



Westlake Village
Republican Women Book Club
'An Elephant Never Forgets'

Sixth Annual Holiday Cookie Exchange

Recipe Booklet 2025

Chocolate Crinkle Cookies

From Patricia Sampson (2025)



Ingredients:

- 1 cup natural unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup powdered sugar

1. Beat together the cocoa powder, white sugar, and vegetable oil:

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or beat by hand with a wooden spoon) beat together the cocoa powder, white sugar, and vegetable oil until it comes together into a shiny, gritty, black dough of sorts.

2. Add the eggs, one at a time, and then the vanilla:

Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing for 30 seconds each. Add the vanilla and beat in thoroughly.

3. Whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder:

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder if using.

4. Beat the dry ingredients into the cocoa-oil mix:

Mix into the chocolate mixture on low speed until just combined. Do not over-beat.

5. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and chill the dough for four hours or overnight.

6. Preheat the oven and prepare the baking sheets:

Preheat the oven to 350°F and line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Roll the cookies:

7. Roll the cookies:

Using a rounded teaspoon, scoop out clumps of the chilled dough and roll them into 1-inch (2.5 cm) sized balls using your hands. Do several at a time and drop them into the powdered sugar as you go. The dough will be quite sticky, so it's useful to roll the dough in batches.

Roll the balls in the powdered sugar and place on the cookie sheets spaced a few inches apart. (You should be able to get 12 to 16 on each sheet).

8. Bake:

Bake at 350°F for 10 to 13 minutes. Allow to cool a minute or two on the sheets before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Repeat with any remaining batter.

Chocolate-Chestnut Tortelli (Christmas Cookies)

Recipe courtesy of Giada De Laurentiis

From Sharon Siemering (2025)



Ingredients:

- 1 cup steamed or roasted chestnuts from a jar
- (about 6 ounces; not water chestnuts)
- 1/3 cup sugar
- Pinch kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons amber rum
- 2 teaspoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 cup (about 1 1/2 ounces) mini semisweet
- chocolate chips
- 3 to 4 purchased refrigerated pie crusts (from two
- 14.1-ounce packages), at room temperature
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 425 degrees F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Blend the chestnuts, sugar and salt in a food processor until the chestnuts are finely ground. Add the rum, cocoa, cinnamon, cloves and ginger.

Blend until the filling is almost smooth, scraping down the work bowl as necessary. Add the chocolate chips and pulse until combined. (Can be made 2 days in advance).

3. Working with 1 pie crust at a time, unroll the pie crusts on a work surface and, using a 3-inch round cutter, cut out 10 rounds from each crust. Brush the pastry rounds with the beaten egg to cover.

Drop 1 generous teaspoon of the filling into the center of each round. Fold half of the dough over the filling and seal to make a half-circle shape.

Brush the top of the tortelli with the beaten egg. Place on the prepared baking sheet and bake until golden brown and crisp, 15 to 17 minutes.

4. Transfer to a rack and cool to room temperature. Dust with powdered sugar and serve.

TRIPLE-LAYER COOKIE BARS

From Meredith Pikulski (2025)

PREP TIME: 15 MINS

BAKE: 30 MINS

YIELD: 3 DOZEN

INGREDIENTS:

1 ¼ CUPS OF ALL PURPOSE FLOUR

2/3 CUP SUGAR

1/3 CUP BAKING COCOA

¼ C PACKED BROWN SUGAR

1 TSP BAKING POWDER

¼ TSP SALT

½ CUP COLD BUTTER

2 LARGE EGGS

TOPPING:

1 PKG (7 OUNCES) SWEETENED SHREDDED COCONUT

1 CAN (14 OUNCES) SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK

2 CUPS SEMISWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS

½ CU CREAMY PEANUT BUTTER

DIRECTIONS:

- IN A LARGE BOWL COMBINE THE FIRST SIX INGREDIENTS. CUT IN BUTTER UNTIL CRUMBLY. BAT IN EGGS. SPEAD IN GREASED 13 X 9 BAKING PAN.
- BAKE AT 350 FOR 8 MINUTES. SPRING COCONUT OVER CRUST, DRIZZLE WITH CONDENSED MILK. BAKE 20-25 MINS. LONGER OR UNTIL LIGHTLY BROWNED.
- MEANWHILE, MICROWAVE CHOCALATE CHIPS AND PEANUT BUTTER UNTIL MELTED AND STIR UNTIL SMOOTH. SPREAD OVER BROWNIES AFTER BASED. COOL AND CUT INTO BARS.



Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

From Bren Dahl (2024, 2025)



- 7 ounces pitted dates (11 to 12 Medjool
- or 22 to 24 Deglet Noor),
- chopped
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats (will be ground into flour)
- 1/2 cup s old-fashioned rolled o a t s
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 t easpoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract (or seeds from 1 to 2 vanilla beans) ½ 2
- cup raisins (plus extra for the tops of t h e cookies)
- 2 ounces walnuts, chopped (about ½ cup; optional)

1. Place the dates into a small bowl, cover them with water, and set aside for at least 15 minutes so they can soften. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

2 . Grind the 1 cup of rolled oats into flour with a blender. Transfer to a medium bowl, and whisk in the 1/ cups of oats, baking powder, and cinnamon.

3. Drain the dates, reserving the soak water. Place the dates and 2 tablespoons of soak- water into a blender, along with the almond butter and vanilla, and blend until smooth.

4. Stir the dat e mixture into t h e bowl of dry ingredients until all of the dry ingredients disappear. Stir in the raisins and the walnuts (if using).

5. To get the most uniformly sized cookies. use a 1-tablespoon cookie scooper (or a soup spoon). Place 9 scoops of dough onto each baking sheet. These cookies will not spread out during baking, so press each scoop with moistened fingers, until it is the size and shape of an already-baked cookie (about 2% inches wide). Push 2 to 3 raisins into the top of each.

6 . Bake for 13 t o 14 minutes, or until just starting to brown (or leave in longer if you want cookies that aren't as moist and soft). Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack.

NOTE For a lower-fat, cakier cookie, use ½ cup of applesauce in place of the almond butter.

Edinburgh Bars

From Julia Bach (2023, 2025)

Cookie Base:

- 1 1/2 c. old fashioned oatmeal
- 1 c. all purpose flour
- 1/4 c. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground ginger



Filling:

- 1/2 c. unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 c. Lyle's Golden Syrup (usually at Cost Plus, may substitute light corn syrup)
- 2 large eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 c. dried currants
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 c. cold butter, cut into tablespoons
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 c. candied (glace) cherries, rinsed in hot water, drained and coarsely chopped in food processor
- 1 c. flaked or shredded coconut
- 2 c. chopped nuts
- 2 T. finely chopped crystallized ginger (Trader Joe's usually has this)

Glaze:

- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 T. Lyle's Golden Syrup
- 2 T. orange juice

Preheat the oven to 375. Grease a 10 X 15 jelly roll pan. Make the cookie base by combining oatmeal, flour, sugar, cinnamon, ginger and salt in a large bowl. Cut in the butter until mix resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the eggs. Place dough in pan and pat evenly until it covers the bottom of the pan. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove and cool on wire rack for 10-15 minutes. To make the filling, stir together melted butter, golden syrup, and eggs. Toss in currants, cherries, coconut, nuts and crystallized ginger. Spread filling evenly over cooled crust. Bake crust and filling for 22-25 minutes or until top is a light golden brown. Cool.

In a small bowl, stir together powdered sugar, golden syrup and orange juice for glaze. Drizzle over cooled cookies. Let glaze set before cutting cookies into small squares. Makes ~6 dozen.

Healthy Cardamom Orange Tahini Cookies

From Candace Hall (2025)



- 1/2 cup unsalted tahini (well stirred) 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/4 cup oat flour
- 1/4 teaspoon fine-grain mineral salt
- 1/2 cup coconut sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 pasture-raised egg (a flax egg works great too!)
- 1/4 cup dark chocolate chips or chopped dark chocolate Maldon or flaky sea salt, to sprinkle (optional, but not really)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Stir together all ingredients except chocolate chips, until the batter is smooth.
3. Add chocolate chips (I like to leave a few out to press on top!). Spoon into mounds, press on more chocolate, and top with flaky sea salt.
4. Bake for 11-13 minutes, until golden at edges. Let cool on the pan before enjoying!! Makes 6-8 cookies. Enjoy!

Saltine Cracker Toffee (aka Crack)

From Patricia Sampson (2025)

Ingredients:

- 4 ounces saltine crackers
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped pecans



Directions:

Gather all ingredients, and preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).

Line a rimmed baking sheet with saltine crackers in single layer.

Combine butter and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to a boil; boil for 3 minutes.

Immediately pour over saltines and spread to cover crackers completely. Bake in the preheated oven for 5 to 6 minutes.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle chocolate chips over top. Let sit 5 minutes.

Spread softened chocolate evenly. Sprinkle with pecans. Allow to cool completely, about 25 minutes.

Break toffee into pieces. Enjoy!

Recipe Tip

Use your favorite nuts to top the cookies.

Thumbprint Hershey Kiss Cookies

From Elena Bach (2025)



Ingredients:

- ¼ cup Butter (unsalted, softened)
- ¼ cup Peanut Butter
- ¼ cup Brown Sugar
- ½ cup Granulated Sugar (divided, 1/4 cup for dough, 1/4 cup for coating)
- 1 Large Egg
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1 cup Flour
- 1 teaspoon Baking Soda
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 16 pieces Hershey Kiss Chocolates

1. Preheat oven to 350° Fahrenheit, grease a large baking sheet, and set aside.
 2. In a large mixing bowl, combine softened butter and peanut butter. Mix with a hand or stand mixer until light and fluffy.
 3. Add in both sugars and mix until well combined. Add in egg and vanilla and stir until just combined. Mix flour, salt, and baking soda, and add to the wet mixture until a dough forms.
 4. Take about 1 tablespoon of dough, roll it into balls, and dip it in sugar to coat. Place about 2 inches away from each other on the prepared baking sheet. Continue with all the dough.
 5. Bake for 8-9 minutes. Remove and press one Hershey Kiss chocolate in the center of each cookie. Place back into the oven for 2 minutes or until the cookies are golden brown.
- NOTE – If the dough is sticky to the touch or hard to roll into a ball, refrigerate for 30 minutes to 1 hour to allow it to firm up.

Biscotti Di Ciliege

From Paula Parsons (2024, 2025)

(Cherry Slices)



- 1 cup sugar
- 8 tbs. creamed butter
- 7 eggs
- 4 1/2 cups flour
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 10 oz. jar maraschino cherries, chopped, reserve liquid
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup coarsely chopped almonds

Pre heat oven to 350 degrees, line a heavy baking sheet with parchment or brown paper (grocery bag works well).

In a large bowl cream butter and sugar. Beat 6 eggs, add to butter and sugar mixture. Sift together flour and baking powder. Add flour mix alternately with reserve cherry liquid until all flour is incorporated but mixture is not runny. Add the cherries and almonds.

Divide the batter into 4 equal sections. Shape 1/4 of the batter into a loaf, 2 loaves per baking sheet. Beat remaining the egg, and brush the loaves with the egg.

Bake the loaves for 20-25 min., or until nicely browned.

Cool. Slice the loaves into 3/4 inch thick slices on a diagonal. Place the slices flat on a baking sheet and return to the oven to toast, 10-12 minutes each side (depends on oven, do not let them get too browned)

When all of the slices are toasted, pile them all together on a baking sheet and return to the oven. Turn the oven off, and let the Biscotti dry over night. Makes about 5 dozen.

Russian Tea Cakes

From Patricia Sampson (2025)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 6 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 1 cup finely chopped walnuts
- ⅓ cup powdered sugar, or more as needed



1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Cream butter and vanilla together in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Whisk flour and 6 tablespoons powdered sugar together in separate bowl. Add to the butter mixture and stir until just blended. Add walnuts and mix until incorporated; mixture may be crumbly.
4. Take small scoops of dough and roll between your hands into 1-inch balls. Place balls 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until edges are just turning golden, about 12 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool for 15 minutes
7. Place remaining 1/3 cup powdered sugar in a small bowl. Roll cooled cookies in the powdered sugar once or twice.

Swedish Glogg

From Paula Parsons (2025)

Ingredients:

- 2 (750 milliliter) bottles fruity red wine, such as Beaujolais
- 1 (750 milliliter) bottle port wine
- 3 (3 inch) cinnamon sticks
- 14 whole cloves
- 1 orange, peel cut into thin strips
- 1 cup white sugar, or to taste
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup rum, or to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brandy, or to taste
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup slivered almonds



Directions:

Step 1

Gently simmer the red wine, port wine, cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, and orange peel in a large pot set over medium-low heat. Stir in the sugar, rum, and brandy. Continue simmering 5 minutes more, stirring to completely dissolve the sugar, and the mixture is steaming but not boiling.

Step 2

Mix the raisins and almonds together in a bowl.

Step 3

To serve, ladle into coffee cups or Swedish-style small glass or ceramic mugs. Garnish each cup with a spoonful of the raisin and almond mixture

Tatziki, as made in Greece

From Paula Parsons (2025)

Ingredients:

- 480 grams (2 cups) strained Greek yogurt*
- 180 grams (1 medium) cucumber
- 3 garlic cloves finely grated, finely minced, or pressed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon sea salt + a little bit extra
- $\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon ground pepper



1. Grate the cucumber with its skin on, on the coarse scale of a hand grater.
2. Drain the cucumber. Place the grated cucumber in a strainer, sprinkle lightly with some sea salt, and rub well. Sit for 10-15 minutes.
3. Squeeze the cucumber by taking handfuls of it in your hands to remove most of its water. Then add to the mixing bowl along with the Greek yogurt.
4. Add the remaining ingredients to the mixing bowl as well and mix very well.
5. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving, for the garlic to cool down a bit. Or even better, overnight. If you like raw garlic, you can serve this dip right away, along with some pita bread or crusty bread

Pita chips.

Pita Bread rounds – Olive Oil – Sea Salt

Spread about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teasp of olive oil on pita bread. Stack another pita on top, and spread with olive oil. Make 3-4 layers. Cut into wedges of desired size. (I like 10 chips per pita)

Place pita chips on a rack over a baking sheet, and sprinkle with sea salt.

Bake at 375F for 10-12 minutes, or until desired crispness (watch carefully) The longer you bake, the crisper they will be. Let cool on baking rack until completely cooled.

*To strain yogurt, line a colander with cheese cloth and place into bowl. Put yogurt cheese cloth, cover and let sit in the refrigerator overnight, or several hours. Alternately, Trader Joes sells already strained yogurt.

Spekulatius – Spiced German Cookies

From Meredith Pikulski (2024)

Ingredients:

- o 2 cups all-purpose flour | 240 g
- o 3/4 cup sugar | 150 g
- o 1/2 cup butter, softened | 113 g
- o 1 egg
- o 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- o 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- o 1/4 teaspoon cloves
- o 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, cream the butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the egg and mix well.
2. Sift in the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and baking powder, and mix to form a dough.
3. Roll the dough out and cut into shapes.
4. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
5. Bake at 350°F (175°C) for 10-12 minutes or until golden.
6. Let cool on a wire rack.

Note: These cookies store well, making them great for gifting!

Cinnamon Cream Cheese Cookies

From Candace Hall (2024)

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter softened
- 4 ounces cream cheese softened
- 1 & 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or extract
- pinch kosher salt
- 1 & 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and cream cheese with a hand mixer until smooth. Slowly add the powdered sugar until combined. Add egg, baking powder, vanilla, and salt. Mix to combine. Add flour in slowly until fully incorporated, scraping the sides as needed. Place in fridge for one hour to rest.
2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a small bowl, mix together the cinnamon and sugar. Set aside.
3. Roll dough into 1 inch sized balls, about 2 teaspoons worth of dough. Roll until coated in the cinnamon sugar mixture. Place on a parchment lined cookie sheet about 2 inches apart.
4. Bake for 8-9 minutes, until just set. Do not overbake, it is hard to tell when these cookies are ready, they will puff up but won't get golden brown. Let cool on baking sheet for 10 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack and let cool completely.

Notes

1. You can easily double or halve this recipe depending on how many people you are serving.
2. These cookies can be frozen, see my tips above.
3. These need to chill before baking, make sure that you do not skip this step.
4. These should be baked on a parchment or silpat lined baking sheet to reduce spreading.

Cranberry Lemon Bars, by Genevieve Ko

From Julia Bach (2024)

For the cranberry Layer

- 1 (12oz/340g) bag fresh or frozen cranberries
- 3/4c/150g granulated sugar
- 2 to 3 large lemons

For the crust

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 1/2c/190g all-purpose flour
- 1/3c/65g granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3/4c/170g unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks), melted and cooled

For the lemon layer

- 1c/200g granulated sugar
- 1/4c/30g all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- Powdered sugar (optional)

1. Start preparing the cranberry layer. Combine the cranberries, sugar and three tablespoons water in a medium saucepan. Zest two of the lemons directly into the saucepans; reserve the lemons.
2. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Continue boiling, stirring occasionally, until the berries burst and the mixture is jammy, 7 to 9 minutes. Remove from heat and reserve.
3. Make the crust: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom and sides of a 9 X 13-inch baking pan with one large sheet of heavy aluminum foil, making sure there are no gaps or holes, then generously coat with cooking spray.
4. Whisk the flour, sugar and salt in a medium bowl. Whisk the vanilla into the butter, then pour over the flour mixture. Stir until the dough comes together in a mass. Press into an even layer in the prepared pan. Bake until golden brown around the edges and dry and golden on top, 17 to 20 minutes.
5. While the crust bakes, begin preparing the lemon layer. Squeeze the juice from the 2 reserved zested lemons. You should have 1/2 cup. Squeeze the juice from another lemon, if needed.
6. Whisk the sugar, flour and salt in a medium bowl. Add the eggs and whisk until just incorporated. Add the lemon juice and stir gently with the whisk until just smooth.
7. Let the crust cool for 5 minutes, then spread the cranberry mixture evenly over the crust. Carefully and slowly pour the lemon mixture on top to create two distinct layers.
8. Return the pan to the oven and bake until the filling is set, 18 to 22 minutes. Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack, then refrigerate until cold and firm, at least 2 hours. Using the foil, slide the bars out of the pan and onto a cutting board. Cut into 24 squares, wiping the knife between cuts for clean lines. If desired, sift powdered sugar over the tops just before serving.

Alfajores (Christmas cookies in Spanish speaking countries)

From Patricia Sampson (2024)

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon brandy
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- 1-1/4 cups plus 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, divided
- 1-3/4 cups cornstarch
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 12 tablespoons butter, softened
- 2 large egg yolks, room temperature
- 2 cans (14 ounces each) dulce de leche
- 3/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

Directions

1. In a small bowl, whisk together brandy, lemon zest and vanilla extract; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together 1 1/4 cups flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda and salt; set aside.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together butter and sugar on medium speed until fluffy and pale in color, 3-4 minutes. Beat in egg yolks on low speed, one at a time, until incorporated. Beat in brandy mixture until incorporated, scraping down sides as needed. Add flour mixture; beat on low until batter just comes together in a ball, 1-2 minutes.
4. Sprinkle a cutting board with remaining 1/4 cup flour. Place dough ball on cutting board; cut in half. Roll each ball into a log shape, 1 1/4-in. thick. Tightly wrap each log in plastic wrap; refrigerate at least 2 hours.
5. Preheat oven to 350°. Unwrap chilled dough logs; slice into 1/4-in. thick slices. Place on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake 5-7 minutes or until light brown in color. Let cool slightly, then transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.
6. Spoon dulce de leche in a pastry bag fitted with a 1/2-in. piping tip. Pipe a thick layer in a swirling motion on the flat side of half of the cookies. Sandwich the spread with another cookie on top, rounded side up.
7. Place coconut in a shallow bowl; roll edges of sandwich cookies in coconut.

Grinch Cookies

From Patricia Sampson (2024)

Ingredients

- 1 box Vanilla Cake Mix
- 1 Stick Unsalted Butter softened
- 1 tablespoon Canola Oil
- 2 eggs Room Temperature
- 1 Cup Powdered Sugar
- 1 Cup Corn Starch
- Green Gel Food Coloring
- Red Heart Sprinkles

Instructions

1. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Add powdered sugar and corn starch together in a loaf pan. Mix well.
3. Mix the butter, cake mix, oil and eggs together (the batter will be thick).
4. Stir green food coloring to get the perfect Grinch green color (I used about 3 drops).
5. Using a small ice cream scoop get a chunk of dough then roll it into the powdered sugar/corn starch mixture.
6. Pick up the dough and roll into a ball and place on cookie sheet.
7. Place the cookie balls 2 inches apart on the cookie sheet.
8. Bake at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until they puff up.
9. Cool on the cookie sheet for several minutes then transfer to a wire rack to completely cool.
10. Once the cookies have cooled, mix a tablespoon of powdered sugar and a teaspoon or so of water, to make a tiny bowl of sugar glue to stick the heart sprinkles onto the top. You can also gently push the heart onto the dough before it gets baked.
11. You can serve and enjoy right away or store in an airtight container for future consumption!

Notes

This recipe will make exactly 2 dozen cookies using a 1 1/2 inch cookie scoop.

MAHA-tini

(no additives, no preservatives, no artificial colors)

Paula Parsons (2024)

- 2 oz Vodka
- 2 oz Limoncello made with organic, locally grown* lemons
- 3 oz fresh squeezed, organic, locally grown* orange juice

Garnish with dehydrated orange slice, and a sprinkle of pomegranate seeds

** (like 50 feet out the back door)*



Soft Sour Cream Sugar Cookies

From Meredith Pikulski (2023)

- 2 eggs
- ½ C butter
- 1 C sugar
- 1 C sour cream
- 1 tsp soda
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 C flour

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients together and refrigerate overnight for best flavor.
2. Remove from refrigerator and ADD approximately 2 c flour to dough or until dough is no longer sticky.
3. Roll out on floured flour – dough will be very soft – roll to ¼” thick (cookies will puff up when baked).
4. Cut out shapes and place on sheet pan.
5. Bake approximately 8-10 mins in 350-degree oven.
6. Once cooled, front/decorate.

NOTE: non-holiday baking, omit nutmeg.

Stained Glass Cookies

From Jeanne Llewellyn (2023)

I decorated an entire tree one year with these!

- Ingredients:
- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons egg (about half a large egg)
- lightly beaten
- 1 ½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon lemon extract
- 2 ¾ cups bleached flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 package (1 cup) sour-ball candy



Directions:

In a mixing bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the egg and extracts and beat until blended. In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining dry ingredients. On low speed, gradually add them to the butter mixture and mix just until the dough can be gathered into a ball.

Scrape the dough onto a sheet of plastic wrap and use the wrap, not your fingers, to press the dough together to form a thick, flat disc. Wrap it well and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, preferably no longer than 3 hours.

Separate the sour balls into individual colors and pulverize them separately in a blender or food processor.

Place each color in a small container and set aside.

Stained Glass Cookies (Continued)

Using about a quarter of the dough at a time, roll out the dough to ½ inch thickness between 2 sheets of plastic wrap or a lightly floured counter. Cut out cookies with a 3 inch cookie cutter, spraying or greasing the cutter as needed to prevent sticking. With a small, angled metal spatula or pancake turner, transfer the cookies to cookie sheets that have been lined with aluminum foil, then sprayed with vegetable cooking spray or greased. If you are planning to hang the cookies on a tree, make small holes with the blunt end of a wooden skewer.

Cut out shapes for stained glass in each cookie with small cutters or with a small, sharp knife. Use the tip of a small, sharp knife to fill holes with crushed candy, filling just to the top of the dough.

Bake:

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until the cookies are lightly browned and the candy has melted completely. For even baking, rotate the cookie sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through the baking period. Watch carefully toward the end of baking to see that the candy does not start to caramelize and turn brown.

Allow the cookies to cool completely on the sheets. Carefully peel off the aluminum foil. Store in an airtight container, between sheets of wax paper, at room temperature for up to several weeks.

Makes about 4 dozen (3 inch) cookies.

Jam Thumbprint Cookies

From Marlene O Touse (2023)



Ingredients

- 3/4 pound (3 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
 - 1 Cup Cane Sugar (can use granulated sugar)
 - 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
 - 3 1/2 Cups Flour
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 1 egg beaten with 1 Tbs. water for egg wash
 - 7 oz unsweetened flaked coconut (you can use sweetened coconut for a sweeter cookie)
 - Cherry jam (I use Bonne Maman brand Cherry Fruit spread)
 - *Apricot jam works very well in this recipe also but the cherry is pretty for the holidays
- Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together the butter and sugar until just combined, and then add the vanilla. Separately, sift together the flour and salt.

With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture to the creamed butter and sugar. Mix until the dough starts to come together. Dump on a floured board and roll together into a flat disk.

Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

Roll the dough into 1 1/4 -inch balls. (I weigh out the balls to 1 oz each). Dip each ball into the egg wash and then roll in the coconut.

Place the balls on an ungreased (I use silpat) cookie sheet and press a light indentation into the top of each with your finger. Drop 1/4 teaspoon of jam into each indentation. Bake for 20- 25 minutes, until the coconut is a golden brown. Cool on a rack.

Parmesan Shortbread with Fennel and Sea Salt

From Paula Parsons (2023); as published in Bon Appetit 2012

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 cups all-purpose flour plus more
- 1 cup finely grated Parmesan (about 2 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1 teaspoon Maldon sea salt or other coarse salt
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil



Directions:

Using an electric mixer, beat butter in a medium bowl on low speed until smooth, 1–2 minutes. Add powdered sugar, pepper, and kosher salt. Reduce speed to medium and beat, occasionally scraping down sides of bowl, until light and fluffy, 4–5 minutes. Add flour and cheese. Reduce mixer speed to low and beat mixture just until dough comes together.

Wrap dough in plastic and flatten into a rectangle. Chill until firm, at least 2 hours, then set at room temperature for 30 min.

Place fennel seeds in a resealable plastic freezer bag. Coarsely crush with a rolling pin or the bottom of a skillet. Alternatively, pulse in a spice mill until coarsely crushed. Transfer to a small bowl; stir in sea salt. Set fennel salt aside.

Arrange a rack in center of oven and preheat to 350°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Remove plastic wrap from dough. Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface to a 10x8-inch rectangle about 1/4-inch thick. Cut in thirds crosswise, then cut each third crosswise into 6 rectangles. Arrange cookies on prepared baking sheet, spacing 1 inch apart. Brush cookies generously with oil, then sprinkle with fennel salt.

Bake, rotating sheet halfway through, until cookies are golden brown (flecks of cheese will be slightly darker), 20–24 minutes. Let cool on sheets for at least 10 minutes.

Can be made 2 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature. Pairs well with coffee or wine!

Sandbakkels

From Julia Bach (2023)

1 lb. butter

1 c. granulated sugar

5 c. flour

1 unbeaten whole egg + 1 yolk

2 t. almond extract

Up to 1/2 tsp. salt



Work together sugar, butter and egg; do not beat. Sift flour and add; mix well after each cup. Add Almond extract. Add salt up to 1/2 tsp. Batter will be firm. Chill overnight.

Keep chilled until just before use. Press into individual metal sandbakkel tins or tartlet tins.

Bake at 325 degrees until golden brown. Let cool for a few minutes then turn out of tins onto wire racks for additional cooling.

Mom's Christmas Cheese Ball

From Paula Parsons and Leslie Escoto

- 1 - 8oz package cream cheese
- 4 to 6 oz. crumbled blue cheese
- ½ stick (2 oz) softened butter
- ¾ cup finely shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 – 4.25 oz can chopped black olives, drained well
- 1 ½ cup walnut pieces



Cream together all ingredients except the walnuts.

Shape into a ball, wrap in waxed paper, and chill for a few hours

Chop the walnuts to a medium coarseness. Place chopped walnuts into a shallow bowl. Unwrap cheese ball, and roll into walnuts to evenly coat all around, making a walnut crust.

Wrap the walnut coated ball in plastic wrap and refrigerate a few more hours until ready to serve. Take out 20-30 minutes prior to serving to soften.

Serve with your favorite crackers or toasts.

Easy Nutella Chocolate Chip Cookies

From DJ Rogers (2023)

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup of Nutella
- 1/2 cup milk chocolate chips



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, using a spoon, mix together flour, egg, sugar and Nutella.
3. Stir in chocolate chips until evenly distributed.
4. Drop the dough by spoonful on to a cookie sheet, about 2 inches apart.
5. Bake for about 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool for about 10 minutes before serving.

Notes:

Adapted from Easy 5-Ingredient Fudgy Nutella Cookies with Sea Salt from Ambitious Kitchen

Hazelnut Cappuccino Crinkles

From Leslie Escoto (2023)



1 pouch of Betty Crocker Double Chocolate Chunk Cookie Mix
(can substitute Chocolate Chip Cookie Mix)

3 Tablespoons Vegetable Oil

2 Tablespoons Hazelnut Syrup

2 Teaspoons instant coffee granules

1 Egg

½ Cup Powdered Sugar

30 Coffee Bean Chocolate Pieces (chocolate covered Coffee Beans)

Heat Oven to 375 F

In large bowl stir cookie mix, oil, Syrup, Egg, Coffee and form into soft dough forms

Roll dough into 1 " balls roll in powdered sugar. Place 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheet

Bake about 9 minutes or until set – Immediately press candy piece into top of each cookie – Cool 1 Minute and remove from cookie sheet to wire cooling racks

Makes 2 ½ Dozen

Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies

From Jeanne Llewellyn (2023)

Yield: about 20 cookies



Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 c all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/8 tsp. baking soda
- 3/4 c plus 3 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1/2 c light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs plus 2 large egg yolks, at room temperature
- 1 tbs; canola oil
- 1 tbsp Red Velvet Bakery Emulsion
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- 3 oz semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
- 1/4 c cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

Directions:

1. Adjust an oven rack to middle position and preheat the oven to 350degrees F. Line three sheet pans with parchment paper.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and baking soda.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together 3/4 cup of the granulated sugar, the brown sugar, eggs, egg yolks, canola oil, Red Velvet Bakery Emulsion, vanilla, and salt.
4. Place the butter and chocolate in a small, heavy-bottom saucepan over low heat and melt together, stirring frequently to prevent the chocolate from scorching. Continue cooking until the mixture is smooth. Off the heat, add the cocoa powder to the chocolate and whisk until completely combined, about 45 seconds (the mixture will be thick).
5. Add the warm chocolate-butter mixture to the egg mixture and whisk together until combined. Add the flour mixture and use a rubber spatula to mix gently until combined. Cover the dough and chill the mixture for at least 6 hours and up to overnight.
6. In a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar and the remaining 3 tablespoons of granulated sugar. Scoop the dough into 1 tablespoon portions and roll the dough in the sugar mixture. Place eight cookies on each sheet pan and bake one pan at a time, rotating halfway through baking. Bake until the edges are set and the cookies are puffed but still soft in the center, 12 to 14 minutes. Move the sheet pans to a wire rack and let the cookies cool to room temperature. Cookies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Perfect Pear Martini

Paula Parsons (2022)

- 2 parts Pear Vodka
- 1 part St. Germain liqueur
- freshly squeeze lemon juice
- 1 shake bitters (optional)
- Garnish with fresh pear



Pomegranate Martini

Paula Parsons (2023)

- 1 ½ oz Vodka
- 1 ½ oz Pomegranate juice
- ½ oz Gran Mariner
- Garnish with orange peel

