

Cookies part of Christmas fun

By RON CROW
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Everyone likes Christmas cookies, right? Well, this year do not wait until Christmas break to indulge in all these goodies.

With a little experience you can bake cookies in your apartment before going home for break. However, dorm students may have a little trouble since dorms are not equipped with ovens.

The recipe for Date Cookies can be followed through successfully even by inexperienced baker.

You need:
3/4 cup margarine.
1 1/2 cup sugar (mix brown and white). Cream together until fluffy.

Then add:
2 eggs.
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla.
2 1/4 cup flour.

3/4 teaspoon soda.
1 1/2 cup chopped dates.
1/2 cup chopped nuts.

Mix and drop on greased cookie sheets by teaspoon. Bake at 350 degrees until done. Makes about five dozen.

After you have mastered the Date Cookies and if you are still hungry you can try traditional German Christmas Cookies.

You need:
one quart honey or molasses.
three pounds dried fruit (raisins, currants, apricots, dates, figs or prunes.)
one cup brown sugar.
one cup shortening.

one teaspoon each of nutmeg, cinnamon and allspice.
1/2 teaspoon cloves.
one tablespoon each of vanilla and one fruit flavoring (such as pineapple, strawberry or lemon.)

one pint nut meats.
1 1/2 cup buttermilk.
1/4 cup wine or fruit juice.
2 1/2 tablespoons soda.

Grind fruit in food grinder. Heat honey or molasses and add soda. Let cool, then add other ingredients with enough flour to make a stiff batter. Let stand overnight.

Roll 1/4 inch thick and bake in oven at 350 degrees. This dough may stand as long as two weeks before baking (refrigerated or in a cool place).

Cookies should be put away in a tightly covered container and left to ripen several weeks before eating. These will keep indefinitely.

A little more complicated but still traditional cookie is the Swiss Biberli Cookie. To make the dough for these you need:

one cup sugar.
1/3 cup honey.
1/2 cup apricot jam.
1 1/2 teaspoon almond extract.
grated rind of one lemon.
juice of 1/2 lemon.

For the glaze:
1 1/2 cup sugar.
1/2 cup water.

For dough, heat honey, sugar and water together until sugar dissolves. Do not boil. When cool stir in lemon rind and Kirsch brandy or rum.

Put the honey mixture slowly into a well in center of flour and blend well. Place the dough in a greased bowl. Cover and set aside for two days.

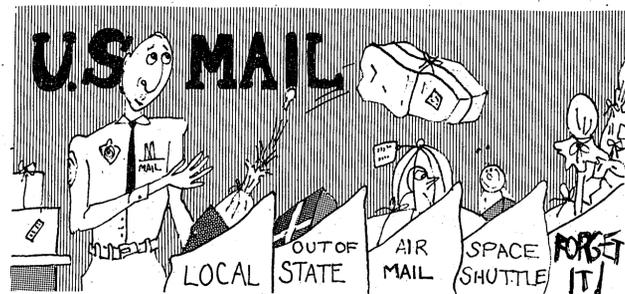
Grind almonds for filling using finest blade or use your blender. Mix in sugar, honey, jam, almond extract, lemon juice and rind. Set aside while you roll the dough.

Divide dough in fourths. Using one fourth at a time roll the dough into a rectangle about 1/4 inch thick. Place a roll of filling one inch thick one inch away from edge of dough. Bring dough over the filling and trim. Repeat.

Cut filled rolls into one inch pieces. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes. Remove from sheet to rack while hot.

Glaze Biberli while still hot. Boil sugar and water five to seven minutes or until it reaches syrupy stage (230 degrees Fahrenheit on candy thermometer). Brush baked surface with syrup.

When glaze is dry, store in airtight container a few days before eating to bring out the spicy flavor. Recipe makes nine dozen or more. Can be kept for weeks.



Mail holiday greetings early

By K.E. FISHMAN
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Although the State College Post Office is not expecting a Christmas crunch worse than in previous years, they will be processing up to 600,000 pieces of mail during the season's peak.

Therefore, to ensure that your holiday cards, letters and packages reach their destinations before next March, the postal service suggests you note several important mailing dates, said Roman Lux, window service technician at the State College Post Office, 237 S. Fraser St.

Mail and letters sent second or third class to any U.S. destination should be received at gateway points, or major send-off points, by Dec. 18. In Pennsylvania, gateway points are Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Parcels being sent by airmail or to distances farther than 600 miles

within the U.S. should reach gateway points by Dec. 14. Parcels going by surface mail, or less than 600 miles, should reach gateway points by Dec. 4.

If you are sending holiday greetings to friends and relatives outside the U.S., you should check the following dates.

Air parcels going to Europe and the Far East should have been sent by Dec. 7. Tomorrow is the latest you can send those airmail cards and letters. Dates for surface mail, or mail being sent less than first class, were Nov. 9 for Europe and Oct. 26 for the Far East. Mailing dates for Central and South America, the Middle East, Africa and Australia have also passed, so all holiday mail should be sent out as soon as possible.

Because of the amount of mail the postal service must handle during the holiday season, ensuring that your

packages arrive without a few bumps and bruises is virtually impossible, Lux said.

"We do the best we can," he said, "but there are always a few packages that get a dent or two."

Lux suggested that breakable items be packaged so they are totally suspended; not touching the sides of the box. Compartmented boxes packed with the bubble plastic and/or tissue paper work best with glassware and dishes.

To seal packages, Lux suggested using filament tape, since the threads make the tape stronger.

On the front, mark the mailing address clearly in ink, and make sure the return address is clearly visible. If the contents are fragile, mark it clearly on all sides of the package, and make the postal clerk aware of the fragile contents so he can put on an official sticker.

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