

Home on the Range

Gifts From The Kitchen

A gift from the kitchen is a gift from the heart. Nothing is more special or has more meaning than a gift from the heart.

Imagine a cake baked in a jar, a festive pasta bowl filled with a bag of fettuccine, a jar of macadamia nuts, a small bottle of olive oil and a bag of sweetened dried cranberries.

Looking for something simpler? Try colorful mugs with bags of spices and cinnamon sticks, the makings for a warm, wonderful wassail. Decorate mugs with ribbons and cellophane for merry looking keepsakes.

These homemade presents are easy and convenient. Use baskets, bowls, bags, bows, ribbons, or wrap.

Remember, whatever the holiday fare creation, don't forget the recipe card. In this season of giving, make it creative, fun, and from the heart.

CHEDDAR CHEESE BALL

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, at room temperature

3-ounces cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup shredded carrot
2 tablespoons minced onion
1/4 teaspoon dill weed
1/2 cup finely chopped salted peanuts

Beat cheeses until well blended. Stir in remaining ingredients. Chill one hour for ease in handling. Shape to form a ball. Cover and chill 1 to 2 hours to blend flavors. Serve with crackers or cover with plastic wrap, gathering ends at the top, tie with curling ribbon and you have a pretty, delicious and nutritious gift.

Judy Geissinger
Juniata Co. Dairy Princess

SPICED MOCHA MIX

1 1/2 cups non-dairy creamer
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup instant coffee
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients, mix well. Store in tight containers.

Yield, 3 cups mix or 16-1 cup servings.

To serve: 3 tablespoons mix into a mug. Add 1 cup boiling water. Stir well. Garnish with a dollop of whipped cream.

B. Light
Lebanon

GINGERBREAD BAKED IN A JAR

2 1/4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup molasses
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 cup water

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease five 12-ounce jelly jars. Use a pastry brush to grease the jars because the jars are too tall and narrow to fit your hands into it. Do not use vegetable spray; it doesn't work.

In large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and spices.

Stir in butter, water, and molasses until well blended.

Pour mixture into five jars. Place jars on cookie sheet in center of oven and bake 35 minutes or until tester comes out clean.

Have sterilized lids ready. Take one jar at a time from oven and place a lid and ring on top. Screw down tightly.

N. E. Koons

MERRY CHRISTMAS CAKE Year 1700

Cream:
3 cups sugar (granulated or brown)
2 sticks butter
5 eggs, one at a time

Add:
1 teaspoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 tablespoon buttermilk

Add alternately:
3 cups sifted cake flour
1 cup milk

Mix well. Add:
1 1/2 tablespoons rum or rum flavoring
1/2 cup black walnuts or other nuts

1 cup grated coconut
1/2 cup chopped fruit cake mix
1/2 cup raisins

Mix well. Place in loaf pans or large ring pan. Start in cold oven at 325 degrees for 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

Cake improves if wrapped and left to ripen 3 days before serving or freeze. Serve with lemon sauce or drizzle with cream cheese icing.

Linda Boyer
Narvon



Gifts from the kitchen are becoming more and more appreciated as the younger generation of adults has less time and less experience in cooking.

RASPBERRY SAUCE

2 cups raspberries
3 tablespoons water
1/4 cup sugar

Press berries through fine mesh strainer to puree and remove all seeds. Set aside. Make a simple syrup by stirring together water and sugar in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Cool. Stir together puree and simple syrup. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week or freeze.

After thawing, stir well before serving. Try other fruits great over cake and ice cream.

Linda Boyer
Narvon

NUT BUTTER CRUNCH

1 cup sugar
1 cup butter
1 tablespoon light corn syrup
1 1/2 cups salted nuts, cashews, peanuts, pecans, or walnuts

Combine sugar, butter, and corn syrup in a 2-quart saucepan. Cook over low heat until it reaches 290 degrees or hard strands in ice water 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from heat, add nuts, stirring to coat all nuts. Spread 1/4-inch thick in a jelly roll pan lined with waxed paper. Cool completely and break into pieces. Makes approximately 1 1/2 pounds.

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Featured Recipe

"Baking is an easy and delicious way to tell someone you care," said Mary Bergin, pastry chef and spokesperson of American Dairy Association.

ADA's new recipe leaflet "Butter Brings the World to Your Holiday Table" is full of great recipes—perfect for gift giving.

For a free leaflet, send a self-addressed stamped, business-sized envelope to Butter Brings the World to your Holiday Table, c/o American Dairy Association, P.O. Box 760, Rosemonth, IL 60018-7760.

Here is a festive cookie recipe, from Chef Bergin, excellent for gift giving. See photo above.

CANDY CANE BUTTER COOKIES

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 teaspoon anise extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 large egg yolk
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
Red food coloring

Cream butter, sugar, salt, and egg yolk with electric mixer until smooth. Gradually beat in flour. Remove half of dough. Add 10 to 12 drops food coloring to remaining dough. Beat until well blended. Wrap doughs separately in plastic wrap; refrigerate one hour or up to 2 days. During this time, the flavors blend and develop, bringing out the butter flavor of the dough.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Shape one teaspoon dough from each half into 4-inch ropes. Place ropes side by side; press together gently and twist. Place 2-inches apart on lightly-greased cookie sheets. Curve one end to form cane. Repeat with remaining pieces. Refrigerate for five minutes or until firm.

Bake for 12 to 15 minutes. Cool on baking sheet 5 minutes. Makes 3 dozen cookies.

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.

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