

Home on the Range

Merry & Bright



Cookie baking is the perfect time to spend time in the kitchen with family and friends. Today's collection of recipes includes traditional and recently-developed cookie recipes to help make your holiday celebrations merry and bright.

BEST EVER SUGAR COOKIES
 1 cup butter, softened
 1 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
 1 egg
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 Granulated sugar
 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
 2 1/2 cups flour
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
 Mix thoroughly butter, confectioners' sugar, egg, vanilla, and almond extract. Blend in flour, soda, and cream of tartar. Cover; chill 2-3 hours.

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Divide dough in half. Roll each half 3/16-inch thick on lightly floured board. Cut into desired shapes using your favorite cookie cutters. Sprinkle with sugar. Place on lightly greased baking sheet. Bake 7-8 minutes or until lightly brown around the edge. If desired, omit sprinkling with sugar and frost instead after cookies have cooled.

Amy Hartle
 Centre County Alternate
 Dairy Princess

LEMON CHEESE PRESS COOKIES
 1 cup butter
 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
 1 cup sugar
 1 egg
 1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 2 1/2 cup flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 Cream butter, cheese and sugar until fluffy. Blend in remaining ingredients. Cover; chill 1 hour.

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Fill cookie press with 1/4 of dough at a time. Form desired shapes on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes or until lightly brown around the edges.

Amy Hartle
 Centre County Alternate
 Dairy Princess

CHOCOLATE NUT TOFFEE BARS
 1 cup butter
 1 cup confectioners' sugar
 1 1/4 cup flour
 1/2 cup cocoa
 1/2 cup chopped nuts
 1 can (14-ounce) sweetened condensed milk
 2 teaspoons vanilla
 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Reserve 2 tablespoons butter. In large mixing bowl, beat remaining butter and sugar until fluffy. Add flour and cocoa; mix well. With floured hands, press into greased 13x9-inch baking pan. Bake 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in medium saucepan, combine reserved butter and sweetened condensed milk, cook and stir until mixture thickens slightly, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Pour over crust. Bake 10 to 15 minutes longer or until golden brown. Remove from oven; immediately top with chips. Let stand 1 minute, spread while warm. Top with nuts. Cool. Cut into bars. Store covered at room temperature.

Amy Hartle
 Centre County Alternate
 Dairy Princess

MAE'S COOKIES
 3 cups brown sugar
 1 cup butter
 2 eggs
 4 cups flour
 1 cup sour cream
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
 Cream sugar and butter; add eggs; beat. Alternate dry ingredients and sour cream. Roll and cut, sprinkle sugar on top. Bake at 350 degrees.

Royell Bashore
 Lebanon County Dairy Miss

ORANGE COOKIES
 2 cups sugar
 1 cup butter
 1 cup buttermilk
 2 eggs
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 4 cups flour
 Juice of 1 orange
 Mix all together. Drop and bake at 350 degrees. Frost.

Icing:
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 cup confectioners' sugar
 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice

Royell Bashore
 Lebanon County Dairy Miss

LEMON SNOWDROPS
 1 cup butter
 1/2 cup powdered sugar
 1 teaspoon lemon extract
 2 cups flour
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 Mix butter, sugar, and extract. Blend in flour and salt. Chill.

Shape dough into small (level teaspoon) balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets, flatten slightly. Bake 8 minutes at 400 degrees. Remove from sheets to cool. Fill with filling placing two cookies together. Roll in powdered sugar.

Lemon Butter Filling:
 1/2 cup sugar
 2 tablespoons cornstarch
 1/2 cup water
 2 tablespoons butter
 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
 3 tablespoons lemon juice
 Mix sugar and cornstarch; stir water in gradually. Cook stirring constantly until mixture thickens and boils. Boil and stir 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in butter, lemon peel, and juice. Cool completely.

I worked in a bakery nearly 10 years and found parchment paper is something that should be used when baking cookies. If you bake alot at Christmas you need not change the paper between each variety unless using decorating sugar that sticks. You never need to grease pans either.

Barbara Mayer
 North Wales

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CUP COOKIES
 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
 2 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened baking chocolate
 1 cup sugar
 1/2 cup shortening
 2 eggs
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 1 1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons flour
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 3/4 cup finely chopped peanuts
 36 peanut butter cup miniatures (unwrapped)
 Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Melt chocolate chips and chocolate squares in microwave just until smooth, stirring often. Cool slightly.

Combine sugar and shortening; beat in eggs one at a time; add salt and vanilla. Add chocolate mixture slowly mixing well. Stir in baking soda and flour; mixing well.

Shape dough into 1 1/4-inch balls. Roll in peanuts. Bake on ungreased baking sheets 8 minutes or until edges are set. Press peanut butter cup in center immediately. Remove from cookie sheet to cool completely.

Drizzle:
 1 cup peanut butter chips
 Place chips in heavy sandwich bag or plastic throw away decorating bag. Microwave on 50 per-

cent power; kneading bag often until melted. Cut off tiny corner of bag and drizzle over cookies. Makes 3 dozen.

Barbara Mayer
 North Wales

CREAM CHEESE COOKIES
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 teaspoon orange rind
 1 cup flour
 6 ounce package chocolate chips
 3 ounce package cream cheese
 1/2 cup butter
 1 egg
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Cream butter, sugar, and cream cheese together. Add the egg and mix well. Add flour, salt,

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Featured Recipe

Katie Spinler, New York Dairy Princess for Chautauque County, believes people will love her favorite cookie recipes using the best of real dairy products.

RAISIN FILLED COOKIES

1 cup shortening, cream
 2 cups sugar
 6 tablespoons milk
 2 teaspoons vanilla
 3 eggs (beaten)
 5 cups flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 Cream shortening; add sugar gradually. Slowly add milk, vanilla, and eggs; mix well. Add flour salt and baking powder; mix and chill.

Filling:
 2 cups raisins (ground)
 3/4 cup sugar
 3/4 cup water
 1/2 cup chopped nuts
 Cook raisins sugar and water slowly until thick; add nuts. Cool.

Cut round cookies; fill and add top. Slit top open and bake at 350 degrees until done.

PEANUT BUTTER GOODIES

2 sticks soft butter
 1/2 cup peanut butter
 1 sleeve graham crackers (crushed)
 2 cups confectionary sugar
 Mix in 9x13-inch pan. Melt 12 ounces (1 package) milk chocolate chips and pour over top. Let set.

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.

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