



# Home on the Range

## Gifts From The Kitchen

"A homemade gift from the kitchen is a true token of affection," said Betty Rosbottom, cookbook author and founder of La Belle Pomme Cooking School in Ohio. "Lovingly wrapped and ribboned, the sweetest gifts are the ones you make for family and friends."

When baking gifts for giving, Rosbottom uses the highest quality ingredients — like real butter. Its taste is unmistakably rich. In addition, butter enhances the flavor of other ingredients, making them more pronounced.

Tabletop designer Nancy Wall Hopkins believes that the package is just as important as its contents. "Homemade treats deserve handmade containers," she said.

She suggests using on-hand household items or materials that can be purchased inexpensively from craft or hobby stores. Decorate a round cardboard box by gluing twine or cord around it. Sponge on gold acrylic paint for a dazzling finishing touch. Or simpler yet, glue dried leaves or flowers onto a plain box. Using "natural finds," as she calls them, is environmentally friendly and consistent with the trend toward do-it-yourself.

Package treats in the boxes lined with tissue paper or in cellophane bags. Attach gift tags decorated with colorful stickers and tie with a red or green ribbon for a colorful holiday presentation. If time permits, copy the recipe and include it with your gift.

### JOLLY JARS OF SNACK MIX

For an instant gift, top a jar of Holiday Snack Mix with a spectacular bow. Place snack mix in clear containers with lids.

#### HOLIDAY SNACK MIX

3 cups cinnamon toast flavor cereal

2 cups chocolate bear-shaped graham snacks

2 cups peanuts

1½ cups red and green candy-coated chocolate pieces

In large mixing bowl, combine cereal, graham snacks, peanuts and chocolate pieces. Pour mixture into container with lid. Makes 16 to 18 servings.

## 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** 17- Planning Christmas Dinner

24- Fireside Treats

31- Best Breakfast Ideas

**January** 7- Your Favorite Soup

### SHAKE 'N SERVE CRACKERS

¼ cup SoyOil

2 12-ounce packages dill weed

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon lemon pepper

1 envelope ranch dressing

Mix all ingredients except crackers. Add mixture to oyster crackers in large plastic bag. Shake and serve or put mixture into glass jars for gifts.

### CHOCOLATE ALMOND MINI-TORTES

Tortes:

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into small pieces

½ teaspoon instant coffee powder

½ cup butter, room temperature

¾ cup sugar

3 eggs

1 cup finely ground almonds

¼ cup fine, dry plain bread crumbs

Glaze:

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into small pieces

¼ cup butter

2 teaspoons honey

Sliced or slivered almonds

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

For tortes, melt chocolate in top of double boiler over hot, not boiling, water. Stir in coffee powder.

Remove from heat and cool slightly. In large mixer bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add melted chocolate mixture, almonds and bread crumbs, beating just until smooth. Divide batter among 24 paper-lined mini-muffin cups. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool slightly; remove tortes from pans and transfer to wire rack; cool 30 minutes.

For glaze, place chocolate, butter and honey in top of double boiler over hot, not boiling, water. Stir constantly 3 to 4 minutes or until smooth and shiny. Transfer to small bowl; cool about 10 minutes to thicken slightly. Spread about a teaspoon of glaze over top of each torte; top with almond slice.



Packaging food gifts gives that extra special touch that can make ordinary food seem elegant.

### GLITTERING GIFTS

Ordinary cookie tins become elegant gift boxes when decorated with a holiday bow. Pies sparkle when wrapped in Reynolds Crystal Color Plastic Wrap, which is available in crystal rose, green, and clear colors to add that special holiday glow to your gift giving. Several of the cookie recipes are from Sarah Clark, Breezewood, who bakes tons of cookies for gift giving each year.

### COCONUT SHOO-FLY PIE

1 cup flour

¾ cup dark brown sugar

1 cup coconut

1 tablespoon shortening

1 egg, slightly beaten

1 cup pancake syrup

1 cup hot water

1 teaspoon baking soda

9-inch pie crust

Mix together flour, sugar, and coconut to form crumbs. Reserve ½ cup of this mixture for topping in another bowl. Mix egg syrup and ¼ cup hot water; add to dry ingredients. Dissolve baking soda in remaining ¼ cup hot water. Add to mixture, pour in unbaked pie shell. Sprinkle with remaining crumbs. Bake at 375 degrees for 35 minutes.

Ethel Barnes  
Manheim

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## Featured Recipe

The end-of-the-year-holidays bring out the cook in all of us. The kitchen lures us into its web of stove, oven, and mixer.

The idea of giving a gift made in your own kitchen is certainly not new. But it is a warm, personal gesture that is always appreciated. It brings pleasure to both the giver and the recipient.

All that is needed are good recipes that require minimal culinary skills. The American Dairy Association has gathered such a collection — from candy and flavored butter to quick bread and cookies. For a free copy of the brochure, send a stamped, self-addressed business-size envelope to Dairy Gifts from Your Kitchen, Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association, P.O. Box 19464, Baltimore, MD 21206.

Here is a recipe from the brochure.

### SNACK MIX

½ cup butter

¼ cup soy sauce

1 teaspoon seasoned salt

1 cup blanched whole almonds

3 cups bite-size crispy rice squares

1 pound salted cocktail peanuts

1 cup golden raisins

3-ounces chow mein, noodles

¼ cup sesame seed

¾ ounces flaked coconut

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat butter, soy sauce, and seasoned salt in large skillet over low heat until butter is melted. Stir in almonds. Cook, stirring constantly, 5 minutes. Stir in cereal, peanuts, raisins, noodles, and sesame seed. Cook, stirring constantly, until noodles begin to brown, about 10 minutes. Stir in coconut. Spread half of the mixture in a 15x10-inch jelly roll pan. Bake 10 minutes. Cool on paper toweling. Repeat with remaining mixture. Store in airtight container at room temperature until ready to package as gifts. Will keep up to one month.