

Home on the Range

Holiday Cookies

Warm up your oven, get out your mixing spoons and cookie cutters and join 82 percent of the women and 39 percent of men who bake during the holidays.

Cookie baking is a tradition that adds joy to the holidays.

In addition to nibbling on cookies served with milk or hot chocolate, here are some other ideas:

- Tuck an assortment of cookies into a basket or tin lined with shiny tissue paper.

- Take along a tray of cookies to a holiday open house, school function or office party. Use colored paper or foil candy cups to display bar cookies and chocolates.

For more creative ideas and holiday recipes, call the Land O' Lakes Holiday Bakeline at 1-800-782-9606. All callers will receive a free "Joy of Holiday Baking" recipe leaflet complete with festive treats that make great gifts.

GRAMMY'S SANDTARTS

2 cups sugar
1 cup butter
3 eggs, reserve 1 egg white
4 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Mix together by hand. Roll into logs and chill. Roll dough thin and cut out favorite shapes. Place cut-outs on cookie sheet. Brush with egg white and sprinkle with colored sugar or cinnamon. Bake at 325 degrees until light brown.

This is a great way to let kids help with baking and start a Christmas tradition.

Royell Bashore
Lebanon Li'l Dairy Miss

CHEWY CARAMEL CANDY POPCORN SQUARES

8 cups popped popcorn
2 cups honey graham cereal
1 cup red and green candy-coated chocolate pieces
1 cup pretzel sticks, broken in half
1/2 cup butter
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup light corn syrup
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
In very large bowl, combine popcorn, candy, and pretzels; set aside.

In 2-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Continue cooking; stirring occasionally, until mixture comes to a full boil (2 to 4 minutes). Boil 1 minute.

Pour caramel mixture over popcorn mixture; toss to coat well. Press into buttered 13x9-inch pan. Cool completely; cut into bars. 36 bars.

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HOLIDAY COOKIE POPS

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup honey
1 package yellow OR chocolate cake mix
2 eggs
Decorator sugars and candies
Wooden craft sticks

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In large bowl, combine all ingredients except decorator sugars and wooden sticks. Stir until well mixed.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls; roll in decorator sugars. Place 2 inches apart on cookie sheets. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Immediately and carefully insert wooden sticks halfway into side of each cookie. Cool 1 minute; remove from cookie sheets.

4 dozen.

Tip: For gift giving, once cookies are cooled, write a special message on wooden stick. Wrap holiday pops in colored plastic food wrap, cellophane or gift bags and tie with ribbons.

Tip: If desired, shape balls of dough into stars, trees, wreath, etc. Bake as directed.

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STAY SOFT SUGAR COOKIES

2 cups sugar
4 eggs
1 cup shortening
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon baking soda
4 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
4 cups flour

Cream together sugar, shortening, eggs, and milk. Add remaining ingredients. Drop by teaspoonsfuls on greased cookie sheet. Put sprinkles, colored sugar or granulated sugar on top. Bake at 350 degrees until edges are brown.

Verna Moll
Temple

OLD-FASHIONED DROP COOKIES

3 eggs
2 cups brown sugar
3/4 cup shortening
1 1/2 cups buttermilk
4 1/2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons vanilla

Mix together all ingredients. Drop on cookie sheet and bake.

Anna Martin
Denver



Kids will enjoy helping make these cookies. Pictured (top to bottom) are Holiday Cookie Pops, Kids Favorite Oatmeal Brown Sugar Cookies, and Chewy Caramel Candy Popcorn Squares. Recipes are from Land O' Lakes.

KIDS FAVORITE OATMEAL BROWN SUGAR COOKIES

Cookies:
1 1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
1 cup butter, softened
1 egg
2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
2 cups quick cooking oats OR old-fashioned rolled oats
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Stir-ins:

1 cup of the following: raisins, cut-up gumdrops, green or red chocolate covered candies, chocolate-covered raisins, chopped nuts, chocolate, butterscotch or vanilla chips, toffee chips, cut-up candy bars, etc.

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In large mixer bowl, combine brown sugar, butter, egg, and lemon peel. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy (1 to 2 minutes). Reduce speed to low; add all remaining ingredients except stir-ins. Beat until well mixed (1 to 2 minutes).

By hand, stir in desired stir-ins from list above.

Drop by tablespoonsfuls onto ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until lightly golden-brown on edges. Cool one minute before removing from cookie sheet. Cool completely.

Makes 3 1/2 dozen cookies.

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Featured Recipe

Questions about cookie baking?

Your personal baking consultant is only a phone call away. From now through Dec. 24, dial 1-800-782-9606 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. (CST) for great baking advice, to request recipes or to get help with baking emergencies.

Bakeline's extensively-trained home economists will assist thousands of callers across the nation.

All callers will receive a leaflet filled with great baking tips and holiday recipes.

Here is a Bakeline recipe from which you can make three variations.

CREATE-YOUR-OWN BARS

Makes 16 bars

Crust:

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter, softened

Filling:

Choice of variation (see below)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In small mixer bowl, combine all crust ingredients. Beat at low speed until mixture is crumbly. Press on bottom of 9-inch square baking pan. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Follow directions for variations:

- Lemon: In small mixer bowl combine 3/4 cup sugar, 2 eggs, 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, 3 tablespoons lemon juice, and 1/4 teaspoon baking powder. Beat at low speed until well mixed. Pour filling over hot crust. Continue baking 18-20 minutes or until filling is set. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Cool completely; cut into bars.

- Pecan: In small mixer bowl, combine 3/4 cup dark corn syrup, 2 eggs, 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla. Beat at medium speed until well mixed. By hand, stir in 1 cup chopped pecans. Pour filling over hot crust. Continue baking 30-35 minutes or until set. Cool; cut into bars.

- Cherry Coconut: In small mixer bowl, combine 3/4 cup flaked coconut, 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar, 2 eggs, 1/2 teaspoon almond extract, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Beat at medium speed until well mixed. By hand, stir in 1/2 cup sliced almonds and 1/2 cup chopped maraschino cherries, well drained. Spread over hot crust. Continue baking for 20 to 30 minutes or until set. In medium bowl, stir together 1 cup powdered sugar, 2 tablespoons water, and 1/2 teaspoon almond extract. Drizzle over hot bars. Cool; cut into bars.

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 listed below.

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