



Home on the Range

Gifts From The Kitchen

Homemade gifts always make a lasting impression.

It's not the size or cost of the gift that matters. The fact that you took time from your busy schedule to make homemade gifts shows how much you care.

Here are many creative and simple gifts to make that are sure to please friends and families.

GOLDEN PILAF MIX

1 cup uncooked rice
1/2 cup golden raisins
1/4 cup chopped dried apricots
1 tablespoon dried minced onion

1 tablespoon chicken bouillon granules

1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper

Combine all ingredients. Package in airtight container or plastic bag. Makes 1 rice mix. Attach the following instructions:

Combine rice mix, 2 cups water (use 1 1/4 cups water for medium or short-grain rice, 2 1/2 cups water for brown rice), and 2 tablespoons butter in 2- to 3-quart saucepan.

Bring to a boil; stir once or twice. Reduce heat to simmer; cover and cook 15 minutes (25 minutes for parboiled rice, 45-50 minutes for brown rice) or until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Fluff with fork. Serves 6.

Fay Strickler
Berks Co. Extension

CINNAMON OAT PANCAKE MIX

4 cups quick-cooking oats
2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
2 cups whole wheat flour
2 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
1 cup nonfat dry milk
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

Combine all ingredients in large bowl; stir well. Store in airtight container in refrigerator. Give with the recipe for pancakes. Yield: 8 cups mix.

Attach direction to make pancakes: In a mixing bowl, beat two eggs. Gradually beat in 1/2 cup vegetable oil. Alternately beat in 2 cups pancake mix and 1 cup water. Heat a lightly greased skillet over medium-high heat. Pour a heaping spoonful batter onto hot skillet. Cook pancakes until bubbles appear on surface and begin to break (about 2 to 3 minutes). Turn and cook 2 to 3 more minutes or until golden brown. Yield: about 12 5-inch pancakes.

Letie Schadler
Lebanon Co. Extension

LEMON DILL SNACK MIX

2 packages fish-shaped cheddar cheese crackers

5.5-ounce package fish-shaped pretzels

2 cups slivered almonds

1/4 cup butter, melted

2 packages (1.8-ounces each) lemon-dill sauce mix

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Combine crackers, pretzels, and almonds in medium roasting pan. In a small bowl, combine melted butter and sauce mix. Pour over dry ingredients; toss until well coated. Bake 30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. Allow to cool. Store in airtight containers. Yield about 16 cups snack mix.

Letie Schadler
Lebanon Co. Extension

SAVORY HOLIDAY SNACK TOSS

5 cups corn, rice, or wheat cereal squares

2 cups oyster crackers

2 cups pretzel sticks, broken in half or holiday-shaped pretzels

1 cup dried cranberries

2 cups cashew halves

1/2 cup butter, melted

1.2-ounce package Caesar dry salad mix or Italian

Heat oven to 300 degrees. Combine cereal squares, oyster crackers, pretzels, cranberries, and cashews in large roaster pan or in two 13x9-inch pans. Stir together butter and salad dressing mix in small bowl. Pour over cereal mixture; toss to coat.

Bake for 20-30 minutes, stirring twice, until lightly browned. Cool completely. Store in tightly covered containers (12 cups, 24 servings).

Letie Schadler
Lebanon Co. Extension

DRY SOUP IN A JAR

1 1/4 cup instant potatoes

1 1/2 cups powdered milk

2 tablespoons chicken bouillon powder

2 teaspoons minced onion

1 1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon dried parsley

1/4 teaspoon thyme

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/4 teaspoon turmeric

Combine all ingredients and package in mason jars. Attach instructions: Stir 1/4 cup soup mix into 1 cup boiling water. Will thicken as it sets and is practically fat free.

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny

FRUIT CAKE COOKIES

6 cups pecans, halved
2 pounds candied cherries, halved

1 pound seedless raisins

1/2 cup sifted flour

Measure and sift together:

3 1/2 cups sifted flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 teaspoon allspice

1 teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon cloves

Work with spoon until soft:

1/2 cup butter

1 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed

Beat until light and fluffy. Stir in, one at a time:

4 eggs

Beat until well blended. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with 1 cup whiskey. Blend in fruit mixture.

Drop batter by teaspoonful on greased cookie sheet. Bake in 300-degree oven about 15 minutes. Separate and store cookies, covered tightly.

Sara Wichhart
Lincoln University

FRIENDSHIP TEA

In a pretty container, place a favorite tea bag with the following attached: *On Christmas Day at half past three, brew yourself a cup of tea. And as you do, I'll think of you and you of me while sitting around the Christmas tree.*

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny

FRIENDSHIP COFFEE

Package in Mason jars, add a coffee mug, cookies, etc. Mix in large bowl:

4 cups Swiss Miss cocoa mix

4 cups non-dairy creamer

2 cups instant coffee

4 cups powdered sugar

1 1/2 tablespoons cinnamon

Place in jars with the directions: Place 2-3 teaspoons in mug of hot water.

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny

TROPICAL CAKE IN A JAR

Cream 1/2 cup shortening

2 1/2 cups sugar

Add 4 eggs

1 teaspoon baking powder

2 teaspoons baking soda

1 1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground cloves

Pinch ginger

3/4 cup water alternating with

3 1/2 cups flour until well blended

Mix in:

3/4 cup pecans or walnuts

3/4 cup drained crushed

pineapple

3/4 cup mashed ripe banana

1/2 cup shredded coconut

Pour mixture evenly into eight well-greased wide mouth pint canning jars. Bake at 325-degrees for 35-45 minutes. Place the eight lids in hot water for at least 10 minutes while the jars are baking. When the cakes are done, remove one at a time, wiping off rim with a clean cloth, and screw the lid on. Jars will seal as they cool. Cakes will keep up to six months if sealed properly.

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny



Gifts from the kitchen are gifts from the heart.

CANDY CANE BATH SALTS

2 cups epsom salts

1/2 cup sea salt

4-6 drops peppermint oil

2-3 drops red food coloring

Place 1 cup epsom salt and

1/4 cup sea salt in a bowl, add 2-3

drops red food coloring. In a second

bowl, mix remaining ingredients. Layer the red and white

mixtures in jars (18-ounce plastic

peanut butter jars work best).

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny

FOAMING BATH SALTS

1/2 cup liquid soap

1 tablespoon light oil

2-3 drops food coloring

6 cups rock salt crystals

Mix soap oil and food coloring.

Pour over rock salt, stir constantly

until rock salt is evenly coated.

Spread coated rock salt in a thin

layer and let air dry for at least 24

hours. Package in airtight

containers.

Kathi Taylor
Shickshinny

(Turn to Page B8)

Featured Recipe

Kathi Taylor, Shickshinny, writes that she prefers giving jar gifts at Christmas time.

"I have oodles and oodles of recipes to fill Mason jars," she writes.

Kathi has sent in several of her favorite recipes — many unique ones, some for cooking, some for the bath, and some gag gifts. For readers who want more ideas for making gifts, Kathi said readers should write directly to her at R.2, Box 2250, Shickshinny, PA 18655 or e-mail to taylorfarm@email.msn.com

ORANGE SLICE COOKIE MIX IN JAR

3/4 cup sugar

1/2 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed

1 1/4 cup flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1 1/2 cups orange slice candies, quartered

Layer ingredients in order listed in quart-size Mason jar, pressing firmly into jar (it is a tight fit).

Attach these directions to the jar:

Remove orange slices from jar and set aside. Empty remaining ingredients into a large bowl, and blend together with 1/2 cup softened butter (do not use diet spread). Add 1 slightly beaten egg and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Mix together and thoroughly blend. Add orange slice candies. Shape into 30 balls, place each ball on greased baking sheet 2-inches apart. Bake at 375-degrees for 12-14 minutes, edges should be lightly browned. Cool 5 minutes, remove to rack to finish cooling.

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.

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| December | 18 - Party Ideas |
| | 25 - Christmas Dinner |
| January | 1 - Lentils |
| | 8 - Beef |