

## **PUBLISHER'S CORNER**

*"The way to Cat Heaven is a field of sweet grass, where crickets and butterflies play!"  
~Cynthia Rylant, author of Cat Heaven*

Good evening and welcome to the newest issue of A to Z Recipes Newsletter. I'm still a little under the weather but I'll make it. No fever but just hanging on to this darn cold. And the weather is no help; it has been really chilly (30's - 40's), wet and windy, which normally would make me very happy; I love cold weather! And so I completely FORGOT about this being the date of our promised Holiday Cookie theme issue. I started on an issue while sitting here being lazy - and rather goofy - needless to say, lol. NOW I must start the REAL issue. Oh, what the heck. It's not like a have a tight schedule here. I am retired. I love saying that: I am retired! "What do you do for a living, Mrs. Carr?" they ask. I all but scream with delight in response: "Nothing! I am retired!" Gosh I love saying that!

PS: There's a little sadness here for me in that I unexpectedly lost my cat a few days ago. I've been moping around about it since finding him laying on the patio. All I could do was cry out to my husband. If you're a pet owner you understand how I feel. You also understand that pets are "human owners", especially cats. Pinky (long story) was a purr-fect cat as he layed about, doing nothing; and he did it very well, indeed! I will miss him. I can't even imagine having another cat. Ever.

As mentioned, in today's issue we share recipes for Holiday Cookies. I was pleased to have some help from a small but awesome group of a2z'ers. I've also included some of my own favorites and included personal memories with some. We have over 5 dozen recipes here - an entire cookbook full!! Many, many thanks to the following for their help:

**Lynda N., MO**  
**Rachael M., Heber Springs, AR**  
**Lisa H., Belmont, NC**  
**Jessica S., Corfu, Greece**  
**Marilyn M., OH**

I'd love to see your name here! Why not take a few minutes and send us a recipe?

For recipes use [this](#) link.

For other postables use [this](#) link.

I have embedded the "subject" line so I know you're a friend, not a foe. PLEASE remember to include your name (just your first is fine) and your location (just your state is fine). I thank you so much!

I'm also on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Maggie.R.Carr>

Want to get to know one another better or share cooking tips? We have a gathering of fellow recipe collectors, cooks, and friends at the "QT". Join in at the A to Z Recipes Quick Talk (QT). Here is the link:

<https://www.quicktopic.com/37/H/a8K9wr7j97nV>

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

### Tips For Better Cookies

Tired of your cookies not turning out right? Follow our simple tips and techniques and you'll turn out perfect cookies every time. Master a few techniques and learn some quick tips to turn out perfectly crispy, chewy, sweet cookies every time you bake. Your Butter

#### -Soften Your Butter

Most cookie recipes call for softened butter. The butter should be starting to soften but still be slightly cool to the touch (it shouldn't feel like it's melting at all).

#### -Creaming Butter

Beating together butter and sugar is almost always the first step in a cookie recipe. Start with butter that's softened and use a mixer to beat in the sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy. This usually takes about 3 to 5 minutes; just keep beating until it's no longer grainy when you rub it between your fingertips. As you cream the butter, you force in tiny air bubbles, which create the structure of the dough and will later help the cookies to rise.

#### -Measure Your Flour Correctly

Ask two people to measure out one cup of flour, and chances are they'll be slightly (or a lot) different by weight, and that can greatly affect the results of your recipe. For the most accurate flour measurement, spoon it lightly into a dry measuring cup, then level it off with a knife. Never dip the measuring cup into the flour or tap the knife against the cup — you'll pack too much flour into the measuring cup, and end up with tough, dry cookies.

#### -Line Your Pans With Parchment Paper

Lining your baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats is a simple step that really pays off. The paper or mat acts as a layer of insulation between the cookies and the direct heat of the baking sheet, which helps keep cookies from spreading any more than you

want. The bottoms of the cookies bake up smoother and more evenly golden, and the cookies slide off the sheet without any sticking. Instead of waiting until the hot baking sheets cool between batches, parchment paper lets you scoop out all the dough at once: Lay sheets of it (mats will work too if you have a lot of them) on the counter and space out the dough balls ahead of time; slide the whole thing onto the baking sheets once they're cooled. And of course, when you're finished baking, clean-up couldn't be easier since all you need to do is throw away the parchment paper.

#### -Add Eggs One at a Time

Adding eggs one at a time to the creamed butter and sugar isn't just to slow you down. Like any other wet ingredient, eggs added all at once won't emulsify properly with the fat in the butter. If the egg isn't mixed in well before the next one is added, the emulsion could break. Patience at the beginning of the process will yield better cookies out of the oven.

#### -Add Flour or Dry Ingredients in Batches

If the flour is added all at once, the dough would be too stiff and difficult to mix together. The more the flour and liquid are mixed, the more gluten will develop, creating a dense cookie. Adding the flour in batches also ensures the dry ingredients get evenly dispersed.

#### -Fold in Chocolate Chips by Hand

Folding the chocolate chips, and other cookie add-ins, in by hand reduces the chance of overmixing the dough, which can result in a tougher cookie.

#### -Space Cookies Evenly on Baking Sheet

Space the balls of cookie dough far enough apart on the sheets so that they don't spread into each other as they bake. Usually, this means about 2 inches apart. If your dough has a lot of butter in it, or very little leavening agent, the cookies will spread more, so give them a little extra room.

#### -Use an Ice Cream Scooper to Measure Out Dough

An ice cream scoop portions out the cookie dough in a uniform shape and size, ensuring the cookies will bake evenly. It also helps compact the dough and prevent the cookies from spreading as much during baking. [Use a cookie or ice cream scoop to make cookies the same size, better for even baking.]

#### -Rotate Pans

All ovens have hot spots, and if you bake often enough you'll soon learn which cookies on the baking sheet brown the fastest. To make sure they all bake evenly, rotate the baking sheet from front to back halfway through the baking time. If you're baking two sheets of cookies at once, switch the position of the sheets from top to bottom and then rotate them from front to back.

#### -Use a Cooling Rack

If left on the hot baking sheets for too long, cookies continue to bake and the bottoms can start to steam. Cooling racks allow air to circulate evenly on all sides of the cookie, preventing them from getting soggy. Look for racks that sit at least 1/2 inch above the counter, leaving enough space for air to move underneath. The best racks also have a tight grid to support soft or delicate cookies and keep them from falling through.

#### -Use a Ruler to Cut Uniformly Sized Bars

Baking involves a lot of measuring, but it's not always obvious to reach for a ruler. Start keeping one with your baking tools, and you'll find all sorts of uses for it. Cut perfectly even, straight brownies or sugar cookies. Hold the ruler vertically on your work surface to make sure your cookie dough is the right thickness. Or hold it against a log of biscotti or refrigerated cookie dough and mark out even slices rather than just estimating. Your baked goods will look that much more professional.

#### -Slice Biscotti Like a Pro

The right knife can mean the difference between getting coffee shop-worthy biscotti and a crumbly mess. For straight, even slices, use a long, sharp serrated knife and gently saw it back and forth over the dough log, without pressing too hard. Many recipes say to let the log cool slightly before slicing, but cooling it longer (or even refrigerating it overnight) allows time for the glutes to relax, making the dough more pliable and less likely to crumble.

Source: Cooking Channel TV

<https://www.cookingchanneltv.com/recipes/packages/holiday-recipes/holiday-cookie-swap-and-recipes/photos/tips-for-better-cookies>

## **JUST MAKE ME LAUGH!**

Cookies!

What do you get when you use a deer-shaped cookie cutter?

Cookie doe!

How do you make a baby computer cry?

Delete his cookies!

What kind of cookies do rich people like best?

Fortune cookies!

What did Homer Simpson say when he dropped a plate of cookies?

Dough!

What type of cookies do redheads like best?

Ginger snaps!

Why did the chocolate chip cookie drop all his chips?

Because that's the way the cookie fumbles!

What do you call an oatmeal raisin cookie baked at 666 degrees?  
Raisin hell!

Why couldn't the Cookie Monster make his bed?  
He couldn't find a cookie sheet!

Why did the Oreo cookie visit the dentist?  
To get his filling replaced!

What's the best kind of cookie to hand out on Halloween?  
Ghoul scout cookies!

What do you call it when two cookies from the same sheet fall in love?  
A batch made in heaven!

Why did the thief rob the Keebler Elves?  
Because they had a lot of dough!

What do you call a thief who robs the Keebler Elves?  
A crook-ie!

Source: [AllWording.com](http://AllWording.com)

## TODAY'S RECIPES

### Applesauce Cookies Or Bars

~Shared by Lynda N., MO

Don't remember where this recipe came from, it has been a favorite of mine for over 50 years.

2 cups flour  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp nutmeg  
1/2 cup butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 cup applesauce  
1/2 chopped nuts  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground cloves  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1 egg  
1 cup raisins

Sift together flour, baking soda, salt and spices. Cream butter and sugars. Stir in egg and applesauce. Add flour. Add nuts and raisins.

Arrange by spoonfuls on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake at 425F for 8 to 10 minutes. Makes 40 or more cookies.

APPLESAUCE BARS: Spread in a 9x15" pan lined with foil. Bake at 350F for 30 to 40 minutes. While still warm, spread with confectioners' sugar moistened with hot milk. Cool and cut into bars.

NOTES: I have never made the bars but I have had all kinds of compliments on the cookies. Now I really don't like cloves and I'm not fond of nutmeg so I always have omitted them but I do love my cinnamon.

### Wedding Cookies (Mom's Little White Cookies)

Rachael M., Heber Springs, AR

Cookies I have always made for Christmas.

1 cup butter-softened  
2 Tbs. powdered sugar  
2 cups flour  
1 tsp. vanilla  
2 cups nuts- chopped (your choice)  
More powdered sugar for rolling after baking

Cream butter, sugar and and vanilla.

Add flour and mix thoroughly. Add nuts and mix.

Roll into balls the size of walnuts.

Place on ungreased baking sheet

Bake at 300 degrees for about 20 minutes or until lightly browned.

Remove from pan and immediately coat in powdered sugar.

These freeze well so may be made ahead of time. ENJOY!

#### Holiday Cookies

~Shared by Lisa H., Belmont, NC

3 1/2 c. all purpose flour  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1 c. butter, softened  
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened  
2 c. sugar  
1 egg  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/4 tsp. almond extract  
1/2 c. chocolate chips

In a medium mixing bowl stir together flour and baking powder; set aside. In a large mixer bowl beat butter and cream cheese with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until fluffy. Add egg, vanilla, almond extract; beat well. Gradually add flour mixture to creamed mixture, beating well. Divide dough into thirds. Cover and chill overnight.

Stir in 1/2 cup of chocolate chips and shape into crescent like form. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and bake in oven at 375 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes. Chill and dip half of cookie in melted chocolate and decorate with nuts, coconut or sprinkles.

Makes about 36 cookies.

Source: [www.cooks.com](http://www.cooks.com)

#### Pecan Shortbread Cookies

~Shared by Lisa H., Belmont, NC

Here is another cookie recipe... one that my holistic doc shared when she had her grand opening of her practice here in town. A healthier alternative to the norm. Enjoy.

2 1/2 Cups blanched almond flour  
1/4 tsp. sea salt  
1/4 tsp. baking soda  
1 cup pecans, toasted and chopped  
5 Tbsp. honey  
1/2 cup salted butter, melted (if unsalted butter, add 1/4 tsp. salt)  
1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

- 1.) In large bowl combine almond flour, salt, baking soda and pecans
- 2.) In a smaller bowl, mix together honey, butter and vanilla
- 3.) Mix wet ingredients into dry
- 4.) Place dough in the center of a large piece of parchment paper and form into a large log approximately 2 1/2 inches in diameter.
- 5.) Place in freezer for one hour, until firm, unwrap and cut into 1/4 inch thick slices
- 6.) Place slices on a parchment lined baking sheet
- 7.) Bake at 350° until lightly golden, 7-10 minutes
- 8.) Cool and serve

#### Sugar Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

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

1/2 cup sugar for rolling cookies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

Using a mixer, beat together the butter and sugar until smooth and very fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla extract. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients.

Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls, and roll in sugar. Place on lined cookie sheets about 1 1/2 inches apart.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until lightly browned. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.

(Note: for holiday cookies roll them in colored sugar!)

#### Gingerbread Shortbread Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

Recipe for shortbread cookies flavored with molasses, ginger, cinnamon and brown sugar.

1 1/2 Sticks (12 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1/4 Cup white granulated sugar  
1/4 Cup brown sugar (light or dark)  
1 Tablespoon molasses  
1 Teaspoon vanilla  
2 Cups all purpose flour  
1 Teaspoon ground ginger  
1 Teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 Teaspoon salt  
4 oz. White chocolate chips for drizzling  
4 oz. Semi-sweet chocolate chips for drizzling  
4 oz. Peanut butter chips for drizzling  
Sprinkles (white or chocolate) for topping

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees.

Add the butter and sugar to a large bowl and cream together using a hand or stand mixer. Mix in the molasses and vanilla.

In a separate bowl, combine the flour, ginger, cinnamon and salt. Add the dry ingredients into the wet and stir to combine.

On a well floured board, roll the dough out to approximately 3/4" thick and use any cookie cutters you like to cut out shapes. A 3 1/2" cookie cutter should yield about a dozen cookies. Place the cookies on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 20 minutes or until the edges are a light golden brown. Allow to cool thoroughly before handling.

Add the white chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate and peanut butter chips into 3 separate bowls and microwave for about 30 seconds or until melted. Stir thoroughly and drizzle over the finished cookies as desired.

Source: <http://www.hungrycouplenyc.com>

#### Ginger Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

Ginger Cookies with a ton of flavour and are crisp on the outside, soft on the inside.

2 1/2 cups all purpose flour  
2 1/4 tsp baking soda  
1/4 tsp salt  
1 Tbsp ground ginger  
1/2 tsp allspice  
3/4 cup butter room temperature  
1/2 cup light brown sugar  
1/2 cup granulated sugar plus 1/3 cup for coating  
6 Tbsp Fancy Molasses I like Crosby's brand  
1 large egg

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In medium bowl, add flour, baking soda, salt, ginger and allspice. Use a whisk to combine all ingredients together.

In large mixing bowl, beat together butter, brown sugar and 1/2 cup granulated sugar until light and fluffy.

Beat in molasses and egg.

Gradually stir in flour mixture until just combined. (don't over mix)

Flatten into a disk, wrap in plastic, and freeze for 20 minutes.

Divide dough into 24 balls. (appx. 2 tbsp.each)

Place 1/3 cup granulated sugar in bowl. Roll ball in sugar to coat.

Place on cookie sheet at least 3 inches apart, and using bottom of a glass, flatten down.

Bake 350° F for 10-12 minutes until brown. Cool on wire rack.

Source: Crosby's Cookbook, Simple Fare.

#### Buttery Pecan Snowball Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

1 cup butter softened  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 1/4 cups flour  
1 cup chopped pecan  
1 cup powdered sugar for dusting

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

In stand mixer cream butter and powdered sugar. Turn to low and mix in salt, vanilla, flour and pecans. Roll into one inch balls. Place on parchment covered baking sheets a few inches part. Bake for 11 minutes. Do not over bake

Remove from oven and allow to cool just enough to handle them. Pour 1 cup powdered sugar in large Ziploc bag. Gently add 3-4 cookies at a time and roll them gently in the bottom of the bag. Use fork to scoop under each cookie and gently shake to remove excess powdered sugar. Place on cooling racks. Once completely cooled roll in powdered sugar bag again.

#### Cookies & Cream Truffles

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

Serves 6-8

36 chocolate sandwich cookies  
8 ounces cream cheese, softened  
12 ounces white chocolate, melted

1. In a food processor, finely crush the cookies, reserving about 2 tablespoons of the mixture for sprinkling on top of the truffles.
2. In a large bowl, combine cookie crumbs and cream cheese, stirring until evenly mixed.
3. Chill the mixture for about an hour or until the mixture can be rolled into a ball and hold its shape.
4. Roll ping pong-sized balls with the mixture.
5. Dip the truffles in the melted white chocolate and place on a baking tray lined with parchment paper.
6. Sprinkle some of the cookie crumbs on top of the chocolate-coated truffle before the chocolate hardens.
7. Repeat with the rest of the truffles, reheating the chocolate if necessary.
8. Serve!

#### Palmier Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

Serves 4-6

1 sheet puff pastry, thawed  
1 cup cane sugar  
1/2 stick melted butter

1. Preheat oven to 425°F/220°C.
2. Brush the melted butter evenly over the puff pastry.
3. Sprinkle half the sugar on the pastry, then spread it around evenly.
4. Using a rolling pin, roll the pastry into a rectangle, pressing the sugar into the pastry.

5. Flip the pastry, then repeat the process, brushing with butter and rolling in the rest of the sugar.
6. Starting from the shorter edges, roll them tightly towards the middle.
7. Wrap in cling film and chill for about 30 minutes.
8. Remove the cling film and push one of the rolls directly on top of the other.
9. Trim off the uneven ends of the pastry, then slice 1-centimeter cookie rounds.
10. They should look like smushed hearts.
11. Place the slices on a baking tray lined with parchment paper about 2 inches apart to allow for expansion.
12. Bake for 15 minutes, flipping them halfway, until the sugar is caramelized and the cookies are golden brown.
13. Cool, then serve!

And finally in honour of my Belgian mother, aunt and grandmother...

Speculaas (Molded Ginger Cookies) aka  
Hamantaschen (Jewish Holiday Cookies)

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

A specialty of the Netherlands and Belgium, these are cousins of gingerbread, only lighter and more delicately spiced. They're also showstoppers, thanks to the intricately carved wooden molds used to make them, which form the cookies into bas-relief images of characters and symbols from stories about Saint Nicholas, or Sinter-klaas, whose name day, December 6, kicks off the Christmas season in that part of the world.

Makes about 2 dozen

3 cups flour  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg  
1 tsp. ground coriander  
1 tsp. ground ginger  
½ tsp. ground cloves  
½ tsp. baking soda  
½ tsp. kosher salt  
¼ tsp. freshly ground white pepper  
12 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened  
1 cup packed light brown sugar  
1/3 cup milk

1. In a bowl, whisk together flour, spices, baking soda, salt, and white pepper; set aside. In a mixer, beat together butter and sugar. Add half the flour mixture; mix. Add milk and remaining flour mixture; mix. Form into 2 disks. Chill, covered, for 2 hours.
2. Heat oven to 350°. Working with 1 disk at a time, break off chunks and press into a floured speculaas mold; scrape away excess dough and invert mold to free dough. Brush away flour from mold. Transfer imprinted dough pieces to parchment paper-lined baking sheets, spacing pieces 2" apart. Bake until golden brown, 16-18 minutes. Let cool.

Belgian Spice Cookies

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

Speculoos, a specialty of Belgium in which flat gingerbread cakes are cut into different shapes, are the inspiration for this recipe. Similar cookies called speculaas are made in Holland, Germany and Austria. These are decorated with melted white chocolate and some pretty red sugar.

2 cups all purpose flour  
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/4 cups (packed) dark brown sugar  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 large egg  
2 ounces good-quality white chocolate (such as Lindt or Baker's), melted  
Red colored sugar

Combine first 6 ingredients in medium bowl. Using electric mixer, beat brown sugar and butter in large bowl until light. Add egg and beat until fluffy. Gradually add dry ingredients and beat just until combined. Divide dough in half. Flatten each half into rectangle. Wrap with plastic; chill 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly butter 2 large baking sheets. Roll out 1 dough piece on lightly floured work surface to 13 x 9-inch rectangle. Trim edges to form 12x8-inch rectangle. Cut into 24 4x1-inch rectangles. Lightly press miniature cookie cutter into each

rectangle to make imprints (do not cut through dough). Arrange cookies on prepared baking sheets, spacing 1 inch apart. Bake until edges begin to darken, about 8 minutes. Transfer cookies to rack and cool. Repeat with remaining dough piece.

Working with 1 cookie at a time, brush imprints with melted white chocolate. Sprinkle colored sugar generously over chocolate. Let stand until chocolate sets, about 2 hours. Shake off excess colored sugar. (Can be made ahead. Store in airtight container at room temperature up to 1 week, or freeze up to 1 month.)

Source: Bon Appetit, December 1996

### Rum Balls

~Shared by Jessica S., Corfu, Greece

With only 4 ingredients (plus sprinkles) and no baking required, these decadent truffle-like, treats pack a punch that makes the cookie tray season just a little bit brighter!

3 cups crushed Oreos whole cookies including the middles  
1 1/2 cups finely chopped walnuts  
3 tablespoons heavy cream  
1/4 cup to 1/3 cup dark rum

#### OPTIONAL COATINGS

chocolate sprinkles  
coconut  
cocoa powder  
sprinkles  
chopped nuts

Combine crushed Oreos, walnuts, cream in a medium bowl and mix well.

Add rum starting with 1/4 cup and adding more if needed to create a consistency that holds its shape when rolled. (If you add too much and they are too soft, add in more cookie crumbs to get desired consistency, note that the crumbs do soak up the liquids as they sit).

Using a small scoop (or melon baller) scoop dough and roll into balls.

Roll in sprinkles. Refrigerate 2 days before serving.

### Turtle Cookie Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1/2 cup butter, softened

#### 2nd Layer

1 cup pecan halves or chopped pecans  
2/3 cup butter  
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1 cup milk chocolate morsels

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine first 3 ingredients in a mixing bowl; beat at medium speed with an electric mixer until blended. Pat mixture firmly into an ungreased 13x9 inch pan. Arrange pecans over crust. Combine 2/3 cup butter and 1/2 cup brown sugar in a saucepan; bring to a boil over medium high heat, stirring constantly. Cook 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour mixture over pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-17 minutes or until golden and bubbly. Remove from oven; sprinkle with chocolate morsels. Let stand 2-3 minutes or until slightly melted. Gently swirl chocolate with a knife, leaving some morsels whole (do not spread). Let cool on a wire rack at room temperature until chocolate is set. Cut into squares.

### 10 Cup Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

This is my sons favorite cookie and he makes them every Christmas.

1 cup sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
1 cup butter (room temperature)  
1 cup peanut butter

Mix the above together by hand (do NOT use a mixer).

Add the following:

1 cup flour (mixed with 1 tsp baking soda and  
1/2 tsp baking powder)  
1 cup raisins  
1 cup oatmeal (quick cooking kind)



1 cup chopped walnuts  
1 cup shredded coconut  
1 (12 oz) package semi sweet or milk chocolate chips  
1 egg

Mix all of the above by hand. Drop tsp size dough on parchment lined cookie sheet. Bake 350 for 10-15 minutes

#### Traditional Spritz Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup softened unsalted butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 large egg yolks  
1 1/2 tsp vanilla  
2 cups flour  
1/4 tsp salt  
Garnish: Candied cherries, nuts, colored sprinkles or colored sugars

Preheat oven to 350. Butter 2 cookie sheets and refrigerate for 15 minutes. Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in egg yolks and vanilla until incorporated. Gradually add flour and salt and beat until well mixed. Transfer to a pastry bag (or cookie press) with a star tip. Pipe onto sheet while nearly touching tip to pan. Leave at least 1" between cookies. Decorate with sprinkles, or other decorations. Bake for 11-14 minutes or until edges are barely brown. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Enjoy!

#### Chocolate Cloud Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 1/3 cup superfine sugar  
1 1/3 cup packed light brown sugar  
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into 1/2-inch cubes  
1/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
2 large eggs, at room temperature, beaten  
2 cups unbleached all purpose flour  
3/4 teaspoon baking soda  
1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt  
2 cups (8 oz) toasted sliced almonds  
2 cups (12 oz) chocolate chips

Position the racks in the center and top third of the oven and preheat to 350°F. Line 3 half-sheet pans with parchment paper.

Rub the sugar and brown sugar together through a coarse wire-mesh wire sieve into a medium bowl; set aside.

Beat the butter in the bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on high speed until smooth, about 1 minute.

Gradually add the sugar mixture, then the vanilla.

Beat, occasionally scraping the bottom and sides of the bowl, until the mixture is pale yellow and light textured, about 5 minutes. Gradually beat in the eggs.

Sift the flour, baking soda, and salt together into a medium bowl.

With the mixer speed on low, add the dry ingredients in three additions, mixing just until each addition is incorporated.

Add the almonds and chocolate chips and mix just until combined.

Empty the dough onto the work surface, and use your hands to thoroughly distribute the almonds and chocolate chips in the dough.

Using a 2-inch-diameter ice-cream scoop, portion the batter onto the prepared pans.

Using the heel of your palm, slightly flatten each ball of dough.

Bake two of the pans with the cookies, switching position of the pans from top to bottom and front to back about halfway through baking, until cookies are evenly golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes.

During the last 3 minutes, rap each pan on the rack. The cookies will deflate and their signature cracks will appear on the tops. Repeat with the third pan.

Cool on the pans. (Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.)

#### Holiday Date Squares

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 1/2 cups oatmeal  
1 cup brown sugar  
1 cup butter (not too soft)

1/8 tsp salt  
1 tsp soda  
1 tsp vanilla  
1 1/2 cups flour

Mix all ingredients together until they form a crumble. Press half into an 8 x 8 glass baking dish.

#### Filling

1 pound dates  
1 cup water (or substitute 1/2 cup orange and 1/2 cup water)  
1/4 cup brown sugar (optional)

Cook over medium low until mixture is soft. Spread over bottom half of crumble. Top with remaining mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes, or until golden brown.

Variation: Use lemon pie filling instead of above date for other seasons.

#### Southern Pecan Butterballs

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup butter flavored vegetable shortening  
1 cup powdered sugar (plus more for coating)  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
1/8 tsp. salt  
1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 F degrees.

Line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In a medium bowl, using an electric mixer, combine shortening, powdered sugar and vanilla. Mix until smooth.

In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt. Give it all a stir with a large fork.

Then gently begin adding flour mixture to the shortening mixture. Add just a little at a time so the flour doesn't fly everywhere. Stir until combined.

Stir pecans into batter. Roll dough into walnut-sized balls. Place them about 1 1/2 inches apart onto prepared cookie sheet.

Bake for about 15 minutes until the edges just begin to brown slightly. Bake only one cookie sheet at a time.

While the cookies are baking, get a bowl of powdered sugar ready for dipping.

Let cookies cool for just a couple of minutes. While still warm, roll cookies in the powdered sugar.

Place them on a platter (or just roll out a sheet of wax paper like I do) and let cookies finish cooling.

Once they are cool, roll cookies a second time into the powdered sugar.

The second dipping ensures even and smooth coating. Enjoy!

#### Gingerbread Snowballs

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice  
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves  
1 Tbsp molasses  
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
Powdered sugar for rolling

Preheat oven to 350°. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Mix butter with an electric mixer until fluffy. About 20 seconds.

Add powdered sugar, vanilla, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, cloves, and molasses and mix until mixture is smooth.

Add flour and mix until the dough comes together. This will take time. It will look like it won't go beyond a crumbly mess, but it will

form into a cookie dough if you keep mixing. It can take a few minutes.

Scoop 1 tablespoon of dough and place on prepared cookie sheet.

Bake cookies for 10-12 minutes until bottoms are just slightly brown.

Remove from oven and cool for just a minute, until you can handle them.

Fill a small bowl with additional powdered sugar and roll each cookie in the sugar until coated.

Place on a rack to cool. (Once cookies are cooled, you may want to re-roll them in more powdered sugar.)

### Pecan Sandies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

12 Tbsp (1 1/2 sticks) butter, slightly softened  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 Tbsp ice water  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 cups plain flour  
1 cup finely chopped pecans (walnuts are a good substitute)  
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 325-degrees F.

Using an electric mixer, beat together butter, sugar until smooth.

Add all other ingredients and mix to combine.

Chill dough covered for at least 30 minutes.

By hand firmly form dough into 1-inch balls. Dough will be crumbly so it will need to be pressed together well to hold shape.

Place dough balls on ungreased baking sheets about 2-inches apart.

Using a flat bottom glass, gently flatten balls to about 1/2-inch thick, or roll into crescent shapes.

Bake at 325-degrees F for 20 minutes.

Note: Optional: If a bit more sweetness is desired, dust or gently toss cookies with powdered sugar.

### Butternuts

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

3/4 cup butter, room temperature + 1 Tbsp.  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
6 oz package butterscotch chips  
1 cup finely chopped pecans

#### RUM GLAZE

3 cups powdered sugar  
1 tsp. rum extract  
1/2 cup chopped pecans  
3 to 4 Tbsp milk

Cream butter with powdered sugar and salt til light and fluffy.

Blend in flour, mix well.

Add butterscotch chips and 1 cup finely chopped pecans.

Shape dough, a scant teaspoonful at a time, into balls.

Place 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake in 325' oven for 15 minutes or until firm but not brown.

Let cool on wire racks.

Make rum glaze. Mix the ingredients until smooth.

Either dip cookies in glaze or use a spoon to pour over cookies.

Sprinkle with chopped pecans. Enjoy!

### Raspberry Bow Tie Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

8 oz cream cheese, softened  
8 oz butter, softened  
3/4 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla  
2 1/2 cups flour  
1/2 cup raspberry jam  
1 egg white  
1 Tbsp water  
powdered sugar for dusting cookies

In a mixing bowl, mix cream cheese and butter together.

Mix in powdered sugar and vanilla.

Mix in flour. Beat until all flour is incorporated into dough.

Divide dough in half. Wrap each half in plastic wrap, flattening into a 4 inch disc. Refrigerate for at least one hour or overnight.

When ready to bake, work with one disc of dough at a time. Place on a lightly floured surface and roll into a rectangular shape until dough is approx. 1/8" thick. Trim edges and cut into 2 inch squares. Place 1/2 teaspoon jam on each square. Spread stream of jam on dough from corner to corner.

Mix egg white together with water.

Fold two corners together over your index finger.

Place a dab of egg white mixture between overlapping corners of cookies. Press firmly together so the dough is fused.

Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Press folded sides down slightly so they are not rounded. This will help prevent cookies from coming apart while baking.

Bake for 10 minutes in a preheated 400 degree oven.

Cool on a baking rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar when completely cooled.

### Oreo Balls

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 package of Oreo Cookies  
1 (8 oz) block cream cheese, softened  
1 package Cooking Chocolate (Hershey's Semi sweet chocolate chips the best)

Place cookies in a bag/blender and smash/blend until it is the consistency of dirt. Mix the softened cream cheese into the smashed oreos. Roll the mixture into balls. Melt chocolate in the microwave. Cover balls in chocolate then leave to set in the fridge. Enjoy!

### Christmas Shortbread Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

A buttery shortbread that makes a perfect Christmas.

1 1/2 cups unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 cup sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
3 1/2 cups all purpose flour  
1/4 tsp. salt  
Optional Toppings  
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips, melted  
1/2 cup white chocolate chips, melted  
Colored Sprinkles  
Crushed Peppermints  
Mini Chocolate Chips  
Pecans or other nuts

Preheat oven to 350 Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside. In the bowl of an electric mixer, using a paddle attachment, beat the butter and sugar until combined Mix in the vanilla, flour and salt on low until the mixture turns from powder and it starts to come together as a dough On a floured surface form the dough into 2 logs and wrap in plastic wrap and chill for at least 30 minutes Work with small batches of dough and roll it out to 1/2 inch thick ~ use cookie cutters to make the cookie shapes Bake cookies on the prepared baking sheet for 15-17 minutes, making sure to remove them as soon as the bottoms start to brown Remove the cookies and let cool on a cooling rack Once cool you can dip the cookies into the melted chocolate and top with any additional toppings as you like

Let cookies cool completely on a cooling rack until the chocolate is set

Yield: Serves 48 ... Each cookie is 3 WW+ points

### Cherry OH Cherry Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup butter, softened  
2 cups sugar  
4 eggs  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1/4 tsp. almond extract  
3 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tsp. salt  
2 cans cherry pie filling

#### Glaze:

1 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp. almond extract  
2 Tbsp. milk

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Cream butter and sugar; add eggs and extract ~ beat well. Add flour and salt ~ mix well Spread approximately 3 cups into a greased 13 x 9 baking pan. Spread Pie Filling over the batter Then randomly drop tablespoons of batter over the pie filling Bake for 35 min or until your toothpick comes out clean. Mix together glaze ingredients and drizzle glaze over cooled bars.

### Coconut Meltaways

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

Chopped macadamia nuts would also be great in the dough or sprinkled on top.

1 cup butter  
5 Tbsp. powdered sugar  
2 cups flour, sifted  
1 cup shredded coconut  
1 tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar.

Stir in flour, coconut, and vanilla until blended.

Chill dough 20 minutes or until firm enough to handle.

With your hands, roll dough into 1-inch balls and place an inch apart on cookie sheets.

Bake about 15 minutes (it took a bit longer in my oven), until dough just begins to crack. Cool.

#### Icing

2 Tbsp. butter  
1 cup confectioner's sugar  
2 or 3 Tbsp. milk  
1/4 tsp. vanilla  
Green food coloring  
Chopped walnuts

Cream together oleo and sugar in a small bowl. Add milk and vanilla, and mix well.

Add just enough tint to make a mint green color, and stir until you don't care that the lumps are still there.

Spoon over cookies and sprinkle with shredded coconut or chopped nuts. Enjoy!

### Star Mint Meringues

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

3 egg whites  
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar  
1/4 teaspoon peppermint extract  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
3/4 cup sugar  
Red paste food coloring

Preheat oven to 200 degrees F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper; set aside.

In a large mixing bowl beat egg whites, cream of tartar, peppermint extract, and salt with an electric mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form (tips curl). Gradually add sugar, about 1 tablespoon at a time, beating on high speed until stiff peaks form (tips stand straight).

Using a new small paintbrush, brush stripes of red food coloring on the inside of a decorating bag fitted with a 1/2-inch open-star tip.

Carefully spoon egg white mixture into decorating bag. Pipe 2-inch stars 1 inch apart onto the prepared cookie sheet.

Bake about 1-1/2 hours or until meringues appear dry and are firm when lightly touched.

Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool.

To Store: Layer cookies between sheets of waxed paper in an airtight container; cover. Store at room temperature for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

#### Almond-Streusel Cherry Cheesecake Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

##### Cookie Base and Topping:

1 pouch (1 lb 1.5 oz) Betty Crocker® sugar cookie mix  
1/4 cup cold butter  
4 oz (half of 8-oz package) cream cheese  
1/2 cup sliced almonds

Heat oven to 350°F. Spray bottom and sides of 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray.

Place cookie mix in large bowl. Cut in butter and 4 oz cream cheese, using pastry blender or fork, until mixture is crumbly.

Reserve 1 1/2 cups mixture for topping. Press remaining mixture in bottom of pan. Bake 12 minutes.

##### Filling:

2 1/2 packages (8 oz each) cream cheese (20 oz), softened  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon almond extract  
2 eggs  
1 can (21 oz) cherry pie filling

Meanwhile, in large bowl, beat 20 oz cream cheese, sugar, flour, almond extract and eggs with electric mixer on medium speed until smooth.

Spread cream cheese mixture evenly over partially baked cookie base.

Spoon pie filling evenly over cream cheese mixture. Sprinkle with reserved topping and almonds.

Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool 30 minutes.

Refrigerate about 2 hours or until chilled.

To serve cut into bars, 6 rows by 4 rows. Store covered in refrigerator.

#### Lemon Coconut Crumb Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

These bars are easy to make and such a treat! The lemon and coconut combo is a winner!

1 1/2 cups Gold Medal White Whole Wheat flour  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 cup coconut oil, at room temperature  
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
1/4 cup granulated sugar  
1 large egg  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon coconut extract  
3/4 cup flaked coconut, plus 2 Tbsp, divided  
3/4 cup lemon curd

Preheat oven to 350 F ~ Grease an 8-inch square baking dish with cooking spray; Set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and baking powder; set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream coconut oil and sugars on high speed until light and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes.

Add the egg, vanilla extract, and coconut extract; mix well.

With the mixer on low, slowly add in the flour mixture. Mix until combined, the dough will be crumbly.

Stir in the 3/4 cup coconut.

Stir lemon curd to loosen it up. Gently press half of dough into bottom of prepared baking dish.

Evenly spread lemon curd over dough. Sprinkle remaining dough over the top, making sure you cover the entire bars.

Press gently to form the top layer. Sprinkle the additional coconut over the bars.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

Cool completely and cut into squares. Enjoy!

Yield: 12-16 bars

### Soft Shortbread Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

Yield: 3 dozen

1 cups all purpose flour  
1 cup cornstarch (USA)  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 cup powdered sugar  
1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

#### Topping

1 cup powdered sugar, sifted

In a medium sized bowl whisk together the flour, cornstarch and salt; set aside. Using a bowl fitted with a mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the vanilla extract and slowly add the flour mixture and continue mixing until incorporated. Cover with saran wrap and chill the dough in the refrigerator for at least one hour or until firm. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and place the rack in the center of oven. When dough is firm take out of the refrigerator, uncover and form into 1 inch balls. Place the cookies on the prepared baking sheets spacing about 1 inch apart. Bake for about 12 - 14 minutes or until the edges of the cookies start to brown. Baking time may vary depending on altitude so be sure not to burn the cookies. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack to cool for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, line another baking pan or tray with parchment or wax paper. Sprinkle about half of the confectioners powdered sugar onto the bottom of the pan and then place the slightly cooled cookies on top of the sugar. Put the remaining sugar in a fine strainer or sieve and then sprinkle the tops of the cookies or just roll the cookies in the sugar.

These cookies are great on their own. However, if a coating is desired, try caramel or a light chocolate shell.

These cookies store very well. Place in an airtight container between sheets of wax paper and they will keep a couple of weeks.

### Coconut Chews

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

2 sticks (8 oz) unsalted butter, softened  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 eggs  
2 1/3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 pound sweetened shredded coconut

Preheat the oven to 375F. Line 2 sturdy cookie sheets with parchment paper or silicone liners.

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter, sugar, and vanilla with an electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy.

Beat in the eggs, one at a time, and scrape the bowl. Add the flour and baking soda and mix until combined.

Fold in the coconut by hand. Drop the dough by heaping tablespoons about 2 inches apart onto the prepared cookie sheets.

Bake for 15 minutes, rotating the pans halfway through the baking time.

The cookies are done when they spread out and turn golden around the edges.

Let cool completely before serving, if you can wait that long

Yield: Makes about 3 1/2 dozen cookies

## Easy Jello Favored Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

3 1/2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 1/2 cups butter, softened  
1 cup sugar  
2 (3 oz) packages Jello - any flavor you like. (Use the same flavor or mix and match)  
1 egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
non-stick cooking spray

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Spray several cookie sheets with cooking spray. This recipe makes about 50 to 60 cookies!

In a large bowl, mix the flour and baking powder and set to the side.

In a separate large bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the butter until it is creamy.

Add the sugar and one package of the Jello, then continue to mix until well blended and fluffy.

Mix in your egg and vanilla.

Then gradually add in the flour and beat until all is well mixed.

Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and place 2 inches apart on the baking sheets. I spray my hands with a little bit of the cooking spray so the dough doesn't stick.

Use a glass to flatten each cookie (I also sprayed the bottom of the glass with the cooking spray) and then generously sprinkle the other package of dry Jello mix onto the top of each cookie.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until the edges are slightly browned.

Let cool slightly before serving, or cool completely before storing in an air-tight container.

## Coconut Cream Pie Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

THESE ARE SO AMAZING. MAKE THEM NOW.

### Crust:

1 cup (2 sticks) butter  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup icing sugar

### Coconut Cream Filling:

3 cups half-and-half  
3 cups coconut milk  
4 eggs  
1 1/2 cups white sugar  
2/3 cup cornstarch  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cup flaked coconut  
1/2 teaspoon coconut extract  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Whipped Cream Topping:

2 cups heavy whipping cream  
1 tablespoon cold water (for stabilizing)  
1 teaspoon gelatin (for stabilizing)  
3-4 tablespoons icing sugar  
1 cup coconut, for toasting

Make shortbread crust: Preheat your oven to 350°F. Prepare a 9 x 13 in. baking dish with a foil sling (I use one long sheet across the length of my dish, and two overlapping short sheets across the width of my dish — just arrange it so that it has some overlap and overhang to help you pull the bars out after they're finished). Cut the butter into the flour and icing sugar and press into the baking dish (I used a food processor to cut the fat into the flour — about 6-10 pulses — and then the bottom of a glass to press the mixture into the pan). Bake 18-20 minutes or until light brown. Set on a wire rack.

Toast coconut for the topping: Spread about 1 cup of the coconut flakes out on a baking sheet and bake in the oven along with your shortbread crust for 3-6 minutes, stirring every minute or so, until the coconut is golden brown. Spread it out on a plate to cool completely.

Make coconut cream filling: Combine the half-and-half, coconut milk, eggs, sugar, cornstarch, and salt in a large saucepan and bring it to a boil over medium-low heat, whisking constantly until it's thick and bubbling (this can take anywhere from 15-30 minutes. Just do it. It's worth it.) Add coconut and vanilla extracts and the 1 1/2 cups of untoasted coconut and stir. Pour this filling over your cooled crust, letting it cool for a bit on the counter before sticking the whole thing in the fridge to chill until firm, about 2 to 4 hours.



Make whipped cream topping: Put 1 tablespoon cold water in a small bowl and sprinkle the gelatin evenly over the top. Let it soften for 2 minutes before microwaving it for 30 seconds and whisking to dissolve the gelatin. Using a chilled bowl and beater, whisk the 2 cups of heavy cream and icing sugar together until the cream forms stiff peaks, stopping to add gelatin mixture about halfway through. Dollop the cream over your bars and gently spread it around. Sprinkle on toasted coconut. Chill until ready to serve to let the whipped cream set up. Use the sling to pull the bars out of the dish, slice with a sharp knife, and enjoy!

Yield: 12-16 bars, depending on size.

#### Angel Food Macaroon Blossoms

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 (16 oz) box Angel Food cake mix  
1/2 cup water  
1 tsp. almond extract  
3 cups sweetened, shredded coconut  
3 dozen Hershey Kisses

Preheat oven to 350. Line baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.

In the bowl of your mixer, beat cake mix, water, and almond extract on low speed until combined.

Increase speed to medium and beat for one minute. Fold in the coconut with a spatula.

Drop dough with a small cookie scoop on prepared sheets, a couple of inches apart.

Bake for about 10 minutes or until edges turn golden brown.

Remove from oven and immediately press a Hershey Kiss in the center of each cookie.

Let cool for a minute, then remove to wire racks to cool completely. Enjoy!

#### Coconut-Chocolate Bars (13x9)

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 box Devils Food Cake Mix, dry  
1/3 cup butter, softened, NOT melted  
1 large egg, slightly beaten  
1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk  
1 large egg  
1/2 tsp. vanilla  
1 1/2 cups sweetened coconut, divided  
1 cup chopped pecans  
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

In a large bowl, combine cake mix, butter and slightly beaten egg.

Mix until crumbly but crumbs stick together.

Press batter on the bottom of a ungreased 9x13 baking pan.

In a medium bowl, combine sweetened condensed milk, egg and vanilla. Beat for 3 minutes.

After beating sweetened condensed mixture; stir in 1 cup coconut, chopped pecans and chocolate chips until evenly mixed.

Spread evenly over cake mixture.

Sprinkle the top with remaining 1/2 cup of coconut.

Bake at 350 degrees F for 25-30 minutes on center rack of oven.

When done, remove pan from oven and allow to cool completely before cutting.

#### Butter Pecan Cookies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

3/4 cup pecans  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1/3 cup sugar (plus more for coating)  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1/8 teaspoon fine sea salt  
1 cup all purpose flour

Preheat oven to 350.

On a baking sheet, toast pecans about 6 minutes, or until fragrant. Let cool, finely chop.

With an electric mixer, cream butter and 1/3 cup sugar until light, about 1 minute.

Beat in salt, vanilla, and flour, scraping down sides of bowl, just until dough comes together. Fold in pecans.

Separate dough into 12 pieces; shape into balls, Roll in sugar.

Place 3 inches apart, on a baking sheet.

Gently flatten with bottom of a glass (reshape sides if necessary).

Sprinkle with sugar.

Bake until golden brown, rotating halfway through, about 15 minutes.

Cool cookies on a wire rack. Enjoy!

### Pineapple Coconut Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

#### Crust Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter, very soft or melted

1/2 cup light brown sugar

1 cup flour

#### Filling Ingredients:

2 eggs

1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

juice of one lime, about 1 Tbsp.lime juice

1/3 cup light brown sugar

1/4 cup flour

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup pineapple tidbits in 100% juice, drained

1 cup shredded sweetened coconut

#### Topping Ingredients:

1 cup shredded sweetened coconut

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees ~ grease or parchment line a 10" square pan\*; set aside.

Combine crust ingredients and press mixture into bottom of prepared pan.

\*Doubling this recipe will fill a 9x13 pan.

Bake for 12 minutes (or 15 minutes for a doubled recipe).

Remove from the oven and let the crust cool for 10 minutes while preparing the filling.

Place the pineapple and 1 cup of shredded coconut in a bowl.

Sprinkle with flour, brown sugar and salt. Stir to coat.

Mix together the eggs, vanilla and lime and stir into the pineapple mixture.

Pour the filling over the crust and top with the remaining coconut.

Bake for 25-27 minutes, until the coconut turns golden brown.

Let cool completely before slicing. Enjoy!

Yield: 16 bars

### Pizzelles (Italian Wafers)

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup granulated sugar

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 cup cocoa powder

3 eggs

1 Tbsp. pure anise oil (or vanilla extract)

1/2 cup butter, melted

Optional: Add 1/4 cup cocoa powder to dry ingredients for cocoa wafers.\*

Preheat the pizzelle maker according to manufacturers instructions.

In a large bowl, add flour, sugar and baking powder. \*If you are making cocoa wafers, this is where you will also add the cocoa.

Whisk together and set aside.

In a new large bowl, add eggs and vanilla and whisk.

Stir in melted butter.

Add dry mixture to the wet ingredients and stir until blended.

Follow the instructions on the pizzelle maker for how much batter to pour for each pizzelle, and for how long to cook.

Generally with most machines you will pour a spoonful and cook for under a minute.

(Makes about 30)

#### Amish Pineapple Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1/2 cup oil  
2 eggs, beaten  
2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
1/2 teaspoon coconut extract  
2 1/2 cups flour  
1 3/4 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1 (20 oz) can crushed pineapple, undrained (\* 3 Tbsp. set aside for frosting)

Mix together oil, eggs, lemon juice and coconut extract.

In a separate bowl, mix together flour, sugar, salt, and baking soda.

Add dry ingredients to the wet and mix just until blended.

Stir in the undrained pineapple.

Bake in a greased 17 x 11 pan (cookie sheet) at 350° for 25 - 30 minutes.

Frost immediately.

Cream Cheese Frosting:  
1/2 cup softened butter  
4 oz. softened cream cheese  
3 Tbsp. crushed pineapple\* from above  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon coconut extract  
3 cups powdered sugar  
1 cup walnuts  
1 cup sweetened flaked coconut

Beat together butter and cream cheese until smooth; add pineapple and extracts.

Slowly add powdered sugar 1/2 cup at a time and beat until smooth.

Spread over warm cake.

Toast the walnuts and coconut briefly in the oven or on the stove top until the coconut is browned.

Sprinkle over frosted cake. Enjoy!

#### Chocolate Mint Meringues

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

A no-fail recipe for making beautiful, delicious meringue cookies!

4 egg whites, room temperature  
1 Tbsp white vinegar  
1 Tbsp cornstarch  
1 cup granulated sugar  
3/4 tsp. peppermint extract  
1 drop green food coloring, gel  
6 oz chocolate Candiquik, melted

In a clean, dry mixing bowl, whisk the egg whites for 30 seconds until frothy.

Add in vinegar and cornstarch, whisk with electric mixer for 1 minute.

While beating, slowly add the sugar in a steady stream. Add peppermint extract and food coloring.

Beat for 4 minutes on high until stiff peaks form.

Spoon into a large pastry bag with tip, pipe on parchment paper lined baking sheets.

Bake in a 200 degree oven for 80 minutes. Turn oven off and allow meringues to set 4 hours or overnight.

Once set, dip into melted chocolate and return to parchment paper to set. ENJOY.

Yield: 60 small cookies

#### Pecan Tassies

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

2 cups butter, softened  
1 cup confectioners' sugar  
2 Tbsp. water  
4 teaspoons vanilla extract  
4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 cups chopped pecans  
Additional confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 300°. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add water and vanilla; mix well. Gradually add flour; fold in pecans. Roll dough into 1-in. balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets and flatten with fingers. Bake 20-25 minutes or until bottom edges are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. When cool, dust with confectioners' sugar. Yield: about 5 dozen.

#### Pecan Pie Bars

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

2 cups all-purpose flour  
2/3 cup powdered sugar  
3/4 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1/2 cup honey  
2/3 cup butter  
3 Tbsp. whipping cream  
3 1/2 cups coarsely chopped pecans

Sift together 2 cups flour and 2/3 cup powdered sugar.

Cut in 3/4 cup softened butter using a pastry blender or fork just until mixture resembles coarse meal.

Pat mixture on bottom and 1 1/2 inches up sides of a lightly greased 13- x 9-inch baking dish.

Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool.

Bring brown sugar, honey, 2/3 cup butter, and whipping cream to a boil in a saucepan over medium-high heat.

Stir in pecans, and pour hot filling into prepared crust.

Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

Cool completely before cutting into 2-inch squares.

Serve and Enjoy!

#### Melt-in-your-Mouth Shortbread

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar  
1/4 cup cornstarch  
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Whip butter with an electric mixer until fluffy.

Stir in confectioners' sugar, cornstarch, and flour.

Beat on low for one minute, then on high for 3 to 4 minutes.

Drop cookies by spoonfuls 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Decorate as desired with candied cherries or sugar.

Bake for 12 to 15 minutes in the preheated oven.

Watch that the edges don't brown too much.

Cool on wire racks. Share and Enjoy!

#### Peanut Butter Christmas Mice

~Shared by Marilyn M., OH

1 cup creamy peanut butter (reduced-fat peanut butter not recommended)  
1/2 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
1 large egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

#### DECORATIONS:

Peanuts, split in half  
Brown M&M's minis  
Miniature semisweet chocolate chips  
Black shoestring licorice, cut into 2-inch pieces

Beat peanut butter, butter and sugars until well blended.

Beat in egg and vanilla.

In another bowl, whisk together flour and baking soda; gradually beat into peanut butter mixture (dough will be soft).

Refrigerate until firm enough to shape, about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350°. Shape dough into 1-in. balls; taper one side to resemble a mouse.

Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Add peanuts for ears, M&M's for noses and chocolate chips for eyes.

Bake until set, 8-10 minutes. Immediately insert licorice pieces into warm cookies for tails.

Remove from pan to wire racks to cool. Enjoy!

### **PUBLISHER'S CHOICE**

#### Sand Tarts

*This was my all-time favorite cookie of those Mom would make us for Thanksgiving and Christmas. There are oodles of similar recipes out there but this recipe is as close as I could get to what tastes like home to me. My kids have asked for them every year, and it is #1 on the list for our (early) Christmas dinner together this year. I am excited to have all my kids together as well as the grands (minus Joseph who is serving our country in the military). ~Maggie*

#### Ingredients

1 cup butter softened  
1/4 cup powdered sugar  
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour  
1 cup finely chopped pecans  
1/2 cup powdered sugar sifted, for coating cookies (I use more)

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. In a stand mixer, cream together butter and 1/4 cup powdered sugar. Add flour and pecans and mix on low until incorporated.
3. Shape dough into small balls about the size of a walnut and place on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Bake for 30 minutes.

4. While cookies are still hot, roll in a bowl of sifted powdered sugar. Let cookies cool, then roll again in the powdered sugar. Store in airtight container.

#### Hot Chocolate-Marshmallow Cookies

*These may be Santa's fave cookie. They are addictive AND not particularly healthy with a whopping 340 calories per cookie! But - they are delicious! ~Maggie*

Prep 20 min  
Total 45 min  
Ingredients 6  
Servings 12

#### Ingredients

1 roll (16.5 oz) Pillsbury refrigerated chocolate chip cookies  
1 cup chocolate flavored hazelnut spread  
2 tablespoons unsweetened baking cocoa  
1/2 teaspoon chili powder  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
6 large marshmallows, cut in half (a few miniature marshmallows for each work well ~Maggie)

#### Steps

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Line 2 large cookie sheets with cooking parchment paper.
2. In large bowl, break up cookie dough. Add hazelnut spread, cocoa, chili powder and cinnamon. Beat with electric mixer on low speed about 2 minutes or until well blended.
3. Shape dough into 12 (2-inch) balls. Flatten each ball into 3-inch round. Shape 1 cookie dough round around 1 marshmallow half, covering completely. Repeat with remaining dough rounds and marshmallows. Place 2 inches apart on cookie sheets.
4. Bake 10 to 13 minutes or until surface of cookie appears cracked and marshmallow shows through. Cool 5 minutes; remove from cookie sheets to cooling racks. Cool 5 minutes. Serve warm. Store tightly covered.

Source: Pillsbury

#### Best Ever Pecan Pie Bars

The Best Ever Pecan Pie Bars are so good people offer to pay me for them. A fabulous recipe with a caramelized pecan pie set atop a shortbread crust is the absolute perfect nut bar.

Prep time: 10 MINS  
Cook time: 45 MINS  
Total time: 55 mins  
Yield: SERVES 24-36 (see notes for smaller sizes)

#### Ingredients

##### Shortbread Crust

1 1/4 pounds (5 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
4 large eggs  
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract  
4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

##### Pecan Pie Topping

1 pound (4 sticks) unsalted butter  
1 cup light corn syrup  
3 cups light brown sugar, packed  
1/4 cup heavy cream  
2 pounds pecans, chopped

#### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. For the crust, beat the butter and granulated sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, until light, approximately 3 minutes.
3. Add the eggs and the vanilla and mix well. Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Mix the dry ingredients into the batter with the mixer on low speed until just combined.
4. Press the dough evenly into an ungreased 18 by 12 by 2-inch baking sheet, making an edge around the edge like you would a pie crust. It will be very sticky; sprinkle the dough and your hands lightly with flour. Bake for 15 minutes, until the crust is set but not browned. Allow to cool.

5. For the topping, combine the butter, corn syrup, and brown sugar in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan.
6. Cook over low heat until the butter is melted, using a wooden spoon to stir. Raise the heat and boil for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat. Stir in the heavy cream and pecans.
7. Pour over the crust, trying not to get the filling between the crust and the pan. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the filling is set.
8. Remove from the oven and allow to cool. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold. Cut into bars and serve.

Notes FOR A 9x13 pan (serves 18)

#### Crust

1 1/4 cups (2 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature  
6 tablespoons granulated sugar  
2 large eggs  
1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract  
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt

#### Topping:

1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter  
1/2 cup light corn syrup  
1 1/2 cups light brown sugar, packed  
2 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 pound pecans, chopped

Follow directions above. Watch your cooking time. Time will be decreased for smaller pan sizes.

FOR AN 8x8 pan (serves 9)

#### Crust

1 1/4 sticks (10 tablespoons) unsalted butter, room temperature  
3 tablespoons granulated sugar  
1 large egg  
3/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1 cups + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt

#### Topping:

1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter  
1/4 cup light corn syrup  
3/4 cups light brown sugar, packed  
1 tablespoon heavy cream  
1/2 pounds pecans, chopped

Follow directions above. Watch your cooking time. Time will be decreased for smaller pan sizes.

Recipe adapted from Ina Garten.

Donna Elick The Slow Roasted Italian

<http://www.theslowroasteditalian.com/2013/01/the-best-ever-pecan-bars.html>

#### Brown Butter Ginger Cookies with Mascarpone Cream

*This cookie is very similar to one that Larry Holmes from Toronto, Canada shared with us at a2z many years ago. Gosh, I sure miss that adorable man! We shared a fondness for marscapone (and each other, lol), among many other things. ~Maggie*

3/4 cup butter, browned\*  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 egg  
1/4 cup molasses  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons ground ginger  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
Additional sugar for rolling

\* To brown the butter simply melt in a sauce pan. Let the bubble come to a boil. The milk solids will foam up and as they do watch for them to turn golden. If you have a dark pan you will need to swirl the butter carefully and maybe spoon some on to a white plate to notice the color. You will notice a gently nutty smell wafting from the pan as the solids in the butter start to caramelize. As soon as you see deep golden bits at the bottom of the pan turn off the heat. The butter will continue to brown even as the heat is off so do not let the butter get too dark. Let the butter cool slightly before proceeding with the recipe.

Combine the just warm browned butter with the sugar in a large bowl. Stir to combine. Add the egg and molasses and mix well.

Whisk together the remaining ingredients in another bowl then add to the butter and sugar mixture. Stir until just combined.

Use a spoon to scoop tablespoon size balls of dough. Roll the dough in your hands to form a ball then roll in sugar (I prefer Organic sugar for many reasons, one of which being the granules are bigger and more pronounced on the cookie).

Place on a baking sheet (12 per sheet) and bake at 350°F for 10-12 minutes until puffed and set. If you prefer flatter cookies to the ones you see in my images you can gently press them down before baking.

#### Honey Mascarpone Cream

8 oz mascarpone  
1 - 2 Tb honey  
1 vanilla bean

Combine everything in a bowl. Start with 1 tablespoon honey then add more if you'd like. A vanilla bean isn't necessary but a lovely addition.

Source: Not Without Salt

<http://notwithoutsalt.com/brown-butter-ginger-cookies-with-mascarpone-cream/?ref=sssorganicgglunkwn&pid=sbseogglunkwn>

#### White Chocolate Cranberry Cookies

*In all honesty, I am not a great fan of white chocolate. It's not chocolate! However, these cookies are an exception to that rule. And I will eat these year-round. They even contain a least favorite nut of mine, macadamia. But the combined flavor is a total winner. And for Christmas... they are lovely. You eat with your eyes first, right? And who doesn't love Trisha Yearwood? Duh! ~Maggie*

Total: 1 hr 50 min  
Prep: 20 min  
Inactive: 1 hr  
Cook: 30 min  
Yield: 2 dozen  
Level: Easy

#### Ingredients

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1 large egg  
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda  
1 cup dried cranberries, chopped  
3/4 cup white chocolate chips  
3/4 cup macadamia nuts, chopped

#### Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

With an electric mixer, cream the butter and both sugars together until smooth. Add the vanilla and egg, mixing well. Sift together the flour and baking soda. Spoon the flour mixture gradually into the creamed sugar mixture. Stir in the cranberries, white chocolate chips and macadamia nuts. Drop by heaping spoonfuls, about 2 tablespoons, onto the prepared baking sheets, 2 inches apart. Bake one sheet at a time until lightly golden on top and the edges are set, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool on the sheet about 5 minutes, and then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Source: Trisha Yearwood

#### Honey-Hazelnut Crisps

*So delicate, these lacy cookies keep best in a tin between sheets of wax paper. Make great hostess gifts for all those parties you'll be attending in the upcoming season. ~Maggie*

Hands-on Time 15 Mins  
Total Time 1 Hour 30 Mins  
Yield Makes about 4 1/2 dozen

#### Ingredients

3/4 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 cup butter, softened  
1 tablespoon honey  
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/2 cup finely chopped hazelnuts  
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour



3 tablespoons whole wheat flour  
Parchment paper

#### How to Make It

Preheat oven to 325°. Beat first 5 ingredients at medium speed with an electric mixer 4 to 5 minutes or until creamy. Add hazelnuts and next 2 ingredients; beat just until blended. Drop by level teaspoonfuls 3 inches apart onto 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

Bake at 325° for 12 to 14 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool on baking sheets 5 minutes; transfer to wire racks, and cool.

Hazelnut Fig Sandwiches: Prepare as directed. Spoon 1/2 cup fig preserves on half of cookies (about 1 tsp. per cookie); top with remaining cookies. Makes about 2 dozen.

Source: Southern Living, December, 2013

#### Eggnog Blossoms

The spicy-rich flavors of eggnog (including nutmeg, cream and rum) add a new holiday twist to a classic cookie shape, and the striped chocolate candies on top make them even more festive.

Total: 1 hr 30 min

Active: 30 min

Yield: 24 cookies

Level: Easy

#### Ingredients

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (see Cook's Note)  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tablespoon heavy cream  
1 to 1 1/2 teaspoons rum extract  
1 small pinch ground cloves  
1 large egg yolk  
4 teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg  
24 foil-wrapped striped milk chocolate-white chocolate drops, such as Hershey Hugs, unwrapped

#### Directions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

Whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl until combined. Beat the butter and 1/2 cup of the sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed in a large bowl until creamy, about 1 minute. Add the cream, rum extract, cloves, egg yolk and 2 teaspoons of the nutmeg and beat until smooth. Add the flour mixture and mix on low speed until the dough just combines.

Roll the dough into twenty-four 1-inch balls using a 1/2-ounce ice cream scoop or a tablespoon. Combine the remaining 1/4 cup sugar and 2 teaspoons nutmeg in a small bowl. Roll the balls in the spiced sugar to coat, and then arrange 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets.

Bake the cookies, rotating the baking sheets front to back and top to bottom halfway through, until golden brown at the edges, about 14 minutes. Remove the baking sheets from the oven, place on wire racks and immediately press a chocolate drop in the center of each cookie while it is still soft and warm. Do not move the cookies until the chocolate has completely set and the cookies are cool, at least 1 hour.

#### Cook's Note

When measuring flour, we spoon it into a dry measuring cup and level off excess. (Scooping directly from the bag compacts the flour, resulting in dry baked goods.)

Source: Food Network Kitchen

#### Million Dollar Cookies

Prep time: 45 mins

Cook time: 9 mins

Total time: 54 mins

Serves: 2 dozen cookies

Browned butter, dual-chip chocolate chip cookies stuffed with nutella, dulce de leche and topped with sea salt. These babies are for sure worth a million dollars.

#### Ingredients

1 Cup of Unsalted Butter (2 sticks)  
1/2 Cup White Sugar  
1 Cup Light Brown Sugar  
2 Large Eggs  
1/2 Teaspoon Vanilla

2 1/3 Cups Flour  
1 1/4 Teaspoon Baking Soda  
1/4 Teaspoon Salt  
3/4 Cup Milk Chocolate Chips (we prefer Ghirardelli)  
3/4 Cup Semi Sweet Chocolate Chips  
Nutella  
Dulce de Leche  
Sea Salt

#### Instructions

1. In a large skillet over medium heat, add the butter and cook, stirring slowly with a whisk until golden, nutty scented and foamy, about 3-5 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. Meanwhile, mix the flour, salt and baking soda in a bowl.
3. Add the sugar and brown sugar to a standing mixer and add the browned butter. Mix for 2 minutes to properly combine the sugar mixture. Add the vanilla and mix again. Finally add the egg and egg yolk and mix for a few seconds or until the egg is incorporated. Add the flour bowl contents and mix for 30-60 seconds before adding the chocolate chips.
4. Place a large sheet of saran wrap on the counter and dump out the dough. Form the dough into a long log and cover tightly with saran wrap. Refrigerate the dough 30 minutes.
5. Slice the dough into circles to make it easier to flatten.
6. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 350 and line a few baking sheets with parchment paper or Silpat mats.
7. Press a ball of the dough in the palm of your hand and place 1/2 teaspoon of nutella and 1/2 teaspoon of dulce de leche on the dough. Wrap the dough over the filling and shape into a ball. Place on baking sheets and bake for 9-10 minutes.
8. Remove from the oven and immediately sprinkle with a little sea salt. Allow to cool for a minute or two before placing on a cooling rack.

Serving size: 2 cookies

Source: Oh Sweet Basil  
<http://ohsweetbasil.com>

#### Creme de Menthe Cheesecake Cookies

Some say these are the best cookies they've ever had! Such a cinch to put together with just five ingredients, and so easy to vary. Stir in your favorite baking chips and change up the decorations to suit any holiday. See why they're the best?

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 15 min.  
Bake: 15 min./batch + cooling  
YIELD: 4 dozen.

#### Ingredients

1 tube (16-1/2 ounces) refrigerated sugar cookie dough  
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
1 large egg  
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened  
1-1/3 cups Andes creme de menthe baking chips  
Green candy coating disks and sprinkles, optional

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, beat cookie dough and flour until blended and dough is softened. Beat in egg. Add cream cheese; beat until smooth. Stir in baking chips. (Dough will be soft.)
2. Drop dough by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake until bottoms are golden brown, 11-13 minutes. Cool 2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
3. If decorating cookies, melt candy coating in a microwave. Cut a small hole in the tip of a pastry bag; insert a small round pastry tip. Fill bag with melted coating. Pipe designs onto cookies; decorate with sprinkles.

Freeze option: Freeze undecorated cookies in freezer containers. To use, thaw and decorate as desired.

Source: Taste of Home

#### Cranberry-Orange Shortbread Cookies

*So pretty with the red cranberries and flecks of orange zest - and delicious! ~Maggie*

Prep Time: 15 Mins  
Total Time: 5 Hours 15 Mins  
Yield: Makes 4 dozen

#### Ingredients

1 cup butter, softened  
3/4 cup powdered sugar  
1/2 cup chopped dried cranberries  
1 tablespoon orange zest  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
Wax paper

#### How to Make It

Beat 1 cup softened butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add 3/4 cup powdered sugar, beating until smooth. Stir in chopped cranberries, orange zest, vanilla extract, and almond extract until blended.

Stir together 2 cups flour, 1/4 tsp. baking powder, and 1/8 tsp. salt.

Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating at low speed until blended.

Shape shortbread dough into 2 (7-inch) logs. Wrap each log in wax paper, and chill 4 hours, or freeze logs in zip-top plastic freezer bags up to 1 month.

Preheat oven to 350°.

If frozen, let logs stand at room temperature 10 minutes. Cut each log into 24 slices. Place shortbread slices 1 inch apart on lightly greased or parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

Bake shortbread slices at 350° for 10 to 12 minutes or until edges of slices are golden.

Remove shortbread from baking sheets, and place on wire racks; let cool completely (about 20 minutes). Store in airtight containers.

Source: Southern Living, December 2009

#### Chocolate Coconut Cookies

*This is a great refrigerated cookie dough recipe. While you can't stack these babies on your serving platter (would muss their beautiful coconut-topped, chocolate frosting), you can sure eat them without worry! Except for maybe the chocolate and coconut at the corners of your mouth as a telltale giveaway of your "taste testing", or so I've been told ;) ~Maggie*

#### Ingredients

1 cup All-Purpose Flour  
1/2 teaspoon Baking Soda  
3/4 teaspoon Baking Powder  
1/4 teaspoon Salt  
1 cup Confectioners Sugar, divided  
1/4 cup Butter, softened  
6 ounces Dark Chocolate, melted  
3 large Eggs, lightly beaten  
1/4 cup Granulated Sugar  
8 ounces Cream Cheese, softened  
1 cup Sweetened Coconut Flakes, divided

#### Directions

For the Cookies:

1. Combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. Mix lightly. Set aside.
2. In a separate large bowl combine 3/4 cups of the confectioners' sugar with the butter. Mix until smooth.
3. Stir the melted chocolate (I recommend using a double boiler to melt chocolate) into the sugar and butter mixture. Stir until combined.
4. Add the eggs and the granulated sugar to the large bowl, mix until well blended.
5. Add the flour mixture to the large bowl next, adding it gradually as you mix. Mix until everything is well combined.
6. Cover the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
7. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. If you need the paper to stick a little tip is to scrape just a tiny bit of batter to the corners of the pans, then stick the parchment to it. Works like a charm.
8. Spoon dough onto pans in 1 inch balls. (Or use your hands to roll them into balls.) Place them about 2 inches apart so the cookies will not touch as they bake.
9. Bake for about 8 to 10 minutes. The cookies should not look wet on the top when they are finished.

10. Remove from oven and allow cookies to cool for about 5 minutes. Remove from pans and place on wire cooling racks. Allow to cool completely. While the cookies are cooling you can make the coconut cream cheese topping.

For the Cream Cheese Frosting:

1. Combine the cream cheese and remaining 1/4 cup of confectioners' sugar in a medium size bowl. Stir in 1/2 cup of the coconut. Mix well.

2. Spread the coconut cream cheese mixture evenly over top of each cookie.

To Serve:

1. Sprinkle remaining coconut over top of the cookies.

2. Serve with a big old chocolate and coconut loving smile!

Source: <https://www.cravingsofalunatic.com/chocolate-coconut-cookies/>

Florentines

Hands-On Time 40 Mins

Total Time 2 Hours 20 Mins

Yield Makes 48 cookies

Ingredients

1 cup slivered blanched almonds

1/2 cup sugar

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature

2 tablespoons light corn syrup

2 tablespoons heavy cream

1/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/8 teaspoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons all-purpose flour

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled to room temperature

How to Make It

In a food processor, process the almonds and sugar until finely ground.

In a small saucepan, combine the almond mixture with the butter, corn syrup, cream, vanilla, and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the butter is melted and the sugar is dissolved, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the flour; transfer the mixture to a bowl and refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

Heat oven to 350° F. Roll level teaspoons of the dough into balls and place on parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing them 3 inches apart. With damp fingertips, gently flatten the balls to a 1/4-inch thickness. One baking sheet at a time, bake until golden brown, 7 to 9 minutes; cool for 1 minute on the baking sheet, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

Spread the underside of each cookie with the chocolate. Place, chocolate side-down, on parchment-lined baking sheets and refrigerate until the chocolate is set, about 5 to 10 minutes. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Source: Real Simple

<https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/florentines>

Cookie-Press Cookies

*Rich, buttery, and made with lots of vanilla, these cookies are simple to make. Use a cookie press -- a hollow tube fitted with a decorative nozzle at one end and a plunger at the other -- to press the cookies directly onto the baking sheet. This is an awesome recipe to make with kids. They love using the colored sanding sugar to decorate the kitchen! Lol. ~Maggie*

Makes 2 to 3 dozen cookies

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter

1 cup sugar

2 large egg yolks

3 3/4 cups sifted unbleached all-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Colored sanding sugars

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks, flour, salt, and vanilla. Mix thoroughly.

2. Fill a cookie press with the dough, and turn out cookies 1 to 2 inches apart onto an unbuttered baking sheet. Sprinkle cookies with colored sanding sugars.

3. Bake until the cookies are lightly browned, 7 to 10 minutes. To ensure even baking, rotate sheet halfway through the baking process. Transfer to a wire rack, and let cool.

Source: Martha Stewart Living

## Easy Cinnamon Thins

*These are so easy, really pretty and dressed up for Santa... you can't lose! ~Maggie*

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 20 min. + standing

YIELD: 2-1/2 dozen.

### Ingredients

12 ounces white candy coating, chopped  
1 teaspoon cinnamon extract  
30 Ritz crackers  
12 finely crushed cinnamon hard candies  
Red colored sugar

### Directions

1. In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Stir in extract.
2. Dip crackers in candy coating mixture; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper. Decorate with candies and colored sugar as desired. Let stand until set.

## Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies

*This is another cookie my mom would make for holidays. Just imagine the mad dash for eight kids when a tin of these was placed on the table. We had no shame then ... or now. We still love this cookie, as do my kids & grands.*

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 20 min.

Bake: 10 min./batch + cooling

YIELD: about 2-1/2 dozen.

### Ingredients

1 cup peanut butter  
1 cup sugar  
1 large egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
30 milk chocolate kisses

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Cream peanut butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla.
2. Roll into 1-1/4-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake until tops are slightly cracked, 10-12 minutes. Immediately press one chocolate kiss into center of each cookie. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

Source: Taste of Home magazine

## Chocolate Chunk Cookies

*Who can go wrong with the Barefoot Contessa? I love watching her shows but almost stopped because of her constant prattle about "Jeffrey!". Following my own personal rule of "do not form a dislike about any one or any thing without looking for things you may very well like about them ... So I did what every saavy person does: I checked Wikipedia! << wink >> "Jeffrey E. Garten is Dean Emeritus at the Yale School of Management, where he teaches a variety of courses on the global economy. He also serves on several corporate and philanthropic boards. Garten worked in the Nixon, Ford and Carter administrations in a variety of foreign policy and economic positions." (Ok, I still like him in spite of his political affiliation, lol.) Seriously, he is a very intelligent and talented man who has not only authored many books and published papers, he spends copious amounts of his time and money selflessly for others. Now I find watching The Barefoot Contessa even more enjoyable. OK... off my soapbox and on to the recipe, which I truly love!*

Total: 30 min

Prep: 15 min

Cook: 15 mins

Yield: 36 to 40 cookies

Level: Easy

### Ingredients

1/2 pound unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1 cup light brown sugar, packed  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract  
2 extra-large eggs, at room temperature  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 1/2 cups chopped walnuts\*  
1 1/4 pounds semisweet chocolate chunks

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Cream the butter and two sugars until light and fluffy in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the vanilla, then the eggs, one at a time, and mix well. Sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt and add to the butter with the mixer on low speed, mixing only until combined. Fold in the walnuts\* and chocolate chunks.

Drop the dough on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, using a 1 3/4-inch-diameter ice cream scoop or a rounded tablespoon. Dampen your hands and flatten the dough slightly. Bake for exactly 15 minutes (the cookies will seem underdone). Remove from the oven and let cool slightly on the pan, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

\*I prefer pecans ~Maggie

Source: Ina Garten, the Barefoot Contessa, 2001

#### Red Velvet Snowballs

*I love red velvet cake. I like the red velvet cake balls where you bake a cake, crumble it up, add canned frosting, stir it all, roll into balls, and then frost them. This one is different and makes quite an impression in tiny candy cups on the cookie platter. They look as good as they taste. And taste as good as they look. You know what I mean! ~Maggie*

YIELDS: 2 dozen

PREP TIME: 0 hours 20 mins

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour 40 mins

#### INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 c. all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled

1/4 c. cocoa powder

2 tsp. baking powder

1/4 tsp. Kosher salt

3/4 c. unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks), at room temperature

3 c. confectioners' sugar

1 tbsp. red food coloring

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

1 tsp. white vinegar

#### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F with racks in the upper and lower thirds. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt in a bowl.

Beat butter and 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar on medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to low and gradually add flour mixture, beating just until incorporated, 1 to 2 minutes. Add food coloring, vanilla, and vinegar; increase mixer speed to medium, and beat just until dough is crumbly and holds together when squeezed, 15 to 20 seconds.

Squeeze dough into balls (about 2 tablespoons each). Place balls, 1 inch apart, on prepared baking sheets; freeze 10 minutes. Bake, rotating sheets halfway through, until dry around the edges, 15 to 18 minutes. Cool on baking sheets on wire racks 5 minutes.

Place remaining 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar in a bowl. Working one at a time, gently toss warm cookies in sugar to coat. Return cookies to baking sheets to cool completely; reserve remaining sugar. Once cool, toss again, in batches, in remaining sugar.