strip of the width of one row of pi-cookies in both directions (that is, both straight up and upside down, as in the picture of the design, above).

Now cut out adjacent pi shapes with the cookie cutter. Because of their long legs, lifting the shapes off the rolling surface and on to the cookie sheet can be a bit tricky. It may help to use the cutter itself for the transfer.

It then suffices to make small cuts in the bottom row to separate that into individual pi cookies, that can be transported with a spatula (if needed) to the baking sheet.
Remark: there is no need, really, to cut strips out of the dough first. It is useful to mark a line, so that the top row of cut-outs are nicely aligned, and then to cut through the dough to first isolate the bottom row from the remaining dough, and then cut the bottom row apart – all without using the cookie cutter for this row of upside-down shapes.

**Possible recipe** (in US measurements as well as in metric weights):

1 and 5/8 sticks of butter (175g)
1 cup of fine (caster) sugar (200g)
2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract (can be replaced with other flavorings, e.g. 1 Tbsp cacao powder)
3 1/3 cups all-purpose flour (400g) + flour for rolling out
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt

Cream butter and sugar together until light and mousse-like.
Beat in eggs and flavoring.
Mix dry ingredients well, and then add mixture to butter-sugar-egg mix.
Mix it all.
Form into a flat disk, pop into a plastic bag and refrigerate for 1 hour.
Roll out to thickness of about 3/8” and cut out shapes, to be placed on greased baking sheets, a little apart (no large distance is needed, since they hardly swell in baking).
Bake in preheated oven, at 350° F (180° C) for about 10 minutes. Cool on a rack..
When cool, transfer to a well-closing cookie box.

(the slightly nicked one was immediately claimed by the cookie tester)