

tasteofhome

Christmas Cookies

100 Merry
Favorites





What's the sweetest part of the Christmas season? The cookies, of course! Everyone looks forward to trays, tins and plates piled high with freshly baked, decorated delights. And you'll find some of the yummiest, most festive treats ever inside *Taste of Home Christmas Cookies*.

From the world's No. 1 food and entertaining magazine, this sensational collection gives you 100 holiday goodies to satisfy every sweet tooth. Five convenient chapters feature all of your favorite varieties—*Cutout Cookies*, *Drop Cookies*, *Sandwich Cookies*, *Shaped Cookies* and *Slice & Bake Cookies*.

Pack gift boxes with tempting *Toffee Cashew Treasures* for family and friends...bring scrumptious *Fudge-Filled Sandies* to a holiday cookie exchange...or serve guests irresistible *Peppermint Snowballs*. No matter what kind of assortment you're looking for, you'll have every recipe you need to spread warmth and good cheer.

So gather some colorful sprinkles and start the merrymaking. It's as easy as can be with *Taste of Home Christmas Cookies!*

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Cookies

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Pictured on front cover:
[Shortbread Ornament Cookies](#)



Cutout Cookies

Drop Cookies

Sandwich Cookies

Shaped Cookies

Slice & Bake Cookies

General Recipe Index

Alphabetical Index



Cutout Cookies

Roll out the dough and gather your favorite cookie cutters. These decorated delights are as fun to create as they are to eat! Enjoy Christmasy goodies such as [Crisp Gingerbread Cutouts](#), [Festive Stars](#), [Chocolate Reindeer](#) and [Lemon Leaves](#).



Chewy Tangerine Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 3 dozen.

These Scandinavian cookies have a blend of spices and a hint of tangerine. Enjoy a few with a mug of hot coffee.

Janyce Barstad • Anchorage, Alaska

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup dark corn syrup
1 egg
1 tablespoon grated tangerine or orange peel
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon salt

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. In a small saucepan, bring corn syrup to a boil; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Beat in egg and tangerine peel. Combine the flour, baking soda, cloves, nutmeg and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with floured 2-1/2-in. cookie cutters. Place 1 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Chocolate Reindeer

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min. • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

These cute reindeer really fly off the plate when my brother's around. They're his favorite! The subtle chocolate color and taste make them a nice alternative to plain vanilla sugar cookies.

Lisa Ruppel • Keenesburg, Colorado

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup baking cocoa
1 teaspoon baking soda
44 red-hot candies
ICING (optional)
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 to 3 tablespoons milk

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa and baking soda; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a reindeer-shaped cookie cutter. Place on greased baking sheets.
3. Bake at 375° for 8-9 minutes. Immediately press a red-hot onto each nose. Cool for 2-3 minutes; remove from pans to wire racks.

4. If desired, combine confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth. Cut a small hole in the corner of a heavy-duty resealable plastic bag; fill with icing. Pipe around edges of cookies and add a dot for the eye.



Christmas Tree Cookies

Prep: 1-1/2 hours Bake: 10 min. + cooling • Yield: 6 dozen cookies (or 18-36 cookie trees, depending on fullness of trees).

Delight family and friends with these holly jolly evergreens. Iced with creamy frosting and dusted with sparkly colored sugars, the 3-D cookie trees are as delicious as they are beautiful!

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/4 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
Green gel or paste food coloring

FROSTING:

4-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/2 cup warm water
3 tablespoons meringue powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
Green gel or paste food coloring
Assorted decorating sprinkles and white edible glitter

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.

2. Divide dough in half. Tint half of the dough green; knead well to distribute color evenly. Leave remaining dough white. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion of dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Use tree-shaped cookie cutters with identical shapes, measuring 2-1/2 in., 3 in., 4 in. and 4-1/2 in. Cut out an even number of cookies with each size cookie cutter.
4. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately cut half of each size tree cookies in half from top to bottom. If tree cookie cutters have trunks, trim trunks off trees, creating a flat base. Remove to wire racks to cool.
5. For frosting, in a large bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, water, meringue powder, vanilla and cream of tartar. Beat on high speed for 8-10 minutes or until stiff peaks form. Divide frosting in half. Tint half of the frosting green; leave remaining frosting white. Cover frosting with damp paper towels or plastic wrap between uses.
6. **TO MAKE FOUR-SIDED GARLAND TREES (ON TOP IN PHOTO):** Cut a small hole in the corner of a pastry or resealable plastic bag; insert round pastry tip #5. Fill with green or white frosting to match the tree you are decorating. Pipe a line of frosting along the cut edge of one of the halved cookies; press frosted edge along center of a matching whole cookie. Repeat. Let dry until firm.
7. Stand up partially assembled trees. Attach one matching cookie half to the opposite side of the tree by piping frosting along the center of the whole cookie. Let dry completely.
8. Using another pastry or resealable plastic bag, medium star pastry tip #21 and either white or green frosting, pipe garlands around sides of trees. Decorate with sprinkles if desired. Let dry completely.
9. **TO MAKE FULLER TREES (TOP RIGHT IN PHOTO):** Assemble trees as described for four-sided garland trees, using white or green cookies. Using matching colored frosting, attach four cookie halves, one size smaller than assembled tree cookies. Let trees dry completely. Decorate using either the garland or snow-tipped technique. Dry completely.
10. **TO MAKE SNOW-TIPPED TREES (AT LOWER LEFT IN PHOTO):** Assemble trees as described for fuller trees using green cookies. Using another pastry or resealable plastic bag, large round pastry tip #8 and white frosting, pipe snow on tips of branches. Sprinkle with edible glitter. Let dry completely.
11. **TO MAKE GLAZED TREES (AT LOWER RIGHT IN PHOTO):** In a small bowl, thin 1 cup green frosting with 2-3 tablespoons water until frosting reaches pourable consistency. Place matching pairs of whole and halved cookies on a wire rack over waxed paper. Pour icing over cookies; spread with a metal spatula to completely cover top and sides of cookies. Let dry completely. Assemble, using garland tree method; let dry. Decorate as desired.



Crisp Gingerbread Cutouts

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

My grandsons started cooking by helping their grandpa mix up waffle and pancake batter. They also liked to make these nicely spiced cookies, which are fun to decorate with raisins and candies.

Shelia Hanauer • Reidsville, North Carolina

1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup molasses
1 egg
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in molasses and egg. Combine the dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture and mix well (dough will be soft). Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with floured 2-1/2-in. cookie cutters and place on greased baking sheets.
3. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Evergreen Cutouts

Prep: 1-1/4 hours + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

The taste of these festive cookies may remind you of shortbread. But their wonderful, mild sweetness sets them apart.

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

1/3 cup sugar blend
1/4 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup almond paste
1/4 cup canola oil
1 egg
1 egg white
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
3 cups cake flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt

TOPPING:

1 egg, separated
1/4 teaspoon water
6 to 8 drops green food coloring
2 tablespoons sugar blend

1. In a large bowl, beat sugar blend, butter and almond paste until well blended. Beat in the oil, egg, egg white and extracts. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to butter mixture and mix well. Divide into two portions; cover and refrigerate for 1-1/2 to 2 hours or until easy to handle.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion of dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Using a floured 2-1/2-in. round cookie cutter and a 1-1/2-in. shaped cookie cutter, cut an equal number of circles and shapes from dough.
3. Place circles 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Brush one side of shapes with egg white; place egg white side down on circles. In a small bowl, combine the egg yolk, water and food coloring; brush over trees. Sprinkle with sugar blend.
4. Bake at 400° for 6-8 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks. Store in an airtight container.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe was tested with Splenda sugar blend.



Festive Stars

Prep: 50 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 3 dozen.

Want to add some whimsy to your treat tray? These clever interlocking cookies add delightful dimension to a holiday cookie assortment.

Caren Zimmerman • Franklin, Wisconsin

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup red colored sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. five-point star-shaped cookie cutter. Cut a vertical slit between two points on each star to just above the center; spread dough apart to form a 1/4-in. opening.
3. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar. Bake at 400° for 6-7 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool. Assemble by placing two stars together at slits.



Frosted Molasses Cookies

Prep: 40 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + standing • Yield: 8 dozen.

If my family finds out I'm making this recipe, they come running. And they're sure to gobble up the fresh-baked treats in a hurry.

Sarah Byler • Harrisville, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
3 egg yolks
1 cup molasses
1/2 cup water
5 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking soda
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder

FROSTING:

1-1/2 cups sugar
3 egg whites
1/4 cup water
1 cup confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks, molasses and water. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. round cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.

3. For frosting, combine the sugar, egg whites and water in a small heavy saucepan over low heat. With a hand mixer, beat on low speed for 1 minute. Continue beating on low over low heat until frosting reaches 160°, about 8-10 minutes. Pour into the bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer; add confectioners' sugar. Beat on high until frosting forms stiff peaks, about 7 minutes. Frost cookies. Let stand until dry.



Gingerbread House Cookies

Prep: 40 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min. + cooling • Yield: 4 dozen.

Here is my favorite molasses cookie. I use the recipe not only to create little houses for Christmas, but also to make bunnies for Easter and stars for the Fourth of July.

Karen Haen • Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

1 cup shortening
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 cup molasses
1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel
5-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking soda
3/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon ground ginger
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 cup water
Frosting and food coloring of your choice

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in molasses and orange peel. Combine flour, baking soda, salt and spices; add to creamed mixture alternately with water, mixing well after each addition. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a 3-1/2-in. gingerbread house cookie cutter dipped in flour.
3. Place 1 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks. Decorate cooled cookies as desired with tinted frosting.



Gingerbread People

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

These soft, chewy cookies go over big with my grandchildren. They love helping me decorate them.

Joan Truax • Pittsboro, Indiana

6 tablespoons butter, softened
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup molasses
1 egg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
3 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons ground ginger
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
Icing and candies of your choice

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the molasses, egg, vanilla and lemon peel. Combine the flour, ginger, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, salt and cloves; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 4-in. gingerbread boy cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Reroll scraps.

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3. Bake at 350° for 7-9 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool completely. Decorate as desired.



Gingerbread Star Tree

Prep: 2 hours + standing Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 1 gingerbread tree and 3 dozen small star cookies.

Want to take your Christmas cookies to a whole new level? Assemble this impressive tree. Guests can nibble on the gingerbread cookies as they talk and mingle.

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

DOUGH:

- 1-1/3 cups packed brown sugar
- 1-1/3 cups molasses
- 2 cups cold butter, cubed
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 8 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 4 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground allspice
- 2 teaspoons ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom

ROYAL ICING AND DECORATIONS:

- 7-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar, divided
- 6 tablespoons meringue powder, divided
- 10 tablespoons warm water, divided
- Edible glitter
- Candy of your choice
- Dark chocolate and white candy coating, melted

EQUIPMENT:

Pencil

Ruler

Waxed paper

Scissors

Cookie cutters #151; round (2-1/2 inches, 2 inches and 1-1/2 inches) and star-shaped (3 inches, 2 inches and 1 inch)

#101 petal pastry tip

- 1. TO CREATE STAR TEMPLATES:** With a pencil and ruler, draw five-pointed stars on sheets of waxed paper, labeling each template with its dimensions. Draw an 8-1/2-in. star, 8-in. star, 7-1/2-in. star, 7-1/4-in. star, 6-3/4-in. star, 6-in. star and 4-1/2-in. star. Cut out with scissors and set aside.
- 2. TO MAKE DOUGH:** In a large saucepan over medium heat, bring brown sugar and molasses just to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat; stir in butter until melted. Stir in eggs until blended. Combine the remaining dough ingredients; stir into brown sugar mixture. Divide dough into four portions.
- 3.** On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion to 1/4-in. thickness. Using templates, cut one 8-1/2-in. star, two 8-in. stars, one 7-1/2-in. star, two 7-1/4-in. stars, one 6-3/4-in. star, two 6-in. stars and one 4-1/2-in. star. Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 325° for 12-15 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 4.** Cut two circles using a floured 2-1/2-in. round cookie cutter. Cut 12 circles using a floured 2-in. round cookie cutter. Cut two circles using a floured 1-1/2-in. round cookie cutter. Cut remaining dough using floured star-shaped cookie cutters. Reroll scraps. Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 325° for 10-12 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 5. FOR ONE BATCH OF ICING:** In a large bowl, combine 3-3/4 cups confectioners' sugar, 3 tablespoons meringue powder and 5 tablespoons water; beat on low speed just until combined. Beat on high for 4-5 minutes or until stiff peaks form. Keep icing covered at all times with a damp cloth. If necessary, beat again on high speed to restore texture.
- 6. TO ASSEMBLE:** With icing and round cookies, make six large sandwich cookies and one small sandwich cookie. Let stand for 15 minutes or until set.
- 7.** Place the 8-1/2-in. star on a serving plate. Spread a small amount of icing onto center of star; top with an 8-in. star. Spread a small amount of icing onto center of star; top with a large sandwich cookie. Spread a small amount of icing onto sandwich cookie; top with remaining 8-in. star. Let stand for 15 minutes or until set.
- 8.** Repeat with remaining icing, sandwich cookies and stars, building tree using the largest stars and sandwich cookies first. After each star is added, let stand for 15 minutes or until set.
- 9. TO DECORATE:** Prepare a second batch of icing. Cut a small hole in the corner of a pastry or plastic bag; insert #101 petal tip. Fill bag with icing. Decorate tree as desired with icing, edible glitter and candy. Decorate a 2-in. star cookie as desired; secure on the treetop with icing.

10. **TO DECORATE SMALL STAR COOKIES:** Dip cookies in melted candy coating; place on waxed paper and let stand until set. Sprinkle white cookies with edible glitter. Leave some cookies plain if desired. Gently place cookies onto tree branches and on the serving platter.



Grandma's Star Cookies

Prep: 1 hour Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 7 dozen.

My husband's grandmother would use only a star cookie cutter for these buttery treats. I use various shapes for celebrations throughout the year.

Jenny Brown • West Lafayette, Indiana

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1/4 cup thawed orange juice concentrate
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt

FROSTING:

3 cups confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup butter, melted
1-1/2 teaspoons orange juice concentrate
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 to 4 tablespoons milk
Food coloring and colored sugar, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in orange juice concentrate and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a 3-in. star-shaped cookie cutter dipped in flour. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 7-8 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. For frosting, combine the confectioners' sugar, butter, orange juice concentrate, vanilla and enough milk to achieve spreading consistency. Tint with food coloring if desired. Frost cookies; sprinkle with colored sugar if desired.



Lemon Cutouts

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 6 dozen.

My grandmother passed away when I was 5 years old, so I treasure this recipe of hers. Grated lemon peel makes the buttery cutout cookies stand out from other versions.

Bonnie Lytle • Coal Township, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/4 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
Colored sugars

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and lemon peel; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with 2-1/2-in. cookie cutters dipped in flour.
3. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugars. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Lemon Leaves

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 4-1/2 dozen.

Sugar, chopped pistachios and lemon peel sprinkled on top of these treats make them extra special. I like to use leaf-shaped cookie cutters.

Karen Minthorne • Rancho Cucamonga, California

1/2 cup butter, softened
1-1/3 cups sugar, divided
1 egg
1 tablespoon half-and-half cream
1 teaspoon lemon extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 egg yolks
1 teaspoon water
1/4 cup finely chopped pistachios
1-1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and 1 cup of sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, cream and extract. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. In a small bowl, beat egg yolks and water. In another bowl, combine pistachios, lemon peel and remaining sugar.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-1/2-in. leaf-shaped cookie cutter dipped in flour. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Brush with egg yolk mixture; sprinkle with pistachio mixture.

4. Bake at 350° for 6-8 minutes or until edges are set (do not brown). Remove to wire racks to cool.



Maple Sugar Cookies

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 4 dozen.

Friends and family request this recipe whenever I'm bringing treats to an event. Everyone enjoys the subtle maple flavor of these crisp cookies.

Anna Glaus • Greensburg, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter-flavored shortening
1-1/4 cups sugar
2 eggs
1/4 cup maple syrup
3 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in syrup and vanilla. Combine the remaining ingredients; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.
3. Bake at 350° for 9-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Secret Treat Molasses Cookies

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: About 2 dozen.

This special-occasion recipe has been passed down in our family for generations. The cookies are fun to decorate and, with a surprise flavor inside, delicious to eat.

Ruby Neese • Liberty, North Carolina

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup molasses
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 cup strawberry preserves

GLAZE:

1-2/3 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons water
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and molasses. Combine the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. (The dough will be very stiff.) Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8-in. thickness; cut into 2-1/4-in. to 2-1/2-in. circles. Place 1/2 teaspoon preserves on half of the circles; top with remaining circles. Pinch edges together to seal. Place on greased baking sheets.

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3. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks. Combine glaze ingredients and frost cooled cookies.



Shortbread Ornament Cookies

Prep: 1-1/2 hours + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 3 dozen.

These buttery shortbread cookies are almost too pretty to eat! Use Christmas ornament cookie cutters or any other shapes you like.

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

3 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 cups cold butter, cubed
2 tablespoons cold water
1/2 teaspoon rum extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract

ICING:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons 2% milk
Food coloring of your choice, optional
Colored edible glitter and nonpareils

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in water and extracts until mixture forms a ball.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with floured cookie cutters. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Bake at 325° for 15-18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.

4. For icing, in a large bowl, whisk the confectioners' sugar and milk. Divide into small bowls; tint with food coloring if desired. Gently spread over cookies. Decorate as desired.



Soft Molasses Cutout Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 6-1/2 dozen.

I received this recipe years ago, when my husband and I managed a retirement home. We'd always put out homemade cookies for morning and afternoon coffee, and these treats were the first to disappear.

Vivian Person • Balaton, Minnesota

1 cup shortening
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 cup dark molasses
5-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup water
Frosting or confectioners' sugar, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in molasses. Combine the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with water, beating well after each addition. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with 2-1/2-in. cookie cutters dipped in flour. Place 1 in. apart on greased baking sheets.
3. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool. Frost or dust with confectioners' sugar if desired.



Sour Cream Sugar Cookies

Prep: 70 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 4-1/2 dozen.

I love to make these cookies for my family and our neighbors. The treats stay soft for at least a week, and I can decorate them to suit any occasion.

Carolyn Walton • Smoot, Wyoming

1 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt

FROSTING:

1 cup butter, softened
9 cups confectioners' sugar
3 teaspoons vanilla extract
2/3 to 3/4 cup 2% milk
Paste food coloring

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, sour cream and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 3-in. heart-shaped cookie cutter.

3. Place 1 in. apart on baking sheets lightly coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
4. For frosting, in a large bowl, cream butter until light and fluffy. Beat in confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Add enough milk to achieve desired consistency. Tint with food coloring. Decorate cookies as desired.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To create the look in the photo, use #10 and #4 round pastry tips and additional cookie-cutter shapes.



Swedish Spice Cutouts

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 10 dozen.

My sister, Judith, brought this recipe with her when she came to the United States from Sweden in 1928. It's a timeless treat we still enjoy today.

Lilly Decker • Clancy, Montana

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
1-3/4 cups packed dark brown sugar
1 egg
2/3 cup dark corn syrup
1/4 cup molasses
4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
Slivered almonds, optional
Frosting of your choice, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, corn syrup and molasses. Combine the flour, cinnamon, baking soda and cloves; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with floured 2-1/2-in. cookie cutters. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Top with almonds if desired or leave plain.
3. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. Frost plain cookies if desired.



Zimtsterne

Prep: 40 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 5 dozen.

During December, homes and bakeries in Switzerland are filled with the aroma of classic cookies. They often include Zimtsterne, yummy chocolate cutouts spiced with cinnamon.

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

1 cup butter, softened
2 cups sugar
2 eggs
3 ounces semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled
2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup ground cinnamon

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and chocolate. Combine flour and cinnamon; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Wrap dough in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-in. star-shaped cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Chill and reroll scraps if desired.
3. Bake at 350° for 9-11 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks.



Drop Cookies

Easy to make, fuss-free drop cookies go together quickly and are packed with great flavor. You'll please everyone during the holiday season with merry creations such as [Cranberry Crisps](#), [Chocolate Pecan Kisses](#) and [Toffee Cashew Treasures](#).



Apple Doodles

Prep/Total Time: 25 min. • Yield: 3-1/2 dozen.

This recipe was originally an apple cake, but I transformed it into yummy drop cookies. It's a nice way to feature fall's delicious produce.

Cecilia Lorraine Ruiz • Sunnyvale, California

2/3 cup butter-flavored shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup finely chopped peeled tart apple
3/4 cup chopped walnuts, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt; stir half into the creamed mixture. Stir in the apple, walnuts if desired and remaining flour mixture.
2. Drop by heaping teaspoonfuls 3 in. apart onto lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 13-15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Apricot Cream Cheese Drops

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

This treasured recipe came from a favorite aunt. Her soft, rich cookies have the yummy flavor of apricot, but you could use strawberry, pineapple or raspberry preserves instead.

Melinda Leonowitz • Birdsboro, Pennsylvania

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup apricot preserves
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon 2% milk
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt

FROSTING:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup apricot preserves
1 tablespoon butter, softened
1 to 2 teaspoons milk
Ground nuts or flaked coconut

1. In a large bowl, beat the butter, cream cheese, apricot preserves, brown sugar and milk until blended. Combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt; gradually add to cream cheese mixture and mix well.
2. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.

3. For frosting, in a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, apricot preserves, butter and enough milk to achieve desired consistency. Spread over cooled cookies. Sprinkle with nuts or coconut.



Brownie Crackles

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

Chocolate chips and a convenient brownie mix provide the rich chocolate flavor in these irresistible cookies. Rolling the dough in powdered sugar gives them their inviting crackled appearance.

Ellen Govertsen • Wheaton, Illinois

1 package fudge brownie mix (13-in. x 9-inch pan size)
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 egg
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup canola oil
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
Confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, beat the brownie mix, flour, egg, water and oil until well blended. Stir in chocolate chips.
2. Place confectioners' sugar in a shallow dish. Drop dough by tablespoonfuls into sugar; roll to coat. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.



Cherry Chocolate Chip Cookies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 15 min./batch • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

We run a cherry orchard, so I'm always dreaming up new cherry recipes. These cookies are one of my family's favorites.

Pamela Alexander • Prosser, Washington

- 1 cup dried cherries, chopped
- 1/3 cup hot water
- 6 tablespoons shortening
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 cups quick-cooking oats
- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips

1. In a small bowl, soak cherries in hot water for at least 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, cream the shortening, butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, orange peel and vanilla. Combine the oats, flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in the chocolate chips and cherries with liquid.

3. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool for 1 minute before removing from pans to wire racks.



Chewy Brownie Cookies

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 3 dozen.

Bite into one of these chocolaty cookies, and you'll discover they're like chewy brownies inside. Yum!

Jonie Adams • Albion, Michigan

2/3 cup shortening
1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 tablespoon water
3 teaspoons vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup baking cocoa
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, water and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, salt and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and beat just until blended. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts if desired.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 7-9 minutes; do not overbake. Cool 2 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool.



Chocolate Chip Cookies

Prep: 10 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 11 dozen.

Chocolate chip cookies are a mainstay in every cookie jar. Because they have mass appeal, they're perfect for gifts, bake sales and everyday snacking.

Cindy Utter • Jacksonville, Illinois

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup shortening
- 2 cups packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts (dough will be sticky). Cover and chill dough for 1 hour.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.

CRANBERRY CHIP COOKIES: Reduce semisweet chocolate chips to 1 cup. Along with the chips and pecans, stir in 1 cup vanilla or white chips and 1 cup dried cranberries. Bake as directed.

WHITE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES: Omit semisweet chocolate chips and pecans. Stir 2 cups vanilla or white chips and 1 cup toasted chopped hazelnuts into dough. Bake as directed.



Chocolate Island

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 15 min./batch • Yield: about 4 dozen.

I've been whipping up this recipe for decades, and it's still my family's all-time favorite cookie. A homemade chocolate frosting makes these treats extra special.

Christine Harsh • Kerens, West Virginia

1/2 cup shortening
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
1/4 cup strong brewed coffee
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup buttermilk
1/3 cup flaked coconut

FROSTING:

1-1/2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
1/4 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon butter, softened
1 to 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
2/3 cup flaked coconut

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, chocolate and coffee. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk, beating well after each addition. Stir in coconut.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until edges are browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.

3. For frosting, combine the chocolate, sour cream and butter in a small bowl until smooth. Add enough sugar to achieve spreading consistency. Frost cooled cookies. Sprinkle with coconut.



Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: 3 dozen.

Kids are thrilled to find a marshmallow hidden under this cookie's cocoa frosting. I enjoyed these treats as a child, and now my own family loves them, too.

Joanna Swartley • Harrisonburg, Virginia

1/2 cup butter-flavored shortening
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup 2% milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup baking cocoa
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
18 large marshmallows, halved

FROSTING:

3 tablespoons butter, softened
3 cups confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons baking cocoa
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 to 6 tablespoons 2% milk

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, milk and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, salt and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.

2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8 minutes. Press a marshmallow half, cut side down, onto each cookie; bake 2 minutes longer. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. In a small bowl, beat the butter, confectioners' sugar, cocoa and salt until smooth. Add enough milk to achieve a spreading consistency. Frost cookies.



Chocolate Pecan Kisses

Prep: 15 min. + standing Bake: 40 min. + standing • Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.

A good friend gave me this recipe, and I've shared it with many others. These treats are sometimes called "forgotten" cookies because you bake them, then turn off the oven and leave them inside for a while longer.

Josephine Beals • Zionsville, Indiana

- 1 egg white
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

1. Place egg white in a small bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, on high until stiff peaks form. Fold in chocolate chips and pecans.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake at 250° for 40-45 minutes or until firm to the touch. Turn oven off and let cookies dry in the oven for 1-1/2 hours.
3. Carefully remove cookies from parchment paper. Store in an airtight container.



Chocolate Raspberry Cookies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 6 dozen.

The combination of raspberries and chocolate in these cookies makes each bite tongue-tingling. Serve them for special occasions or any time you want to indulge.

Sherri Crotwell • Shasta Lake, California

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips, melted and cooled
- 1/2 cup raspberries, pureed
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup white baking chips

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in melted chocolate and raspberries. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in chips.
2. Drop by teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Cranberry Crisps

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 5 dozen.

I developed this recipe after sampling a similar cookie when traveling in North Carolina. The pretty treats keep well in the freezer, so I always have some on hand for midday munching.

Sandy Furches • Lake City, Florida

- 1 cup butter-flavored shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2-1/2 cups old-fashioned oats
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1-1/3 cups dried cranberries
- 1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the oats, flour, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in the cranberries and walnuts.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Frosted Peanut Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 5 dozen.

Oats, chopped peanuts and peanut butter frosting make this recipe a nice change of pace from traditional peanut butter cookies. Whenever someone tastes these for the first time, compliments and recipe requests soon follow!

Alicia Surma • Tacoma, Washington

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup quick-cooking oats
1 cup chopped salted peanuts

FROSTING:

1/2 cup peanut butter
3 cups confectioners' sugar
1/3 cup milk

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine flour and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in oats and peanuts.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. In a large bowl, beat the frosting ingredients until smooth. Frost cookies.



Gumdrop Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 15 min. + cooling • Yield: 3-1/2 dozen.

Children really get a kick out of these "candy" cookies dotted with chewy gumdrops. I use red and green ones for Christmas, black and orange for Halloween and pastel colors for Easter.

Carolyn Stromberg • Wever, Iowa

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar, divided
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped fruit-flavored or spiced gumdrops
2 egg whites

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and 3/4 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in gumdrops.
2. In a small bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Fold into dough.
3. Drop by heaping teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 1 minute before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.



Lemon Poppy Seed Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3-1/2 dozen.

These soft cookies are a comforting, old-fashioned variety everyone will enjoy. Try them with tea or coffee as an afternoon pick-me-up.

Pat Woolley • Jackson Center, Ohio

1/2 cup poppy seed filling
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups sugar
3 egg yolks
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
2 teaspoons lemon extract
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1-1/4 teaspoons baking soda
3/4 cup buttermilk

FROSTING:

3 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons butter, softened
1/4 cup 2% milk
2 teaspoons lemon extract
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
Poppy seeds, optional

1. In a small bowl, combine the poppy seed filling and lemon juice; set aside. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks, lemon peel and

extracts. Combine the flour, baking powder and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk, beating well after each addition.

2. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation about 1/2 in. deep in the center of each. Fill with about 1/2 teaspoon of poppy seed filling. Top with a teaspoonful of dough.
3. Bake at 350° for 14-16 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. For frosting, in a large bowl, beat the confectioners' sugar, butter, milk, extract and lemon peel until blended. Spread over cookies. Sprinkle with poppy seeds if desired.



Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 15 min./batch • Yield: about 12-1/2 dozen.

In my small neighborhood, my grandkids and their friends stop by throughout the day. I keep my cookie jar well stocked with these classic treats.

Sandi Swartzenberger • Kalispell, Montana

- 2 cups butter, softened
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 cups quick-cooking oats
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2-1/2 cups raisins
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1-1/2 cups chopped walnuts
- 1 cup flaked coconut

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in water and vanilla. Combine the oats, flour, salt, cinnamon and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. (Transfer to a larger bowl if necessary.) Stir in the raisins, chocolate chips, walnuts and coconut.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Orange Dreams

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

Members of our teaching staff take turns bringing special treats to share, and a fellow teacher gave me this recipe. The moist, chewy cookies with a pleasant orange flavor are a favorite.

Susan Warren • North Manchester, Indiana

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 cups vanilla or white chips

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and orange peel. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in vanilla chips.
2. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Popcorn Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

It's fun to surprise people with the crushed popcorn in these yummy cookies. They definitely make a distinctive treat on a Christmas tray.

Leigh Anne Preston • Palmyra, Indiana

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
Pinch salt
2 cups popped popcorn, lightly crushed
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Stir in the popcorn, chocolate chips and pecans.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 13-14 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Sugar 'n' Spice Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 4-1/2 dozen.

These sweet-and-spicy cookies are such a special treat. They're even more delicious with the homemade lemon frosting spread on top.

Dottie LaPierre • Woburn, Massachusetts

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon salt

LEMON FROSTING:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
3 to 4 tablespoons lemon juice

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and molasses. Combine dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes. Remove to wire racks; cool.

3. For frosting, cream the confectioners' sugar, butter and peel in a large bowl. Gradually add lemon juice, beating until frosting achieves desired spreading consistency. Frost cookies.



Toffee Cashew Treasures

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 5 dozen.

After searching for a recipe that combined my favorite cookies, I decided to create my own. The result was this lacy, crisp treat that gets rave reviews.

Denise Sokolowski • Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups old-fashioned oats
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1 cup milk chocolate English toffee bits or brickle toffee bits
- 1 cup chopped cashews, toasted

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, oats, baking soda, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in the remaining ingredients.
2. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 3 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks.



White Chocolate Holiday Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: 10 dozen.

At first glance, these treats look a bit like traditional chocolate chip cookies. But one bite quickly reveals white chocolate chunks plus spicy dashes of ginger and cinnamon.

Bonnie Baumgardner • Sylva, North Carolina

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
6 ounces white baking chocolate, coarsely chopped
1-1/2 cups chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and extract. Combine the dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in white chocolate and pecans.
2. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Sandwich Cookies

*What's better than a cookie? Two of them, stacked together with a yummy filling in between! From **Caramel Creams** and **Snowman Treats** to **Whoopie Pies** and **Buttercups**, the sweet little sandwiches in this chapter are doubly delightful.*



Almond Jelly Cookies

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 5 dozen.

My mother-in-law used to send these wonderful goodies in special care packages to our family. We could hardly wait to open the box and dig in!

Laraine Hadley • Moretown, Vermont

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 cups ground almonds
1 cup jelly or jam of your choice

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in almonds. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out half of the dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-in. round cookie cutter. Repeat with remaining dough, using a 2-in. doughnut cutter so the center is out of each cookie.
3. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. Spread 1/2 teaspoon jelly over the bottom of the solid cookies; place cookies with cutout center over jelly.



Browned-Butter Sandwich Spritz

Prep: 50 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 3 dozen.

With a sweet maple filling, these scrumptious spritz cookies stand apart from the rest. You can count on them to turn out buttery and tender every time.

Deirdre Dee Cox • Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons butter, cubed
1-1/4 cups confectioners' sugar, divided
1 egg
1 egg yolk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup maple syrup

1. In a small heavy saucepan, cook and stir butter over medium heat for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer to a small bowl; refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.
2. Set aside 2 tablespoons browned butter for filling. In a large bowl, beat 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar and remaining browned butter until smooth. Beat in the egg, yolk and vanilla. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
3. Using a cookie press fitted with the disk of your choice, press dough 2 in. apart onto parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-9 minutes or until set (do not brown). Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. In a small heavy saucepan, bring syrup to a boil. Cool slightly. Whisk in remaining confectioners' sugar until smooth. Beat reserved browned butter until light and fluffy. Beat in syrup mixture until smooth.
5. Spread 1 teaspoon of filling over the bottom of half of the cookies. Top with remaining cookies.



Buttercups

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

I used to make these cookies as simple Christmas cutouts until I hit on the idea of adding a brown butter filling. Sometimes I'll fill the centers with melted chocolate.

Alice Le Duc • Cedarburg, Wisconsin

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

1/4 cup butter, cubed
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 tablespoons water
1/4 cup raspberry preserves or fruit preserves of your choice

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually add flour and mix well. Divide dough in half; wrap each portion in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion of dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. scalloped cookie cutter. Cut a 1-in. hole in the centers of half of the cookies with a floured cutter.
3. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. Heat butter in a small saucepan over medium heat until golden brown, about 7 minutes. Remove from the heat; gradually add the confectioners' sugar, vanilla and enough water to achieve a spreading consistency.

5. Spread on the bottoms of the solid cookies; top with remaining cookies. Place 1/2 teaspoon preserves in the center of each.



Caramels

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 3 dozen.

These pecan-dotted cookies are delicious just as they are when they come out of the oven, but I like to turn them into sweet sandwiches with a homemade brown butter filling. In a pinch, use canned frosting instead.

Barbara Youngers • Kingman, Kansas

1 cup butter, softened
2/3 cup packed brown sugar
2 egg yolks
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup finely chopped pecans
1/4 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

2 tablespoons plus 1-1/2 teaspoons butter
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 to 3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolks and vanilla. Combine the flour, pecans and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and beat well. Shape into two 10-in. rolls; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1-2 hours.
2. Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 11-13 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. For filling, in a small saucepan, cook butter over medium heat until golden brown. Pour into a large bowl, beat in the confectioners' sugar, vanilla and enough cream to achieve

spreading consistency. Spread on the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies.



Chocolate-Mint Sandwich Cookies

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 5 dozen.

A refreshing mint filling sandwiched between two chocolate cookies makes for some yummy Noel nibbling. Just try these and see!

Monica Kneuer • Peconic, New York

3/4 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup baking cocoa
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup 2% milk

FILLING:

3 tablespoons butter, softened
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon 2% milk
1/4 teaspoon peppermint extract
2 to 3 drops green food coloring, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with milk, beating well after each addition. Shape into two 10-1/2-in. rolls; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight.

2. Unwrap dough and cut into 1/8-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 325° for 9-11 minutes or until edges are set. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. Combine filling ingredients; beat until smooth. Add food coloring if desired. Spread on the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies.



Hazelnut-Espresso Sandwich Cookies

Prep: 45 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

The inspiration for these treats came from my sister's description of a hazelnut cookie she tried in Italy. She declared my version to be a wonderful approximation.

Cindy Beberman • Orland Park, Illinois

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/4 cups sugar
1 egg
1 egg yolk
4 teaspoons instant espresso granules
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup finely ground hazelnuts

FILLING:

1-3/4 cups semisweet chocolate chips, divided
1-1/4 cups milk chocolate chips
1 cup heavy whipping cream

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, yolk, espresso granules and vanilla. Combine the flour, salt and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in hazelnuts.
2. Divide dough into thirds; flatten each portion into a circle. Wrap each in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.

3. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one portion of dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 1-1/2-in. cookie cutter; place 1/2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Repeat with remaining dough; chill and reroll scraps.
4. Bake at 375° for 6-8 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
5. For filling, place 3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips and milk chocolate chips in a small bowl. In a small saucepan, bring cream just to a boil. Pour over chocolate; whisk until smooth. Refrigerate for 1-1/2 hours or until filling reaches spreading consistency, stirring occasionally.
6. Spread filling over the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies. In a microwave, melt remaining semisweet chips; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cookies. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Lollipop Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

Cookie "lollipops" are always a hit with kids. Use your imagination with this recipe to create treats for any season —the possibilities are endless!

Jean Edwards • Indianapolis, Indiana

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
2 ounces semisweet chocolate, melted

FROSTING:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 to 2 teaspoons milk
Red-hot candies and red sprinkles

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and extracts. Combine the flour, baking soda and cream of tartar; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half; stir chocolate into one half. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-1/2-in. cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets.

3. Bake at 375° for 7-8 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. For frosting, combine the sugar, extract, salt and enough milk to achieve spreading consistency. Frost chocolate cookies. Place a wooden stick on each cookie, leaving 3 in. for handle. Top each with a plain cookie. Frost tops; sprinkle with candies.



Oatmeal Sandwich Cremes

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

These popular goodies appeal to everyone at family get-togethers and church bake sales. A batch is gone in a flash!

Lesley Mansfield • Monroe, North Carolina

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups self-rising flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 cups quick-cooking oats
3/4 cup raisins

FILLING:

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
3-3/4 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons 2% milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Dash salt

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, water and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and cinnamon; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in oats and raisins.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 3 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Flatten with a glass. Bake at 325° for 13-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. In a large bowl, combine filling ingredients; beat until smooth. Spread on the bottoms of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a substitute for a cup of self-rising flour, place 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a measuring cup. Add all-purpose flour to measure 1 cup.



Raspberry Coconut Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

My mother gave me the recipe for these rich, buttery cookies. Raspberry preserves and a cream filling make them doubly delicious.

June Brown • Veneta, Oregon

3/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup flaked coconut
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

1/4 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons 2% milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup raspberry preserves

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, coconut, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Shape into 1-in. balls. Place 1-1/2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets; flatten with a glass dipped in flour.
3. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool on wire racks.

4. In a small bowl, beat the butter, confectioners' sugar, milk and vanilla until smooth. Place 1/2 teaspoon preserves and a scant teaspoon of filling on the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies.



Raspberry Sandwich Spritz

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + standing • Yield: 2 dozen.

I started baking these Christmas classics when I was in high school, and I still make them for my children and grandkids. The jam, buttery shortbread, chocolate and sprinkles add up to a scrumptious treat.

Joan O'Brien • Punta Gorda, Florida

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup seedless raspberry jam
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
Chocolate sprinkles

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, salt and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Using a cookie press fitted with a ribbon disk, form dough into long strips on ungreased baking sheets. Cut each strip into 2-in. pieces (do not separate). Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cut again if necessary. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. Spread the bottom of half of the cookies with jam; top with remaining cookies. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Place chocolate sprinkles in a small

bowl. Dip each end of cookies in melted chocolate, then in sprinkles. Place on waxed paper; let stand until firm.



Snowman Treats

Prep: 20 min. + standing • Yield: 17 servings.

My daughter, Hannah, and I came up with this recipe on Christmas Eve when she wanted to make treats for Santa. Building a real snowman is fun, but we think coating one in candy is even cooler!

Lori Daniels • Beverly, West Virginia

9 pieces candy corn
1/2 to 3/4 cup creamy peanut butter
34 round butter-flavored crackers
12 ounces white candy coating, coarsely chopped
34 miniature chocolate chips
34 milk chocolate M&M's
Licorice piece or assorted colors of decorating gel

1. Remove yellow ends from candy corn. Cut each candy in half lengthwise; set aside.
2. Spread peanut butter over half of the crackers; top with remaining crackers to make sandwiches.
3. In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Dip sandwiches in chocolate; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper.
4. Immediately position chocolate chips for eyes and mouths and add a reserved candy corn half for nose. For earmuffs, place an M&M on either side of face, connected with a piece of licorice or a strip of decorating gel. Let stand for 30 minutes or until set.



Whoopie Pies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 5 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.

These old-fashioned treats feature a luscious cream filling sandwiched between two chocolate cake-like cookies. Enlist the kids to help assemble them.

Ruth Ann Stelfox • Raymond, Alberta

1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup baking cocoa
2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup water
1 cup buttermilk

FILLING:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 cups marshmallow creme
1/2 cup butter, softened
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with water and buttermilk, beating well after each addition.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 5-7 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

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3. In a small bowl, beat filling ingredients until fluffy. Spread on the bottoms of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies.



Shaped Cookies

When you really want to impress, surprise holiday guests with a plate of fancy favorites such as [Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs](#), [Pecan Horns](#), [Sledding Teddies](#) and [Cream Cheese Spritz](#). Then just wait to hear all the oohs and aahs!



Almond Chocolate Biscotti

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 40 min. + cooling • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

I've given neighbors these decadent, chocolate-covered delights for the holidays. The recipe calls for a convenient boxed cake mix.

Ginger Chatfield • Muscatine, Iowa

1 package (18-1/4 ounces) chocolate cake mix
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 eggs
1/4 cup chocolate syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 cup slivered almonds
1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
1 package (10 to 12 ounces) vanilla or white chips
2 tablespoons shortening

1. In a large bowl, beat the cake mix, flour, butter, eggs, chocolate syrup and extracts until well blended. Stir in almonds and semisweet chocolate chips. On ungreased baking sheets, divide dough in half. Shape each portion into a 12-in. x 2-in. log.
2. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until firm to the touch. Carefully remove to wire racks; cool for 20 minutes.
3. Transfer to a cutting board; carefully cut diagonally with a serrated knife into 1/2-in. slices. Place cut side down on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.
4. In a small heavy saucepan over low heat, melt vanilla chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over biscotti; let stand until set. Store in an airtight container.



Almond Sugar Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: about 4-1/2 dozen.

It's a tradition in our house to start baking Christmas cookies early in the season and to try some new recipes each year. These nutty, glazed melt-in-your-mouth treats are favorites.

Lisa Hummell • Phillipsburg, New Jersey

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon almond extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar

GLAZE:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons almond extract
2 to 3 teaspoons water
Green food coloring, optional
Sliced almonds, toasted

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in almond extract. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Roll into 1-in. balls.
2. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Coat bottom of a glass with cooking spray; dip in sugar. Flatten cookies with prepared glass, dipping glass in sugar again as needed.
3. Bake at 400° for 7-9 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks.

4. In a small bowl, whisk together the confectioners' sugar, almond extract and enough water to achieve glaze consistency. Tint with food coloring if desired; drizzle over cookies. Sprinkle with almonds.



Big Soft Ginger Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 25 min. • Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

These nicely spiced, soft cookies are easy to make and so yummy. They're perfect for people who like the flavor of ginger but don't care for crispy gingersnaps.

Barbara Gray • Boise, Idaho

3/4 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and molasses. Combine the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Roll into 1-1/2-in. balls, then roll in sugar. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until puffy and lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Butter Mint Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: 3 dozen.

These delicate cookies with a touch of mint were a big hit when I made them for a party at work. Plus, they require just five ingredients.

Anita Epitropou • Zion, Illinois

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons peppermint extract
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
Green colored sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in extract. Gradually add flour and mix well.
2. Roll tablespoonfuls of dough into balls. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets; flatten with a glass dipped in colored sugar. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Butter Pecan Roll-Ups

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 5 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 6 dozen.

This is my variation of traditional lace cookies. Enjoy the roll-ups alone or serve them as a yummy accompaniment to bowls of ice cream.

Stella Wartmann • Port Charlotte, Florida

6 tablespoons butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 cup ground pecans

1. In a small bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in pecans.
2. Drop six teaspoonfuls onto a well-greased baking sheet. Bake at 400° for 4-5 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool for 1 minute. Loosen each cookie and curl around a wooden spoon handle. Cool on a wire rack. Repeat with remaining dough.



Buttery Almond Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 4 dozen.

My husband absolutely loves these cookies. They have an old-fashioned flavor that goes well with a cup of tea. Plus, they're simple to put together.

Elaine Anderson • New Galilee, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar, divided
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup chopped almonds

1. In a small bowl, cream butter and 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add flour and mix well. Stir in almonds. Shape into 1-in. balls.
2. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 13-16 minutes or until bottoms are golden brown and cookies are set. Cool for 1-2 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Roll in remaining confectioners' sugar.



Caramel Pecan Treasures

Prep: 25 min. + standing Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 5 dozen.

Your family and friends are sure to be impressed by these fancy-looking goodies. No one can resist the shortbread cookie, caramel filling and melted chocolate top sprinkled with pecans.

Glenda MacEachern • Crown Point, Indiana

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 30 caramels, halved and flattened
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon shortening
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets; flatten slightly. Bake at 325° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. Place a half-caramel on each cookie. Melt the chocolate chips and shortening; drizzle over cookies. Sprinkle with pecans. Let stand until firm.



Caramel Tassies

Prep: 1 hour Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 4 dozen.

Here is one of my family's favorite treats. The buttery, caramel-filled cookie cups make a delightful addition to any dessert tray.

Jane Bricker • Scottsdale, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter, softened
2 packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

1 package (14 ounces) caramels
1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons evaporated milk

FROSTING:

2 tablespoons shortening
2 tablespoons butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon evaporated milk

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and cream cheese until light and fluffy. Gradually add flour and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. Roll dough into 1-in. balls; press onto the bottom and up the sides of ungreased miniature muffin cups. Prick bottoms with a fork. Bake at 375° for 15-17 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.
3. In a large heavy saucepan over low heat, melt caramels with milk. Remove from the heat; cool slightly. Transfer to a heavy-duty resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in a corner of the bag. Pipe filling into pastry cups. Cool to room temperature.
4. For frosting, in a small bowl, beat shortening and butter until smooth. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar and milk until fluffy. Pipe onto filling. Store in the refrigerator.



Chocolate Brownie Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 1 dozen.

These chocolaty cookies taste like brownies but are easier to hold and transport. Children love the crackled coating of confectioners' sugar.

Ruth Cain • Hartselle, Alabama

1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
2 tablespoons canola oil
1 ounce unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/8 teaspoon salt
Confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, beat the sugar, egg, oil, chocolate and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Chill for at least 2 hours.
2. Shape dough into 1-in. balls; roll in confectioners' sugar. Place 2 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dough will be sticky. Dip hands in confectioners' sugar when shaping dough into balls.



Chocolate Cappuccino Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 3-1/2 dozen.

Java fans, rejoice! A touch of coffee gives these chocolaty, chewy cookies a wonderful mocha flavor.

Eleanor Senske • Rock Island, Illinois

1 tablespoon instant coffee granules
1 tablespoon hot water
1 egg white
3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar, divided
1/4 cup canola oil
2 tablespoons corn syrup
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup baking cocoa
1/4 teaspoon salt

1. In a small bowl, dissolve coffee granules in hot water. In a large bowl, combine the egg white, 3/4 cup sugar, oil, corn syrup, vanilla and coffee; beat until well blended. Combine the flour, cocoa and salt; gradually add to coffee mixture and mix well.
2. Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten to 1/4-in. thickness with a glass dipped in the remaining sugar.
3. Bake at 350° for 5-7 minutes or until center is set. Remove to wire racks to cool. Store in an airtight container.



Chocolate Chip Butter Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 30 min. • Yield: about 4 dozen.

At the law firm where I work, we often bring in treats for special occasions. Coworkers make a special trip to my floor when they hear I've baked these crisp, buttery cookies. They're melt-in-your-mouth good!

Janis Gruca • Mokena, Illinois

- 1 cup butter, cubed
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup (6 ounces) miniature semisweet chocolate chips

1. Melt butter in a microwave; stir in vanilla. Cool completely. In a large bowl, combine flour and sugar; stir in butter mixture and chocolate chips (mixture will be crumbly).
2. Shape into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets; flatten slightly. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool on wire racks.



Chocolate Jubilees

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 15 min./batch • Yield: about 5-1/2 dozen.

Rich and fudgy, these decadent delights show up in many of the care packages I send out. I combined several recipes and added maraschino cherries to come up with this winning creation.

LaVera Fenton • Colorado Springs, Colorado

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup shortening
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 to 3 teaspoons almond extract
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup baking cocoa
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 3 cups (18 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 jar (16 ounces) maraschino cherries, drained and chopped
- 1 cup sliced almonds, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, oats, cocoa, baking soda and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Transfer to a larger bowl if necessary. Stir in chocolate chips, cherries and almonds if desired.
2. Roll into 1-1/2-in. balls. Place 3 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 12-14 minutes or until the edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 8-1/2 dozen.

A cookie exchange introduced me to these peanut butter favorites. They're an eye-catching, yummy option for the holidays and bake sales.

Patricia Grall • Hortonville, Wisconsin

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 8 ounces dark chocolate candy coating, coarsely chopped
- 2/3 cup ground salted peanuts

1. In a large bowl, cream the peanut butter, butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine the dry ingredients; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Shape into 2-in. logs. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Dip one end of each cookie into coating; allow excess to drip off. Dip into peanuts. Place on waxed paper to set.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reduced-fat or generic brands of peanut butter are not recommended for this recipe.



Cloverleaf Cookies

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 5 dozen.

Kids are sure to love this recipe—it's like getting three cookies in one! Combining a trio of doughs in the shape of a cute cloverleaf creates a triple treat.

Patricia Gilbert • Kansas City, Missouri

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
1/4 cup chunky peanut butter
1 ounce unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Divide dough into thirds. Add chocolate chips to one portion, peanut butter to another and melted chocolate to the third portion. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm.
3. Roll 1/2 teaspoonfuls of dough into balls. For each cookie, place three balls (one of each dough) with edges touching on ungreased baking sheets to form a cloverleaf.
4. Place cookies 2 in. apart. Bake at 350° for 7-9 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks.



Cream Cheese Spritz

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 9 dozen.

Before baking, I add bright sprinkles to these classics featuring a hint of orange and cinnamon. The recipe is from a booklet that came with a cookie press in the 1950s...and I still have the press!

Sarah Bedia • Lake Jackson, Texas

- 1 cup shortening
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
- Green food coloring, decorator candies and colored sugar, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream the shortening, cream cheese and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla. Combine the flour, salt and cinnamon; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in orange peel. Add food coloring if desired.
2. Using a cookie press fitted with the disk of your choice, press dough 1 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Decorate if desired. Bake at 350° for 9-12 minutes or until set (do not brown). Remove to wire racks to cool.



Dipped Cherry Cookies

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 4 dozen.

Our children and grandchildren declared this festive, flavorful cookie to be a keeper. We gave a batch to our mail carrier to thank her for trudging through so much snow, and she requested the recipe.

Ruth Anne Dale • Titusville, Pennsylvania

2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup sugar, divided
1 cup cold butter, cubed
1/2 cup finely chopped maraschino cherries, drained
12 ounces white baking chocolate, finely chopped, divided
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
2 teaspoons shortening
Coarse sugar and red edible glitter

1. In a large bowl, combine flour and 1/2 cup sugar; cut in butter until crumbly. Knead in the cherries, 2/3 cup white chocolate and extract until dough forms a ball.
2. Shape into 3/4-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly with a glass dipped in remaining sugar. Bake at 325° for 10-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. In a microwave, melt shortening and remaining white chocolate; stir until smooth.
4. Dip half of each cookie into chocolate; allow excess to drip off. Sprinkle with coarse sugar and edible glitter. Place on waxed paper until set. Store in an airtight container.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Edible glitter is available from Wilton Industries. Call 800-794-5866 or visit wilton.com.



Double-Drizzle Pecan Cookies

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

For the cookie munchers in my family, these chewy, toasted pecan treats are a must during the holiday season. Using both a caramel and chocolate drizzle makes them doubly delicious and so pretty on the plate.

Paula Marchesi • Lenhartsville, Pennsylvania

1/2 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1-1/4 cups chopped pecans, toasted
CAMEL DRIZZLE:
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
CHOCOLATE DRIZZLE:
1 ounce semisweet chocolate
1 tablespoon butter

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.

2. Shape dough into 1-in. balls; roll in pecans. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets; flatten slightly. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
3. In a small saucepan, bring brown sugar and cream to a boil. Remove from the heat; whisk in confectioners' sugar. Immediately drizzle over cookies.
4. In a microwave, melt chocolate and butter; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cookies. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container.



Fudge-Filled Sandies

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 20 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 4 dozen.

I dream of one day owning a cookie shop, but until then, I'll keep surprising friends and family with my homemade concoctions. These goodies are like pecan sandies with a touch of chocolate.

Jeanette Ray • Lindenhurst, Illinois

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup finely chopped pecans
Additional confectioners' sugar

FILLING:

3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
1 tablespoon water
1 tablespoon shortening

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add flour to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in pecans.
2. Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each. Bake at 325° for 18-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Roll warm cookies in additional confectioners' sugar; cool on wire racks.
3. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Stir in the corn syrup, water and shortening. Spoon or pipe into cooled cookies.



Hedgehog Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 25 min. • Yield: about 1-1/2 dozen.

These little coconut-coated balls are as cute as can be and go over well with kids and adults alike. A lady from my garden club shared the recipe with me one Christmas.

Sandra Pichon • Memphis, Tennessee

1 cup finely chopped walnuts
1/2 cup finely chopped dates
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup flaked coconut, divided
1 egg

1. In a large bowl, combine the walnuts, dates and brown sugar. Add 1/2 cup coconut and egg; mix well. Shape into 1-in. balls; roll in remaining coconut.
2. Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-13 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Holiday Spritz

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 7 dozen.

I tried substituting rum extract for vanilla in a classic spritz recipe, and the result was a cookie that tasted a lot like eggnog. It makes a traditional Christmas cookie even more Christmasy!

Lisa Varner • Charleston, South Carolina

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons rum extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
Colored sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and extract. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Using a cookie press fitted with the disk of your choice, press cookies 1 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar.
3. Bake at 375° for 6-9 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.



Holiday Spruce Cookies

Prep/Total Time: 25 min. • Yield: about 2 dozen.

These easy treats won first prize at our last cookie exchange for the "prettiest" and "best-tasting" creation. They're fun to make, and your kids will have fun trimming them with red-hot candy ornaments.

Jeanette Alessi • Orange, California

- 36 large marshmallows
- 1/2 cup butter, cubed
- 1 to 2 teaspoons green food coloring
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 4 cups cornflakes
- Red-hot candies
- 12 Tootsie Roll Midgees, cut in half, optional

1. In a heavy saucepan, combine the marshmallows, butter, food coloring and almond extract; cook and stir over low heat until smooth. Remove from the heat; gently stir in cornflakes until well coated. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto waxed paper.
2. Using a 3-in. Christmas tree cookie cutter, shape into trees. Add red-hots for ornaments. Press a Tootsie Roll half into the base for tree trunk if desired.



Lemony Bonbon Cookies

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 2 dozen.

This recipe is from my great-grandmother's collection. I always make these for the holidays and other special events. The pecan on the bottom is the crunchy twist.

Linda Nicholson • Palatka, Florida

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/3 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup cornstarch
24 pecan halves

ICING:

1-1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons butter, softened
3 to 4 teaspoons lemon juice

1. In a small bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in lemon juice. Combine flour and cornstarch; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and chill for 2 hours.
2. Shape dough into 1-in. balls. Place pecan halves on two ungreased baking sheets. Top each pecan half with a ball of dough; flatten with the bottom of a small glass.
3. Bake at 350° for 14-16 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks; cool completely.
4. For icing, combine the confectioners' sugar, butter and enough lemon juice to achieve a spreading consistency. Spread over cookies. Let stand until set.



Lime Spritz Cookies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 14 dozen.

The refreshing citrus flavor of these pressed cookies comes from lime gelatin. They're delightfully different and always a big hit at potlucks and luncheons.

Lori Daniels • Beverly, West Virginia

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 package (3 ounces) lime gelatin
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Red and green colored sugar, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, sugar and gelatin until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour and baking powder; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Using a cookie press fitted with the disk of your choice, press dough into desired shapes 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar if desired.
3. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Noel Cookie Gems

Prep: 35 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 3 dozen.

Here's a great time-saver during the holiday rush. The festive gems are a cinch to assemble and freeze. Plus, you can fill them with different jams for a change of pace.

Patsy Noel • Exeter, California

1/4 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup shortening
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup sour cream
3/4 cup finely chopped nuts
1/3 cup seedless strawberry jam

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with sour cream, beating well after each addition. Shape into 1-1/4-in. balls; roll in nuts.
2. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make a 3/8- to 1/2-in.-deep indentation in the center of each ball. Fill with jam.
3. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks.



Nutty Thumbprint Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 20 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 1-1/2 dozen.

This versatile recipe couldn't be easier or yummier! Switch things up by using several different jams or jellies.

Georgia MacDonald • Dover, New Hampshire

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg yolk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 egg white, lightly beaten
3/4 cup finely chopped pecans or walnuts
1/2 cup preserves or jelly of your choice

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Shape dough into 1-in. balls; roll in egg white, then in pecans. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each ball. Cover and freeze until firm. Transfer cookie dough balls to a large resealable plastic freezer bag. May be frozen for up to 3 months.
3. **TO USE FROZEN COOKIE DOUGH:** Place dough balls 2 in. apart on baking sheets coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350° for 17-20 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks. While warm, fill each with a teaspoonful of preserves. Cool completely.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To prepare cookies without freezing, shape dough into 1-in. balls; roll balls in egg white, then in nuts. Place 2 in. apart on baking sheets coated with cooking spray. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each ball. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks. While warm, fill each with a teaspoonful of preserves. Cool completely.



Orange Macadamia Nut Cookies

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 15 min. • Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

Biting into one of these cookies brings an unexpected delight—a delicate orange flavor. It pairs perfectly with macadamia nuts to create a taste of the tropics.

Laura Oslon • Manchester, Missouri

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1/2 cup macadamia nuts or blanched almonds

FROSTING:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 4 teaspoons butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolk, orange juice and peel. Combine flour and cornstarch; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in nuts.
2. Roll into 1-1/4-in. balls; place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Gently flatten with the bottom of a glass dipped in sugar. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.
3. Combine frosting ingredients in a bowl; beat until smooth. Frost cookies.



Peanut Butter Delights

Prep: 40 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min. + cooling • Yield: about 5 dozen.

With chocolate-dipped bottoms, a peanut butter filling and a pretty drizzle on top, these treats are fancy and fun. The recipe came from my mom.

Jennifer Moran • Elizabethtown, Kentucky

1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
1-1/2 cups sugar, divided
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup sugar
1 egg yolk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups milk chocolate chips

TOPPING:

1 tablespoon butter
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
6 tablespoons baking cocoa
3 tablespoons water

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. In a large bowl, cream the shortening, butter, peanut butter, 1 cup sugar and brown sugar until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Roll into 1-1/2-in. balls; roll in remaining sugar. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each ball.
3. In a small bowl, beat peanut butter and cream cheese until smooth. Beat in the sugar, egg yolk and vanilla. Spoon about 3/4 teaspoon of filling into each indentation.
4. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until firm to the touch. Remove to wire racks to cool.
5. In a microwave, melt the chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Dip bottoms of cookies in chocolate; allowing excess to drip off. Place chocolate side up on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Refrigerate until set.
6. For topping, in a large saucepan, melt butter. Whisk in confectioners' sugar and cocoa. Gradually add water, whisking until smooth. Stir in vanilla. Drizzle over tops of cookies. Chill until chocolate is set. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Pecan Horns

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 25 min./batch • Yield: 4 dozen.

These crescent-shaped creations have a nutty, slightly sweet taste. Serve them with coffee or tea at Christmastime get-togethers.

Dolores Gruenewald • Grove, Oklahoma

2 cups all-purpose flour
4-1/2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup cold butter, cubed
1 egg plus 1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

FILLING/TOPPING:

1-1/2 cups ground pecans, divided
1/2 cup sugar, divided
1/4 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/4 cup milk
1 egg white, beaten

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Combine the egg, yolk and vanilla; add to flour mixture. Shape dough into a ball. Chill for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. Meanwhile, for filling, combine 1-1/4 cups pecans, 1/4 cup sugar, peel and milk; set aside. Divide dough into four portions; shape each into 12 balls. Flatten each ball into a 2-1/2-in. circle; top each with a scant teaspoon of filling. Fold dough over filling; seal edges. Curve ends to form crescents.
3. Place on ungreased baking sheets. Combine remaining pecans and sugar. Brush egg white over tops; sprinkle with pecan mixture. Bake at 350° for 17-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.



Peppermint Snowballs

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch • Yield: 4 dozen.

The holiday season doesn't begin in our house until a batch of these snowballs is baking in the oven. The wonderful aroma scrumptiously says, "Christmas!"

Susan Bonnstetter • Slayton, Minnesota

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup ground nuts, optional

FILLING:

2 tablespoons cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon milk
3 tablespoons crushed peppermint candies
1 drop red food coloring, optional

TOPPING:

1/2 cup crushed peppermint candies
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add flour. Stir in nuts if desired. Knead dough until smooth and elastic. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. In small bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar, milk, candy and food coloring if desired. Roll tablespoonfuls of dough into balls. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make a deep indentation in the center of each.
3. Fill with 1/4 teaspoon filling. Cover with 1/4 teaspoonfuls of dough; seal and reshape into balls. Combine topping ingredients; roll balls in topping.

4. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until firm. Roll warm cookies in remaining topping; cool on wire racks.



Peppermint Twist Kisses

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min. • Yield: 3 dozen.

As rosy as Santa's cheeks, these merry morsels with a chocolate kiss on top are a yuletide favorite. I've received countless requests for the recipe.

Traci Wynne • Denver, Pennsylvania

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/3 cup sugar
1 egg yolk
1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 to 8 drops red food coloring
36 chocolate kisses

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk and extracts. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half; tint one portion red. Divide each into four portions. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.
2. Shape each portion into a 9-in. log. Place one red log next to one white log; twist gently to create one swirled roll. Roll gently until roll becomes one log. Repeat with remaining dough.
3. Cut each log into nine slices; roll each into a ball. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly with a glass.
4. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes until edges are lightly browned. Press chocolate kisses into the center of warm cookies. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Pinwheel Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 4 dozen.

These sugar-sprinkled pinwheels are as pretty as they are yummy. Guests are sure to be impressed when they find these on your holiday tray.

Helen Burch • Jamestown, New York

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons almond extract
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
Red colored sugar
Red and green candied cherries, quartered

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and extracts. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half; wrap in plastic wrap. Chill overnight or until firm.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one portion of dough into a 12-in. x 10-in. rectangle, about 1/8-in. thick. Cut into 2-in. squares. In each square, make 1-in. slits in each corner. Bring every other corner up into center to form a pinwheel; press lightly. Sprinkle cookies with red sugar and press a candied cherry piece into the center of each.
3. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes. Cool 1-2 minutes before removing to wire racks.



Poinsettia Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 3 dozen.

To create these flowery favorites, I changed a traditional cherry blossom cookie recipe. I left out the lemon zest and added food coloring, sprinkles and almond extract.

Gloria Ward • Mesa, Arizona

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon milk
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 teaspoon cherry or vanilla extract
5 to 10 drops red food coloring, optional
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup candied cherry halves
Pink or red sprinkles, optional

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, milk, extracts and food coloring if desired. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes or until easy to handle.
2. Roll dough into 1-1/4-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. With floured kitchen scissors, snip the top of each ball in half, cutting three-fourths of the way through. Cut each half into thirds; carefully spread the wedges apart, forming flower petals.
3. Place a cherry half in the center of each; top with sprinkles if desired. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until set. Cool for 1-2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.



Shortbread Sandwich Cookies

Prep: 20 min. Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: about 4 dozen.

I layered a creamy, coffee-flavored filling between buttery shortbread, then dipped the sandwiches in chocolate. Guests always love them.

Bertha Seyer • Oak Ridge, Missouri

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon baking powder

FILLING:

1/4 cup butter, softened
1-1/3 cups confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons instant coffee granules
2 teaspoons hot water

TOPPING:

1-1/3 cups semisweet chocolate chips
1 tablespoon shortening
Nonpareils

1. Place ungreased baking sheets in the refrigerator. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Using a cookie press fitted with a ribbon disk; press dough into 2-in.-long ribbons on chilled baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 6-8 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool for 1 minute before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

3. For filling, in a small bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Dissolve coffee in hot water; add to creamed mixture and mix until smooth. Spread 1/2 teaspoon filling on the bottom of one cookie; top with another cookie to form a sandwich. Repeat.
4. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip one end of each cookie into chocolate, allowing excess to drip off and then in nonpareils. Place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets until set.



Sledding Teddies

Prep: 3 hours + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch + standing • Yield: 8 servings.

I've been making these merry bears at Christmastime for many years. The cute teddies require a bit of extra effort, but they're definitely worth it.

Linda Nealley • Newburgh, Maine

- 1 cup butter, cubed
- 2/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 2/3 cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons miniature semisweet chocolate chips

FROSTING:

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 2-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

SLEDS:

- 16 candy canes (about 5-1/4 inches)
- 8 whole graham crackers
- 8 red-hot candies

8 cake decorator hearts

1. In a small saucepan, cook the butter, brown sugar and molasses over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Pour into a large bowl; let stand for 10 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, cinnamon, ginger, baking soda and cloves; gradually add to butter mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.
2. For big bears, shape dough into eight 1-1/4-in. balls, eight 1-in. balls, sixteen 1/4-in. balls, sixteen 1-3/4-in. x 1/2-in. logs and sixteen 1-1/2-in. x 1/2-in. logs. Set remaining dough aside.
3. For bodies, place the 1-1/4-in. balls on three ungreased baking sheets; flatten to 1/2-in. thickness. Position the 1-in. balls for heads; flatten to 1/2-in. thickness. Attach two 1-3/4-in. logs for arms and 1/4-in. balls for ears. Do not attach 1-1/2-in. logs for legs; place separately on baking sheets. Add chocolate chips on each paw and on heads for eyes.
4. For small bears, shape the remaining dough into eight 1-in. balls, eight 3/4-in. balls, sixteen 1/4-in. balls, sixteen 1-1/4-in. x 3/8-in. logs and sixteen 1-in. x 3/8-in. logs. Position bears and logs on two ungreased baking sheets as for the big bears; add chocolate chips.
5. Bake small bears and logs at 325° for 11-13 minutes, and big bears and logs for 14-16 minutes or until set. Cool for 10 minutes before carefully removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
6. In a small bowl, combine frosting ingredients. For sleds, use frosting to attach two candy canes to the bottom of each graham cracker; let stand until set.
7. Trim bear bodies so the bottom edge is flat. Using frosting, attach a big bear to the back end of each sled. Attach small bears in front of big bears. For legs, attach big logs in front of bears and small logs on top. For noses, attach red-hots to big bears and hearts to small bears with a dab of frosting. Let stand until set.



Snowmen Butter Cookies

Prep: 30 min. Bake: 15 min. • Yield: 1 dozen.

These cool characters may not melt in warm weather, but holiday guests will make them disappear fast! The buttery cookies add festive fun to any Christmas or winter party.

Suzanne Banyacsky • Schwenksville, Pennsylvania

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon water
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
Red and green liquid or paste food coloring
Black and orange jimmies or sprinkles

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in water and extract. Gradually beat in flour and mix well. Place 1/3 cup each in two small bowls. Add red food coloring to one and green to the other; set aside.
2. Shape remaining dough into twelve 1-in. balls and twelve 1-1/2-in. balls. Place one smaller ball above one larger ball on ungreased baking sheets; flatten slightly.
3. For each snowman, shape 2 teaspoons of colored dough into a hat; place above head. For scarf, shape 1/4 teaspoon of each color into a 3-in. rope; twist ropes together, leaving one end untwisted. Place scarf around snowman's neck. Insert jimmies for eyes and nose.
4. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes or until set. Cool on baking sheets.



Thumbprint Cookies

Prep: 15 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

The thumbprints you make in these festive cookies can hold a variety of fruity jams. They add beautiful color to a platter of holiday treats.

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

6 tablespoons butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
2 tablespoons canola oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon butter flavoring
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 cup cornstarch
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
7-1/2 teaspoons assorted jams

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, oil, vanilla and butter flavoring. Combine the flour, cornstarch, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each.
3. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks. Fill each cookie with 1/4 teaspoon jam; cool.



Slice & Bake Cookies

These tempting treats are truly a cut above the rest! You can't go wrong when you choose [Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems](#), [Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels](#), [Raspberry Swirls](#), [Angel Wings](#) or any of the other sweet treats in this chapter.



Angel Wings

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 20 min. • Yield: about 3 dozen.

I knew this crisp roll-up cookie was a winner when my sister first sampled one. She was so impressed, she asked me to bake her wedding cake!

R. Lane • Tenafly, New Jersey

1 cup cold butter, cubed
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup sour cream
10 tablespoons sugar, divided
3 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
Colored sugar, optional

1. In a large bowl, cut butter into flour until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the sour cream. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 6-8 times or until mixture holds together. Shape into four balls; flatten slightly. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.
2. Unwrap one ball. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons sugar on waxed paper; coat all sides of ball with sugar. Roll into a 12-in. x 5-in. rectangle between two sheets of waxed paper. Remove top sheet of waxed paper. Sprinkle dough with 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon. Lightly mark a line down the center of the dough, making two 6-in. x 5-in. rectangles.
3. Starting with a short side, roll up jelly-roll style to the center mark; peel waxed paper away while rolling. Repeat with other short side. Wrap in plastic wrap; freeze for 30 minutes. Repeat three times.
4. Place remaining sugar or colored sugar if desired on waxed paper. Unwrap one roll. Cut into 1/2-in. slices; dip each side into sugar. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.
5. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Turn cookies; bake 5-8 minutes longer. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Cathedral Cookies

Prep: 10 min. + freezing Cook: 10 min. + cooling • Yield: about 5 dozen.

Children love the colorful marshmallows in these no-bake slices, which mimic the look of stained glass. They really light up the cookie tray at our holiday parties.

Carol Shaffer • Cape Girardeau, Missouri

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 3 cups pastel miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 cup flaked coconut

1. In a heavy saucepan, melt chocolate chips and butter over low heat, stirring occasionally. Stir a small amount into the egg, then return all to pan. Cook and stir over low heat for 2 minutes. Pour into a bowl; let cool for 15 minutes. Gently stir in marshmallows and nuts. Chill for 30 minutes.
2. On a sheet of waxed paper, shape dough into a 1-1/2-in.-diameter log. Place coconut on another sheet of waxed paper. Gently roll log over coconut to coat sides. Wrap up tightly, twisting ends to seal.
3. Freeze for 4 hours or overnight. Remove waxed paper. Cut into 1/4-in. slices. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 4 dozen.

My cookie-loving family is never satisfied with just one batch of these minty pinwheels. I automatically double the recipe each time I bake them!

Ellen Johnson • Hampton, Virginia

1 cup shortening
1-1/2 cups sugar
2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
2 teaspoons peppermint extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted

1. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, milk and extract. Combine the flour, salt and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half. Add chocolate to one portion and mix well.
2. Roll each portion between waxed paper into a 16-in. x 7-in. rectangle, about 1/4-in. thick. Remove top sheet of waxed paper; place plain dough over chocolate dough. Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm.
3. Unwrap dough and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Crisp Lemon Tea Cookies

Prep: 40 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min. + cooling • Yield: 2 dozen.

These lemony cookies are the perfect backdrop for colorful baking bits, sprinkles and edible glitter. They're as much fun to eat as they are to decorate!

Taste of Home Test Kitchen

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 tablespoon 2% milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

FROSTING:

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon butter
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Assorted M&M's miniature baking bits

1. In a small bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in milk and vanilla. Combine flour and cinnamon; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Shape dough into an 8-in. x 2-in. roll; wrap in plastic wrap and freeze.
2. **TO USE FROZEN COOKIE DOUGH:** Unwrap cookie dough and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. For frosting, in another small bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in lemon juice. Frost cookies. Decorate with baking bits.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This recipe does not use eggs.



Date Swirl Cookies

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 4 dozen.

Deliciously old-fashioned, these chewy treats have been a tradition in our family for 60 years. The recipe earned me a ribbon at the county fair and is a winner anytime.

Linda Nilsen • Anoke, Minnesota

1-1/2 cups pitted dates, chopped
3/4 cup sugar, divided
1/3 cup water
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
Pinch salt
1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt

1. In a large saucepan, combine the dates, 1/4 cup sugar, water, nuts and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thick, about 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. In a large bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar, and remaining sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually stir into creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for 30 minutes.
3. Roll dough on a lightly floured surface to a 1/4-in.-thick rectangle. Spread with date mixture; roll up jelly-roll style, starting at a long end. Wrap with waxed paper. Chill for at least 4 hours.
4. Remove waxed paper. Cut into 1/8-in. to 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.



Holiday Lace Cookies

Prep: 45 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 3 dozen.

I cherish this yummy recipe from my mother. It's hard to stop eating the buttery cookies dotted with pecans and dried cranberries.

Mildred Sherrer • Fort Worth, Texas

1 cup butter, softened
2-1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup light corn syrup
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup chopped pecans
1/4 cup dried cranberries

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in corn syrup. Gradually beat in flour and mix well. Fold in pecans and cranberries. Shape dough into two 6-in. logs; wrap each in plastic wrap. Chill for at least 2 hours or until firm.
2. Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 3 in. apart on ungreased foil-lined baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 11-12 minutes or until center and edges are browned and lacy. Allow cookies to cool completely before carefully removing from foil.



Pastelitos De Boda

Prep: 20 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min. • Yield: about 3 dozen.

After moving from the Midwest to an area that's closer to Mexico, I've enjoyed trying authentic Mexican recipes. South of the border, these rich cookies are called "Little Wedding Cakes" and are usually served with hot chocolate. They're quite a departure from the Iowa favorites I grew up with!

Terri Lins • San Diego, California

3/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup finely chopped walnuts
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
Additional confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy; add vanilla. Combine the flour, salt and nuts; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Add cream; knead lightly.
2. Shape into a roll 2-1/2 in. in diameter. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight.
3. Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 15 minutes or until delicately browned around edges. Remove to wire rack. While warm, roll in additional confectioners' sugar.



Peppermint Candy Cookies

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: about 4 dozen.

These buttery mint treats practically melt in your mouth. Plus, bright food coloring gives them a festive look for holiday parties.

Gloria McKenzie • Panama City, Florida

1-1/4 cups butter, softened
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
Green and red paste or gel food coloring

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the flour, salt and extract and mix well. Divide dough into fourths. Tint one portion green and one red; leave the remaining portions plain.
2. Divide each portion into thirds; shape each into a 6-in. log. Flatten into triangular logs, bending the top of one point slightly (to give finished cookies a pinwheel effect). Assemble one large roll by alternating three green and three plain logs. Wrap in plastic wrap. Repeat with red and remaining plain dough. Refrigerate for 4 hours or until firm.
3. Unwrap dough and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks.
4. Cut 6-in.-square pieces of cellophane or plastic wrap to wrap each cookie; twist ends securely or tie with a ribbon.



Raspberry Swirls

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 8 dozen.

My mother-in-law shared the recipe for these old-fashioned cookies with me. Swirls of raspberry jam give them a yummy yuletide twist.

Marcia Hostetter • Canton, New York

1 cup butter, softened
2 cups sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
3-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 jar (12 ounces) seedless raspberry jam
1 cup flaked coconut
1/2 cup chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs and extracts. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and chill dough for at least 2 hours.
2. Divide dough in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll each half into a 12-in. x 9-in. rectangle. Combine the jam, coconut and pecans; spread over rectangles. Carefully roll up, starting with the long end, into a tight jelly roll. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight or freeze for 2-3 hours.
3. Cut into 1/4-in. slices; place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool cookies on wire racks.



Shortbread

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Bake: 15 min. • Yield: 5 dozen.

My parents moved to New Zealand when I was 1 year old, and that's where I grew up, so some of my recipes have a "Down Under" heritage. These special-occasion cookies bring back warm memories of my childhood.

Mrs. Allen Swenson • Camdenton, Missouri

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon salt

1. In large bowl, cream the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Combine the flour, cornstarch and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Roll dough into a 15-in. x 2-in. x 1-in. rectangle; chill.
2. Cut into 1/4-in. slices; place on ungreased baking sheets. Prick with a fork. Bake at 325° for 15-18 minutes. Don't overbake, cookies will not brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems

Prep: 25 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling • Yield: 28 cookies.

Rolled in colorful sprinkles, these melt-in-your-mouth goodies are pretty enough for a party. I make a lot of them for holiday cookie trays.

Delores Edgecomb • Atlanta, New York

3/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cornstarch
1/4 cup colored nonpareils
LEMON ICING:
1 cup confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel

1. In a small bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in lemon peel. Combine flour and cornstarch; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. Shape into a 1-3/4-in.-diameter roll; roll in nonpareils. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until firm.
3. Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 9-11 minutes or until set and edges are lightly browned. Cool for 1 minute before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
4. In a small bowl, combine icing ingredients. Spread over cookies.



Yummy Chocolate Pinwheels

Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch • Yield: 9 dozen.

My husband's grandfather was always intrigued with how the swirls got in these cookies. But he was even more interested in eating them!

Patricia Kile • Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

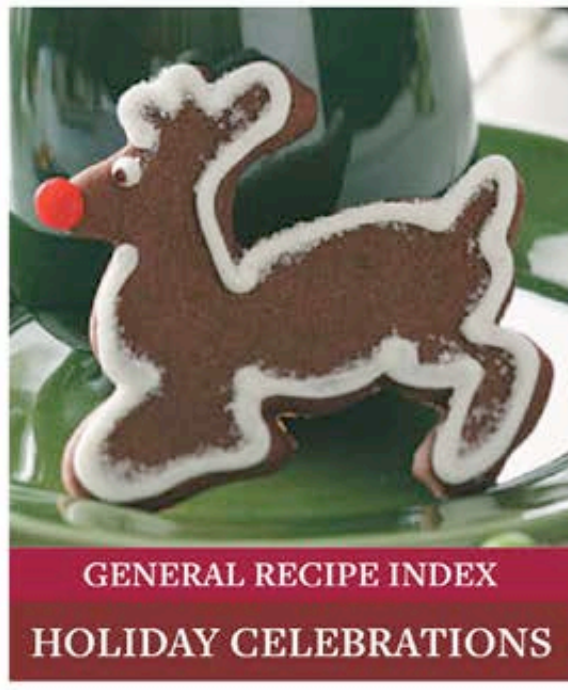
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Pinch salt

FILLING:

2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
2 tablespoons butter
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch salt

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.
2. Divide dough in half; place each half between two sheets of waxed paper. Roll into 12-in. x 10-in. rectangles. Chill until almost firm, about 30 minutes.
3. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt chips and butter; stir until smooth. Beat in vanilla and salt. Spread over dough. Carefully roll up each rectangle into a tight jelly roll; wrap in waxed paper. Chill for 2 hours or until firm.

4. Cut into 1/8-in. slices with a sharp thin knife; place on greased or parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 7-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks.



General Recipe Index

This handy index categorizes the recipes by major ingredient and cooking method to make the most of your time in the kitchen.

ALMOND

- Almond Chocolate Biscotti
- Almond Jelly Cookies
- Almond Sugar Cookies
- Buttery Almond Cookies
- Evergreen Cutouts

APPLES

- Apple Doodles

APRICOTS

- Apricot Cream Cheese Drops

CARAMEL

- Caramel Creams
- Caramel Pecan Treasures
- Caramel Tassies

CHERRIES

- Cherry Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Chocolate Jubilees
- Dipped Cherry Cookies
- Poinsettia Cookies

CHOCOLATE

- Almond Chocolate Biscotti
- Brownie Crackles
- Cherry Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Chewy Brownie Cookies

Chocolate Brownie Cookies
Chocolate Cappuccino Cookies
Chocolate Chip Butter Cookies
Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs
Chocolate Island
Chocolate Jubilees
Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways
Chocolate-Mint Sandwich Cookies
Chocolate Pecan Kisses
Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels
Chocolate Raspberry Cookies
Chocolate Reindeer
Cloverleaf Cookies
Fudge-Filled Sandies
White Chocolate Holiday Cookies
Whoopie Pies
Zimtsterne

CINNAMON & GINGER

Angel Wings
Big Soft Ginger Cookies
Sugar 'n' Spice Cookies
Swedish Spice Cutouts
Zimtsterne

COCONUT

Hedgehog Cookies
Raspberry Coconut Cookies

COFFEE

Chocolate Cappuccino Cookies
Hazelnut-Espresso Sandwich Cookies
Shortbread Sandwich Cookies

CRANBERRIES

Cranberry Crisps

CREAM CHEESE

Apricot Cream Cheese Drops
Cream Cheese Spritz

CUTOUT COOKIES

Chewy Tangerine Cookies
Chocolate Reindeer
Christmas Tree Cookies
Crisp Gingerbread Cutouts
Evergreen Cutouts
Festive Stars
Frosted Molasses Cookies
Gingerbread House Cookies
Gingerbread People
Gingerbread Star Tree
Grandma's Star Cookies
Lemon Cutouts
Lemon Leaves

Maple Sugar Cookies
Secret Treat Molasses Cookies
Shortbread Ornament Cookies
Soft Molasses Cutout Cookies
Sour Cream Sugar Cookies
Swedish Spice Cutouts
Zimtsterne

DATES

Date Swirl Cookies

DROP COOKIES

Apple Doodles
Apricot Cream Cheese Drops
Brownie Crackles
Cherry Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chewy Brownie Cookies
Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chocolate Island
Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways
Chocolate Pecan Kisses
Chocolate Raspberry Cookies
Cranberry Crisps
Frosted Peanut Cookies
Gumdrop Cookies
Lemon Poppy Seed Cookies
Oatmeal Raisin Cookies
Orange Dreams
Popcorn Cookies
Sugar 'n' Spice Cookies
Toffee Cashew Treasures
White Chocolate Holiday Cookies

JAM, JELLY, & PRESERVES

Almond Jelly Cookies
Buttercups
Noel Cookie Gems
Secret Treat Molasses Cookies
Thumbprint Cookies

LEMON & LIME

Crisp Lemon Tea Cookies
Lemon Cutouts
Lemon Leaves
Lemon Poppy Seed Cookies
Lemony Bonbon Cookies
Lime Spritz Cookies
Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems

MAPLE

Browned-Butter Sandwich Spritz
Maple Sugar Cookies

MARSHMALLOWS & MARSHMALLOW CREME

Cathedral Cookies
Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways

Holiday Spruce Cookies
Whoopie Pies

MINT

Butter Mint Cookies
Chocolate-Mint Sandwich Cookies
Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels
Peppermint Candy Cookies
Peppermint Snowballs
Peppermint Twist Kisses

MOLASSES

Crisp Gingerbread Cutouts
Frosted Molasses Cookies
Gingerbread House Cookies
Gingerbread People
Gingerbread Star Tree
Secret Treat Molasses Cookies
Sledding Teddies
Soft Molasses Cutout Cookies

NUTS & PEANUT BUTTER

Butter Pecan Roll-Ups
Caramel Pecan Treasures
Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs
Chocolate Pecan Kisses
Double-Drizzle Pecan Cookies
Frosted Peanut Cookies
Hazelnut-Espresso Sandwich Cookies
Hedgehog Cookies
Holiday Lace Cookies
Orange Macadamia Nut Cookies
Pastelitos De Boda
Peanut Butter Delights
Pecan Horns
Snowman Treats
Toffee Cashew Treasures

OATS

Oatmeal Raisin Cookies
Oatmeal Sandwich Cremes

ORANGE

Chewy Tangerine Cookies
Grandma's Star Cookies
Orange Dreams
Orange Macadamia Nut Cookies

RAISINS

Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

RASPBERRIES

Chocolate Raspberry Cookies
Raspberry Coconut Cookies
Raspberry Sandwich Spritz
Raspberry Swirls

SANDWICH COOKIES

Almond Jelly Cookies
Browned-Butter Sandwich Spritz
Buttercups
Caramel Creams
Chocolate-Mint Sandwich Cookies
Hazelnut-Espresso Sandwich Cookies
Lollipop Cookies
Oatmeal Sandwich Cremes
Raspberry Coconut Cookies
Raspberry Sandwich Spritz
Snowman Treats
Whoopie Pies

SHAPED COOKIES

Almond Chocolate Biscotti
Almond Sugar Cookies
Big Soft Ginger Cookies
Butter Mint Cookies
Butter Pecan Roll-Ups
Buttery Almond Cookies
Caramel Pecan Treasures
Caramel Tassies
Chocolate Brownie Cookies
Chocolate Cappuccino Cookies
Chocolate Chip Butter Cookies
Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs
Chocolate Jubilees
Cloverleaf Cookies
Cream Cheese Spritz
Dipped Cherry Cookies
Double-Drizzle Pecan Cookies
Fudge-Filled Sandies
Hedgehog Cookies
Holiday Spritz
Holiday Spruce Cookies
Lemony Bonbon Cookies
Lime Spritz Cookies
Noel Cookie Gems
Orange Macadamia Nut Cookies
Peanut Butter Delights
Pecan Horns
Peppermint Snowballs
Peppermint Twist Kisses
Poinsettia Cookies
Shortbread Sandwich Cookies
Sledding Teddies
Snowmen Butter Cookies
Thumbprint Cookies

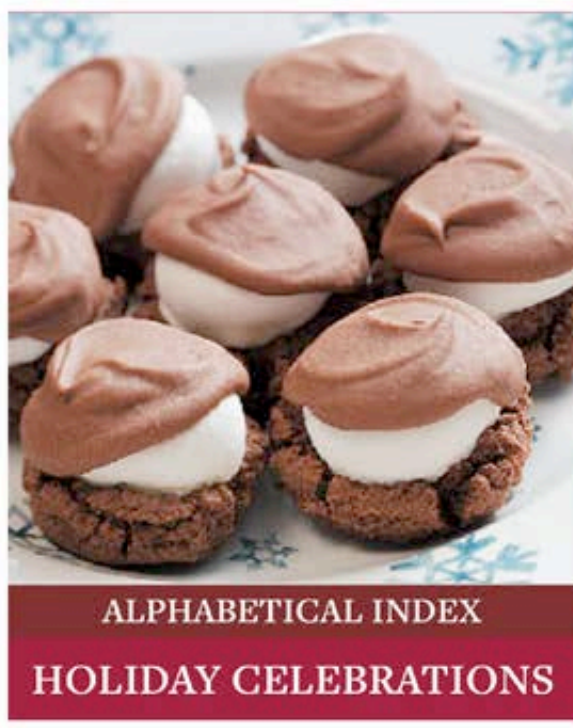
SLICE & BAKE COOKIES

Angel Wings
Cathedral Cookies
Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels

Crisp Lemon Tea Cookies
Date Swirl Cookies
Holiday Lace Cookies
Pastelitos De Boda
Peppermint Candy Cookies
Raspberry Swirls
Shortbread
Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems
Yummy Chocolate Pinwheels

TOFFEE BITS

Toffee Cashew Treasures



Alphabetical Index

Use this index to link to your favorite recipes.

A

Almond Chocolate Biscotti
Almond Jelly Cookies
Almond Sugar Cookies
Angel Wings
Apple Doodles
Apricot Cream Cheese Drops

B

Big Soft Ginger Cookies
Browned-Butter Sandwich Spritz
Brownie Crackles
Butter Mint Cookies
Butter Pecan Roll-Ups
Buttercups
Buttery Almond Cookies

C

Caramel Creams
Caramel Pecan Treasures
Caramel Tassies
Cathedral Cookies
Cherry Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chewy Brownie Cookies
Chewy Tangerine Cookies
Chocolate Brownie Cookies
Chocolate Cappuccino Cookies

Chocolate Chip Butter Cookies
Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chocolate-Dipped Peanut Logs
Chocolate Island
Chocolate Jubilees
Chocolate Marshmallow Meltaways
Chocolate-Mint Sandwich Cookies
Chocolate Pecan Kisses
Chocolate Peppermint Pinwheels
Chocolate Raspberry Cookies
Chocolate Reindeer
Christmas Tree Cookies
Cloverleaf Cookies
Cranberry Crisps
Cream Cheese Spritz
Crisp Gingerbread Cutouts
Crisp Lemon Tea Cookies

D

Date Swirl Cookies
Dipped Cherry Cookies
Double-Drizzle Pecan Cookies

E

Evergreen Cutouts

F

Festive Stars
Frosted Molasses Cookies
Frosted Peanut Cookies
Fudge-Filled Sandies

G

Gingerbread House Cookies
Gingerbread People
Gingerbread Star Tree
Grandma's Star Cookies
Gumdrop Cookies

H

Hazelnut-Espresso Sandwich Cookies
Hedgehog Cookies
Holiday Lace Cookies
Holiday Spritz
Holiday Spruce Cookies

L

Lemon Cutouts
Lemon Leaves
Lemon Poppy Seed Cookies
Lemony Bonbon Cookies
Lime Spritz Cookies
Lollipop Cookies

M

Maple Sugar Cookies

N

Noel Cookie Gems
Nutty Thumbprint Cookies

O

Oatmeal Raisin Cookies
Oatmeal Sandwich Cremes
Orange Dreams
Orange Macadamia Nut Cookies

P

Pastelitos De Boda
Peanut Butter Delights
Pecan Horns
Peppermint Candy Cookies
Peppermint Snowballs
Peppermint Twist Kisses
Pinwheel Cookies
Poinsettia Cookies
Popcorn Cookies

R

Raspberry Coconut Cookies
Raspberry Sandwich Spritz
Raspberry Swirls

S

Secret Treat Molasses Cookies
Shortbread
Shortbread Ornament Cookies
Shortbread Sandwich Cookies
Sledding Teddies
Slice 'n' Bake Lemon Gems
Snowman Treats
Snowmen Butter Cookies
Soft Molasses Cutout Cookies
Sour Cream Sugar Cookies
Sugar 'n' Spice Cookies
Swedish Spice Cutouts

T

Thumbprint Cookies
Toffee Cashew Treasures

W

White Chocolate Holiday Cookies
Whoopie Pies

Y

Yummy Chocolate Pinwheels

Z

Zimtsterne