

# Secrets To Creating Delicious Baked Goods

ARDEN HILLS, Minn. — Butter cookies, cakes, pies and tarts are all traditional baked goods for the holidays. To help create these delicious treats when baking, the Land O'Lakes Holiday Bakeline recommends using only real butter in order to maintain a fresh taste and consistent quality among batches. Here are more suggestions the Bakeline experts would like to share for creating delicious baked goods:

- Both salted and unsalted butter can be used interchangeably when baking. It's not necessary to add salt to the recipe when using unsalted butter.

- Butter absorbs odors easily. To ensure that odors do not transfer from the refrigerator to butter, wrap butter in an airtight food bag and store it in a separate compartment in the refrigerator away from odorous foods like garlic.

- For cookie baking success, butter must be softened, yet slightly firm. To soften quickly, remove from refrigerator and pound wrapped butter stick several times on each side with a rolling pin.

- If butter becomes too soft, dough will be too soft and cookies will spread. If dough is too soft, refrigerate for about 30 min-

utes to one hour.

- Always preheat oven 10 to 15 minutes before baking.

- Heating or melting butter allows for maximum flavor and develops the butter's rich, full taste.

- Remember, butter melts between 82° and 96°F. To prevent butter from burning, melt at low temperatures and check it frequently, about every 30 seconds.

- Cool cookies and breads completely on wire racks before storing.

- Baked cookies may be frozen up to six months if carefully wrapped and sealed in airtight containers.

- Butter and margarine both have 100 calories and 11 grams of fat per tablespoon. Butter is made from pure cream, the source of fat in margarine is vegetable oil.

- Light butter can be used as a low-fat substitute for butter. It is best used for topping vegetables or as a table spread.

- Cool cookie sheets completely between batches to prevent cookies from spreading too much.

- One of the keys to eating right is incorporating a wide variety of foods in moderation.

## LITTLE FRUIT CAKE

- 1 pound shelled pecans, broken
- 1 pound pitted dates
- ¼ pound candied cherries, red and green
- 1 pound candied pineapple
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup sifted flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs

Cut nuts and fruit into a large bowl. Sift flour, salt, sugar, and baking powder and mix well with fruit and nuts. Beat eggs until foamy, add to first mixture and blend well. Put in small souffle cups. Bake at 300 degrees for 25-30 minutes. Especially unique on tray of Christmas cookies.

Betty Biehl  
Mertztown

## SALTED PEANUT CRISPS

- 1 cup shortening, part butter or margerine
  - 1½ cups brown sugar
  - 2 eggs
  - 2 teaspoons vanilla
  - 3 cups Gold Medal flour
  - ½ teaspoon baking soda
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - 2 cups salted peanuts
- Mix all ingredients together, putting flour in last, a little at a

time, then put peanuts in. Drop rounded teaspoons of dough about two inches apart on lightly greased baking sheet. Flatten with bottom of greased glass dipped in sugar. Bake 8-10 minutes or until golden brown.

Betty Biehl  
Mertztown

## MINCEMEAT BARS

- 1 box yellow cake mix
  - 2½ cups quick cooking oats
  - 1 jar (27 ounces) mincemeat
- Combine cake mix, oats, and butter. Reserve two cups. Press the rest into the bottom of a lightly-greased 9X13-inch baking pan. Spread mincemeat over this. Sprinkle reserved oat mixture over mincemeat. Bake 375 degrees 30 minutes or until topping is lightly browned. Cool on rack and cut into 1X2-inch squares.

Kathryn Wagner  
Mt. Joy

## SNOWBALL COOKIES

- 3 cups finely-shredded coconut
  - 18-ounces vanilla candy coating
  - 1 package oreo cookies
- Spread coconut on wax paper.

## CHURCH WINDOWS (Non Bake)

- 1 bag colored mini marshmellows
  - 10-ounce bag chocolate chips
  - 2 cups confectioner's sugar
  - 4 tablespoons butter
  - 2 eggs
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla
  - ¼ cups graham cracker crumbs
  - 1½ cups nuts
- Melted butter and chocolate chips. Beat eggs and sugar. Add to chocolate mixture. Blend. Add vanilla, blend. Fold in marshmellows and nuts. Divide mixture to make five rolls. Place crumbs on wax paper. Roll your cookie rolls into the crumbs. Wrap in wax paper. Refrigerate several hours. Slice when ready to serve.

Kathryn Wagner  
Mt. Joy

## Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for 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. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

### December

- 9 - Snacks Using Chex, Other Cereals
- 16 - Holiday Entertaining
- 23 - Christmas Dinner
- 30 - New Year's Celebration



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