

*Mary Leisz's*

# CHRISTMAS COOKIES

*A treasury of the "best of the best"*

*Polish and American cookie recipes*

*compiled over a lifetime by*

*cookie baker extraordinaire*

*Mary Zema Leisz*

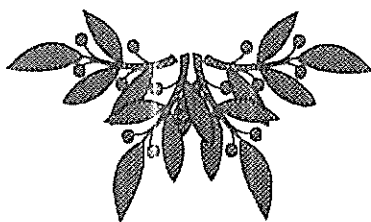
*of Cleveland, Ohio*



# Contents

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Introduction by Mary's daughter Denise Leisz Pazur	2
A note from Mary	4
Mary's Cookies:	
1) Brazil Nut Sticks	6
2) Christmas Apricot Chews	6
3) Java Sticks	7
4) Coconut Meringue Drops	7
5) Chocolate Almond Kisses	8
6) Hazelnut Crescents	9
7) French Lace Cookies	9
8) Spanish Almond Wreaths	10
9) Mexican Wedding Cakes	11
10) Rum Balls	11
11) Holiday Fruit Cups	12
12) Cinnamon Stars	13
13) Candy Cane Cookies	14
14) Snowflake Stars	15
15) Filbert Strips	15
16) Chocolate Crinkles	16
17) Thumbprint Cookies	17
18) Christmas Tree Cookies	17
19) Gingerbread Boys	18
20) Coconut Butter Balls	19
21) Stuffed Dates	19
22) French Almond Cookies	20
23) Ishki Kishki	20
24) Pecan Packages	21
Cookie Tips	22
Photograph of Mary and Jack Leisz	23



**It was nearly 40 years ago** that Mary Zema Leisz began the tradition of making thousands of Christmas cookies each December. Inspired by her older sister Steffie Holeski, Mary gave Steffie a hand with baking until she died in the early 1960s. It was then that Mary took over the task of celebrating the holidays with her cookies and sharing them with dozens of friends and relatives each Christmas.

As soon as the first snow would fly after Thanksgiving, Mary would get to work. Her husband Jack would make trips to the grocery store to purchase all the ingredients - nearly 20 pounds of nuts including Brazil, pecans, almonds, pistachios, filberts and walnuts. Eight pounds of butter and twice as much margarine. Sweeteners including brown sugar, granulated and confectioner's sugar, honey and molasses. Chewy dates and flaked coconut, candied cherries and pineapple. Rich chocolates, cinnamon candies and sugar sprinkles.

It took Mary much of December to complete her cookies. She'd store them in airtight tins in the attic of her modest Wetzel Avenue home on Cleveland's west side. The attic air was cold and dry, and the cookies kept for a month. Then the week before Christmas, Mary would pack them into gift boxes and Jack would deliver them to people across greater Cleveland - relatives, friends and neighbors, acquaintances from Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Cleveland, co-workers from Mary's days as a sales associate at Higbee's Department Store at Parmatown Mall, and to the firemen at Engine No. 1 in downtown Cleveland where Jack worked for more than 30 years.

The origins of many of Mary's cookie recipes are uncertain. Preserved on yellowed index cards in her hand, many belonged to her sister Steffie. Others she clipped from Cleveland's two daily newspapers, *The Plain Dealer* and *The Cleveland Press*. Still others were collected over four decades from the pages of recipe books and women's magazines. Mary was tireless at testing recipes, and very selective about those she chose to make each Christmas.

Today Mary is widowed and lives in Plymouth, Wisconsin near her daughter Denise. And while she no longer has her own kitchen to bake in, she comes to Denise's house and the two of them carry on the tradition of making these cookies each Christmas. Here are her cherished "Hall of Fame" recipes. Hope you enjoy them! And happy holidays to you and yours!

# A Note From Mary

*Christmas 1997*

*"My cookie recipes are just precious to me. As soon as the snow started to fall, Dad and I started to mix up the doughs and make up the cookies. Oh, how I wish we could do that again.*

*Dad got all worked up about going out and buying the nuts and the butter and stuff. I had an old toy box that I'd store my recipes in. First I would work on separating the recipes, which ones I would choose that year and so forth. After that, we'd go out and buy the ingredients. Dad would go to the store and buy me 25 pounds of flour and I'd have to keep it in the refrigerator. He went and bought me all the butter and oleo and nuts, apricots and so forth. We'd put it all in these boxes that I had, and then it was all on hand and ready to use.*

*I would mix maybe five doughs up at a time and have them ready in the refrigerator to roll and bake. I'd have Grandma (Mary's mother Sophia Zema) come over and help chop nuts. We'd each put on our aprons and get to work. Dad even liked when Grandma came over and helped me. Those days are gone forever.*

*All together I would make 25 to 27 different recipes and sometimes double or triple recipes. I'd have thousands of cookies, you know? Sometimes one recipe would take up two cookie tins.*

*We loved the gingerbread cookies. The smell of gingerbread is Christmas. The decorating, oh Dad loved to decorate them. The one time I made the little gingerbread boys and I made 200. And Dad had to paint the bow ties on them and he got so tired. If he stopped and his hands got tired, then he'd rest, but then he'd continue.*

*We'd give them away, boxes and boxes of them. Dad would drive everywhere, to the Parma people first, then to everyone else. I'd have to write out a list of who goes to the west side, and he'd take them by streets and so forth. How he loved to deliver them, and all the kisses he would get. Auntie Helene (Mary's sister-in-law Helene Elkin) and Aunt Bertha (Mary's maternal aunt Bertha Marszalek) would give him kisses and hugs. And he'd say, "Boy, did I get a lot of hugs and kisses today." One day he would go to his family, the next day to my family. That was fun.*

*I did it because I enjoyed it. I wanted to make people happy. I know that they loved them. I think that all the nieces and nephews who tasted my cookies remember them. If I can make this little book up, then they'll still be able to enjoy them and think of Aunt Mary."*

# 1) Brazil Nut Sticks

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*I think this is the best cookie I make. This was my sister Steffie's recipe and it's as old as the hills! This cookie is so easy, and they are delicious and melt in your mouth. Especially good when you dip them in coffee or tea.*

<b>2 cups</b>	<b>brown sugar</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>large eggs</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>1 1/3 cups</b>	<b>flour</b>
<b>1 pound</b>	<b>Brazil nuts, chopped very fine</b>
<b>1/2 tsp.</b>	<b>baking powder</b>
	<b>powdered sugar</b>

Sift flour and baking powder together. Set aside. Beat eggs lightly in large bowl. Add brown sugar and beat on medium for one minute. Add vanilla, then flour/baking powder mix. Stir in Brazil nuts. Refrigerate until firm.

Roll into log shapes a bit thicker than a lead pencil and about 1 1/2" in length. Bake at 325 degrees for about seven minutes. Watch them close, they burn easily! Roll in powdered sugar when cool. Makes nine dozen.

# 2) Christmas Apricot Chews

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*The coconut taste and the apricots and the nuts, chopped big. Very good, delicious. I clipped this recipe from a long-ago issue of a Cleveland newspaper.*

<b>1 cup</b>	<b>sweetened condensed milk (Borden 14 oz.)</b>
<b>3 cups</b>	<b>flaked coconut</b>
<b>1/8 tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
<b>1 1/2 cup</b>	<b>dried apricots, chopped fine</b>
<b>3/4 cup</b>	<b>almonds, chopped medium</b>

Thoroughly blend all ingredients in mixing bowl. Moisten hands and shape into balls 1" in diameter. Place on greased cookie sheet and bake in preheated 325 degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes. Watch these carefully, they burn fast. Remove at once from sheet. Makes about 50 cookies.

### 3) Java Sticks

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*It's the coffee taste that gives this cookie its wonderful flavor. And dipping the ends of each cookie in melted chocolate and sprinkles gives the cookie a mocha taste.*

<b>1 cup</b>	<b>sweet (unsalted) butter, softened</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>unsifted powdered sugar</b>
<b>2 tsp.</b>	<b>instant coffee granules, crushed to powder</b>
<b>1 ½ cups</b>	<b>unsifted all-purpose flour</b>
<b>¼ cup</b>	<b>walnuts, ground</b>
<b>3 oz.</b>	<b>semi-sweet chocolate, melted</b>
	<b>chocolate sprinkles</b>

Cream butter with sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the coffee powder. Add flour and walnuts, blending well. Refrigerate until firm. Break off walnut-sized bits of dough and roll into log shape about ½" wide and 1 ½ " long. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until lightly browned on bottom. Remove from cookie sheet and cool on wire rack. Dip each end of cookie into melted chocolate to coat the tip. Dip in chocolate sprinkles or finely chopped walnuts. Place on wire rack until chocolate hardens.

### 4) Coconut Meringue Drops

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*These are airy and light as a feather. Excellent. They melt in your mouth. Don't remember where I got this recipe, but it's a great one!*

<b>3</b>	<b>egg whites</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>superfine sugar</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>flaked coconut</b>
	<b>whole unblanched almonds, split in half</b>

In a large bowl, beat egg whites with electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar and vanilla. With a rubber spatula, gently fold in coconut. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto a greased and floured cookie sheet. Press ½ almond into center of each, and bake in a preheated 300 degree oven for 15 - 20 minutes. Makes about five dozen cookies.



## 5) Chocolate Almond Kisses

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*Grated chocolate makes these meringue cookies extra special. And the pistachios on top give them pizzazz.*

3	egg whites, at room temperature
1 tsp.	vinegar
½ tsp.	salt
1 cup	superfine granulated sugar
1 cup	almonds, very finely chopped
4 squares	semi-sweet chocolate, grated fine
6 oz.	semi-sweet chocolate (pieces or squares), melted
2 Tbl.	butter
	whole shelled pistachio nuts

Beat egg whites, vinegar and salt in large bowl at high speed until foamy and double in volume. Add sugar one tablespoon at a time, beating until meringue stands in firm peaks, about 8 - 10 minutes. *Gently* fold in the grated chocolate and almonds.

Drop by rounded ½ teaspoonfuls onto lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake in slow oven at 275 degrees for 20 minutes or just until set. Remove carefully from cookie sheet with spatula. Cool on wire rack.

Melt chocolate pieces with butter to make chocolate glaze. Decorate cookies with chocolate glaze, and place two or three whole pistachios on top.



## 6) Hazelnut Crescents

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*The hazelnuts are a different taste with a wonderful aroma! But you can also make these with almonds or pecans. This recipe originated in Northern and Central Europe.*

<b>1 cup</b>	<b>(2 sticks) sweet (unsalted) butter, softened</b>
<b>1/3 cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>hazelnuts, chopped medium</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla extract</b>
<b>2 1/4 cups</b>	<b>sifted all-purpose flour</b>
<b>1 pinch</b>	<b>salt</b>

Cream butter, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Stir flour with salt, and gradually add to butter mixture. Beat until dough is smooth enough to roll. Mix in nuts. Refrigerate until firm.

Break off walnut-size pieces of dough and press into log shapes about 3" long. Curve to form a crescent. Place on cookie sheet and bake in 350 degree oven for 10 minutes. Makes about 8 dozen cookies.

## 7) French Lace Cookies

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*This thin batter is transformed in baking to a crisp round with open spaces resembling lace. The rolled-up version is popular in Sweden; cooks there roll the warm cookies around a piece of broom handle.*

<b>2/3 cup</b>	<b>blanched almonds, finely ground</b>
<b>1/2 cup</b>	<b>butter</b>
<b>1/2 cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>
<b>2 Tbl.</b>	<b>milk</b>
<b>1 Tbl.</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>

In a medium sauce pan, combine almonds, butter, granulated sugar, milk and flour. Heat, stirring constantly, over low heat until butter is melted and mixture is mushy. Drop by heaping teaspoonfuls, 3 inches apart, onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 5 or 6 minutes or until golden. Remove one at a time from cookie sheet, and quickly roll up around handle of wooden spoon. Or if you like, do not roll but leave flat. Cool on wire rack. Makes about 30.

## 8) Spanish Almond Wreaths

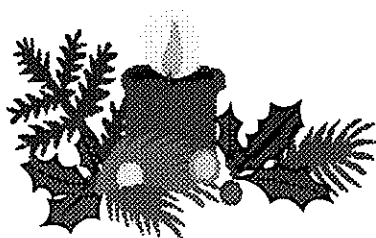
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*These chewy, nutty cookies are spiked with cinnamon and chocolate. They give off a wonderful aroma when baking. You won't forget this delicious cookie!*

1 cup	<b>blanched almonds, grated fine</b>
1 1/4 cups	<b>granulated sugar</b>
2 oz.	<b>semi-sweet chocolate squares, finely grated</b>
1 tsp.	<b>vanilla extract</b>
1/2 tsp.	<b>ground cinnamon</b>
2	<b>eggs</b>
	<b>green tinted decorator icing</b>
	<b>red cinnamon candy drops</b>

Combine nuts, sugar, chocolate, vanilla and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Beat eggs lightly with a fork. Add enough egg to nut mixture to make a firm dough. (Don't add all the egg.) Refrigerate until firm.

Wet your hands with water. Break off walnut-size pieces of dough and roll between wet palms into sticks less than 1/2 inch thick. Turn sticks into rings to form wreaths. Place one inch apart on lightly greased and floured cookie sheet. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes or until crackly but firm. Watch closely, don't overbake. Cool wreaths on wire rack. Decorate with green tinted icing for leaves, and cinnamon drops for berries. Makes about 5 dozen.



## 9) Mexican Wedding Cakes

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*These buttery, nutty cookies are easy to make and they disappear quickly because they are so good. They are thickly coated with powdered sugar while still warm. I like to double the recipe and make one recipe of green-colored cookies and the other red-colored cookies.*

<b>1 cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine</b>
<b>1/4 cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>
<b>2 cups</b>	<b>sifted all-purpose flour</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>walnuts, chopped medium to coarse</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla extract</b>
	<b>green or red food coloring</b>

Beat butter or margarine until fluffy. Add food coloring and mix well. Add remaining ingredients. Refrigerate until firm.

Shape into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 325 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Remove from cookie sheet and cool on wire rack. When cool, roll in powdered sugar. Makes 5 dozen. Note: May be placed rather close together on cookie sheet, as they don't spread a lot.

## 10) Rum Balls

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*The origin of this yummy no-bake cookie recipe is lost in antiquity!*

<b>15 oz.</b>	<b>vanilla wafer cookies, rolled into fine crumbs</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>liquid honey</b>
<b>1/3 cup</b>	<b>brandy</b>
<b>1/3 cup</b>	<b>light rum</b>
<b>1 lb.</b>	<b>shelled walnuts, finely ground</b>
	<b>granulated sugar</b>

Mix cookie crumbs, honey, brandy, rum and walnuts together in a large bowl. Shape into bite-size balls. Roll in granulated sugar. The flavor improves with age! Makes about 5 dozen.

# 11) Holiday Fruit Cups

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*These little fruit cakes are small enough to pop in your mouth. Because they are so rich, you can't eat too many. But are they good!*

8 oz.	pecans, chopped coarse
8 oz.	walnuts, chopped coarse
3/4 cup	candied red cherries, chopped coarse
3/4 cup	candied pineapple, chopped coarse
3/4 cup	golden raisins
1/2 cup	sweet butter
1/4 cup	brown sugar, firmly packed
1/4 cup	honey
3	eggs
3/4 cup	unsifted all-purpose flour
1 tsp.	ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp.	salt
1/4 cup	cognac
	whole candied red cherries for decoration

Fill miniature muffin pans with paper liners. Combine first five ingredients in medium bowl. Set aside. Cream butter, brown sugar and honey in a large mixing bowl. Beat in eggs one at a time, blending well after each addition. Batter will be quite thin. Mix in cognac. Combine dry ingredients and add alternately to batter, mixing thoroughly. Stir in fruit/nut mixture. Fill paper liners to just within top. Bake at 300 degrees for 35 minutes. Decorate top with half cherry.

## 12) Cinnamon Stars

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*Crisp and tender at the same time, these dainty holiday party cookies have a slight chewiness and delicate flavor.*

<b>1/3 to 1/2 cup</b>	<b>egg whites</b>
<b>2 cups</b>	<b>sifted powdered sugar</b>
<b>1/2 tsp.</b>	<b>grated lemon rind</b>
<b>1/2 tsp.</b>	<b>cinnamon</b>
<b>2 cups</b>	<b>(1/2 pound) blanched almonds , ground</b>

Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry. Gradually add sugar and lemon rind. Continue beating until completely blended, about 5 minutes. Reserve 1/4 cup of mixture for centers of cookies. Blend cinnamon and almonds together; fold into remaining egg white mixture.

Using cloth-covered board which has had powdered sugar rubbed into the cloth, roll dough 1/8" thick. Cut in star shapes. Place 1/2 teaspoon reserved mixture on center of each star. If desired, spread to each point of star. Place cookies on greased and floured cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes. Makes 4 1/2 dozen 2 1/2" cookies.

# 13) Candy Cane Cookies

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*These peppermint-sprinkled candy cane-shaped cookies add a festive touch to any holiday cookie platter.*

<b>½ cup</b>	<b>shortening</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>confectioner's sugar, sifted</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>egg</b>
<b>1 ½ tsp.</b>	<b>almond extract</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla extract</b>
<b>2 ½ cups</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>red food coloring</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>crushed peppermint candy canes</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>

ix together crushed peppermint candy canes and ½ cup granulated sugar in small bowl. Set aside. Beat shortening, butter or margarine and egg together until light and fluffy. Add almond and vanilla extracts. Sift together flour and salt. Stir into shortening mixture. Divide dough in half. Blend red food coloring into one half. Refrigerate until firm.

Roll a 4" strip (using 1 tsp. dough) from each color. For smooth, even strips, roll them back and forth on lightly floured board. Place strips side by side, press lightly together, and twist like a rope. For best results, complete cookies one at a time - if all the dough of one color is shaped first, strips become too dry to twist.

Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Curve top down to form handle of cane. Bake at 350 about 9 minutes until lightly browned. While still warm, remove from baking sheet with spatula and sprinkle with candy/sugar mixture. Makes about 4 dozen canes.

## 14) Snowflake Stars

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*These star cookies are accented with a dab of chocolate and delicious pistachios!*

<b>½ cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>
<b>1/3 cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>egg</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>1 1/4 cups</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>baking powder</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
	<b>sweet chocolate, melted</b>
	<b>pistachio nuts, chopped coarse</b>

Cream butter, sugar, egg and flavoring until light and fluffy. Sift dry ingredients together and blend into shortening mixture. Refrigerate until firm. Roll dough 1/8 inch thick on floured board. Cut into small stars. Bake at 350 degrees on ungreased cookie sheet for 6 to 8 minutes until lightly browned. Cool on wire rack. Add dab of melted chocolate to center and sprinkle with chopped pistachio nuts. Makes about 5 dozen cookies.

## 15) Filbert Strips

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*A unique flourless cookie from the pamphlet "My Favorite Cookies By Bernadette."*

<b>1</b>	<b>egg white</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>powdered sugar</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>shelled filberts (hazelnuts), ground fine</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>egg yolk</b>
<b>6 Tbl.</b>	<b>powdered sugar</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>

Beat egg white until stiff but not dry. Add sugar gradually, beating until well blended. Add nuts. Pat out on a floured board in a rectangle 1/4" thick. Beat egg yolk with the 6 tablespoons of powdered sugar and vanilla. Spread over the first mixture. Let dry 30-40 minutes. Cut into strips. Place on a buttered cookie sheet. Let stand for 15 minutes. Bake at 300 degrees for 15 minutes.



# 16) Chocolate Crinkles

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*These cookies are soft when hot but firm and chewy when cool.*

<b>2 cups plus 2 Tbl.</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>2 tsp.</b>	<b>baking powder</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine, at room temp.</b>
<b>1 ¾ cup</b>	<b>granulated sugar</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>eggs</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>4 squares</b>	<b>(one ounce each) unsweetened chocolate, melted</b>
<b>½ cup</b>	<b>powdered sugar</b>

Mix flour, baking powder and salt. In a large bowl, beat butter and granulated sugar with electric mixer until fluffy. Beat in eggs until mixture is pale yellow, then vanilla and chocolate until blended. Gradually add flour mixture, mixing just to blend. Refrigerate until firm.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease cookie sheets. Shape heaping teaspoonfuls of dough into 1 1/4" balls. Roll in confectioners' sugar. Place 1 ½" apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake about 12 minutes until tops are puffed and crackled. (Do not overbake.) Remove to rack to cool. Makes about 4 dozen.

## 17) Thumbprint Cookies

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*Nut-rich . . . the thumb dent is filled with sparkling jelly.*

<b>½ cup</b>	<b>shortening (part butter or margarine)</b>
<b>1¼ cup</b>	<b>brown sugar, packed</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>egg, separated</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>¼ tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
<b>¾ cup</b>	<b>walnuts, finely chopped</b>
	<b>jelly, or tinted confectioners' sugar icing</b>

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Mix shortening, sugar, egg yolk and vanilla thoroughly. Sift flour together with salt; stir in. Refrigerate until firm.

Roll dough into balls (1 tsp. per ball). Beat egg white slightly with fork. Dip balls in egg white. Roll in nuts. Place about 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheet; press thumb gently in center of each. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, or until set. Cool. Fill thumb prints with jelly or tinted icing. Makes about 3 dozen.

## 18) Christmas Tree Cookies

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*I use this favorite rolled sugar cookie recipe to make miniature Christmas trees decorated with green icing and sprinkles.*

<b>1 ½ cups</b>	<b>sifted powdered sugar</b>
<b>1 cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>egg</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla extract</b>
<b>½ tsp.</b>	<b>almond extract</b>
<b>2 ½ cups</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>baking soda</b>
<b>1 tsp.</b>	<b>cream of tartar</b>

Cream sugar and butter. Add egg and flavorings; mix thoroughly. Sift dry ingredients together, and stir into mixture. Refrigerate until firm.

Divide dough in half and roll 3/16" thick on lightly floured surface. Cut with cookie cutter, and bake at 350 for 7-8 minutes. Cool on rack and decorate.

## 22) French Almond Cookies

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*Very good. Excellent. This recipe was clipped from a Cleveland newspaper. Make the cookies small, as they spread out a lot on baking.*

1 cup	(2 sticks) butter
1 1/4 cups	brown sugar, packed
2	eggs, beaten well
1 1/4 cups	granulated sugar
1/2 pound	blanched almonds, ground
1 Tbl.	honey
1 tsp.	baking soda
3 cups	sifted all-purpose flour
	blanched almond halves

Combine and mix ingredients (except almond halves) in order given. Refrigerate until firm. Pinch off pieces of dough the size of walnuts; roll between hands to oblongs. Place on greased baking sheet two inches apart. Place almond half on top of each. Bake at 350 degrees 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from sheet immediately. Makes about 7 1/2 dozen.

## 23) Ishki Kishki

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*I nicknamed these Finnish cookies "Ishki Kishki" because one day years ago, I telephoned my sister Steffie to see what she was baking. She was irritated because I interrupted her, and she blurted out in frustration, "Ishki Kishki." So the name stuck!*

3/4 cup	butter
1/4 cup	granulated sugar
1 tsp.	almond extract
2 cups	sifted all-purpose flour
1	egg white, beaten until frothy
1 Tbl.	granulated sugar
1/3 cup	walnuts, chopped fine

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add almond extract. Stir in flour. Refrigerate until firm. Roll out dough on lightly floured surface to 1/8" thickness. Cut with crimped roller into angled squares 1 1/2" long by 1" wide. Brush centers with egg white and sprinkle with mixture of sugar and walnuts. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove and cool on rack.

## 24) Pecan Packages

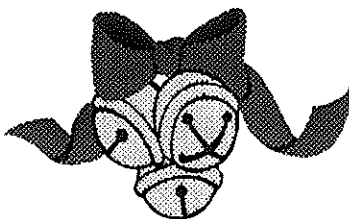
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*These Christmas package-shaped cookies are accented with a red "bow" tied across their middle made from a fruit rollup!*

<b>1 cup</b>	<b>butter or margarine, at room temperature</b>
<b>1/4 cup</b>	<b>powdered sugar</b>
<b>1/4 tsp.</b>	<b>salt</b>
<b>2 tsp.</b>	<b>vanilla</b>
<b>1 Tbl.</b>	<b>water</b>
<b>2 cups</b>	<b>all-purpose flour</b>
<b>2 cups</b>	<b>(8 oz.) pecans, chopped fine</b>
	<b>powdered sugar</b>
	<b>cherry fruit rolls, cut in 1/4" wide strips</b>

Beat butter, 1/4 cup powdered sugar, salt, vanilla and water in a large bowl with electric mixer until fluffy. Stir in flour and nuts until blended. Refrigerate until firm.

Shape rounded teaspoonfuls into logs about 1 1/2" and 1/2" in diameter. Place 12 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees 12-15 minutes until bottoms are lightly browned. Remove to wire rack to cool completely. Roll in remaining powdered sugar. Then decorate as follows: For ribbon, wrap fruit roll strip around log and press gently so it sticks to itself. Loop another strip to form a bow. Press in place. (Bows take time and patience!) Just before serving, dip bottom of "package" in powdered sugar so it doesn't stick to serving plate.



# Cookie Tips

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## **MIXING**

- In recipes calling for butter or margarine, never use whipped or soft margarine. Use only regular variety in stick form.
- Use large eggs for best results.
- Use unsifted flour unless otherwise specified. Pile lightly in measuring cup and level off.
- When rolling dough, use only enough flour to coat surface of board and rolling pin. Do not work excess flour into dough, as this makes dough tough.

## **BAKING**

- Always place dough on a cool cookie sheet; it will spread on a hot one.
- Bake one sheet at a time using center rack. Test doneness after minimum time.
- Because ovens vary, watch cookies closely. Check for doneness just before minimum baking time is up.

## **STORING**

- Store cookies in airtight ziplock plastic bags, cookie tins, or rigid plastic storage containers. Separate layers with waxed paper, especially if cookies are moist or sticky.
- Don't store two types of cookies in the same container, as the flavor of one will affect the other. Especially never store crisp cookies together with soft cookies.
- Store cookies in sealed container in a cool, dry place such as an attic or garage.



**Mary and Jack Leisz**

Christmas 1980

