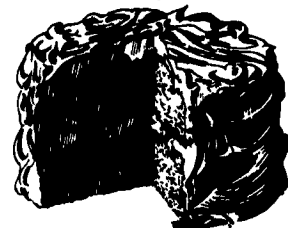


Home On The Range



Time To Bake Christmas Cookies

Tradition is intertwined with the holidays, and baking favorite holiday goodies is often part of that tradition. The simple act of mixing sugar, butter, and flour with other ingredients to create a special cookie is a seasonal ritual that many of us look forward to.

If you don't have a baking tradition in your home, it's time to start one. Time spent together in the kitchen is the perfect setting to pass along your thoughts about the meaning of the holiday season and to share some family history. It's a good time for strengthening family ties and building traditions that you and your children can look forward to each year.

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS COOKIES

Basic Dough:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1½ cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2½ cups flour

Mix butter, egg, and vanilla thoroughly. Blend in flour. Divide dough in half.

English Toffee Bars:

Heat oven 375 degrees. Grease 13x9x2-inch pan. To one half basic dough, mix ½ cup brown sugar. Dough will be crumbly. Pat firmly and evenly into prepared pan. Bake 15 minutes or until no imprint remains when lightly touched with finger. Remove from oven, immediately sprinkle ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate pieces evenly over pan so contained heat will soften chocolate pieces. Spread softened chocolate evenly over crust; sprinkle with ½ cup chopped nuts. While warm, cut into 1½ -inch diamond shapes. Makes about 2½ dozen.

Greek Clove Crescents:

Heat oven 375 degrees. To one half basic dough, mix ½ teaspoon brandy flavoring. Shape dough by rounded teaspoonfuls into balls and crescents. Press whole clove into center of each. Bake on ungreased baking sheet 10 to 12 minutes or until set but not browned. Cool. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Makes about 3 dozen.

Louise Graybeal
Renick, W.Va.

VIENNESE ALMOND WAFERS

Cream:

- ½ cup butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- ½ cup sugar

Add:

- ¼ cup flour

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Chill dough and roll out on floured cloth to 9x13-inch square and place on unbuttered cookie sheet. Beat 1 egg white until foamy. Brush egg white over dough.

Sprinkle with ¼ cup sliced blanched almonds and press down with fingertips. Brush again with egg white. Sprinkle with almond sugar. 2-3 hours before baking, mix ½ cup sugar and enough almond extract to dampen sugar completely. (Keep stirring until time to sprinkle on cookies).

Bake until lightly browned. Cut into squares and cool. Cookies are fragile but good!

Contributor writes that she usually triples this recipe so that she has lots of them.

Linda Massey
Bridgeton, NJ

CREAM CHEESE BROWNIES

Brownie layer:

- 4 ounces sweet chocolate
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup flour
- ½ cup chopped nuts, optional

Cream Cheese Layer:

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon flour

Preheat oven to 350. Melt chocolate and butter in a sauce pan over very low heat. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Stir sugar into melted chocolate mixture. Stir in eggs and vanilla until completely mixed. Mix in flour and nuts. Spread in a greased 8-inch square pan.

In the same bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar, egg, and flour until smooth. Spoon over brownie mixture and swirl with knife.

Bake for 35 minutes. Do not overbake. Cool in pan. Cut into squares.

Karen Heilinger
Lebanon Co. Alternate Dairy
Princess



Start a family tradition this holiday season and bake together. Versatile Butter Almond Cookies are equally delicious eaten plain or decorated. Kids of all ages will love cutting the shapes, decorating — and most of all — eating them!

BUTTER ALMOND COOKIES

- 2 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1½ teaspoons almond extract
- 1 cup finely ground blanched almonds

Colored sugar or sprinkles, if desired

Decorator icing or gel, if desired
Combine flour, salt, and baking powder; set aside. Cream butter and sugar in large mixer bowl until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks and almond extract. Add half of flour mixture mixture; blend well. Add remaining flour mixture; blend well. Stir in ground almonds. Divide dough into two portions; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 2 hours or until completely chilled. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Roll dough on lightly floured surface to 3/8-inch thickness. Cut into desired shapes with cookie cutters dipped in flour. Reroll scraps; chill if necessary for ease in handling. Place 2 inches apart on unbuttered cookie sheets. If desired, sprinkle with colored sugar before baking. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or just until cookies begin to brown around edges. Transfer cookies to wire racks; cool completely. Decorate as desired.

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Featured Recipe

In England, taking time out to enjoy tea and biscuits is part of everyday life. But you don't have to be in the United Kingdom to make an afternoon cookie break part of your day. English Oat Biscuit-Cookies, made with much less fat, are an updated version of a traditional favorite. They make a great-tasting treat, perfect for dipping in hot tea or coffee.

Most of the fat has been replaced in these usually rich and buttery cookies with an easy-to-make puree of prunes and water. This afternoon snack or light dessert tastes good but won't leave you feeling guilty. Learn how to prune the fat by 70 to 95% in a variety of baked goods from chocolate chip cookies to fudgy brownies by writing by: Prune the Fat/M, P.O. Box 10157, Pleasanton, CA 94588.

English Oat Biscuit-Cookies

- ½ cup pitted prunes
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 tablespoons margarine or butter, softened
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup rolled oats
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In container of electric blender measure prunes and water. Pulse on and off until prunes are pureed. In large bowl beat prune puree, margarine and sugar until thoroughly blended. Beat in egg, orange peel and juice. Mix in flour, oats, cinnamon and salt just to blend thoroughly. Coat 2 baking sheets with vegetable cooking spray. On lightly floured surface roll dough out to ¼ inch thickness. Cut into rounds with 2½ - to 3-inch cutter. Place 1 inch apart on baking sheets. Bake in center of oven about 10 minutes until bottoms are lightly browned. Remove to rack to cool completely. Store in airtight container. Serve with tea, coffee, milk or fruit juice. Makes about 24 biscuits.

Nutritional Information Per Biscuit: 99 calories; 2 g fat; 9 mg cholesterol; 70 mg sodium; 19 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 2 g protein.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

December

- 11- Holiday Non-Alcoholic Sippers
- 18- Holiday Treats
- 25- Christmas Dinner

January

- 1- Soups & Stews