

Holiday BAKING!

25 RECIPES COOKIES • BARS • CUPCAKES •
CHEESECAKES • PIES • SCONES • MUFFINS • BREADS

1 RECIPE, 5 DIFFERENT COOKIES

GIFTS
Cookies
in a jar



Peppermint
Brownie Pie
(recipe page 17)

FROM THE EDITORS OF
Midwest Living



Eggnog Muffins
(recipe page 21)

'Tis the season for baking. Our collection of holiday recipes includes tasty treats to give as gifts and breakfast and dessert goodies to enjoy with family and friends at home.

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Basic Cookie Dough (One Dough, Five Ways)

Use this basic recipe as the base for the five cookies on pages 4 and 5. In some cases, you'll substitute ingredients.

PREP 20 minutes

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cornstarch
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

1. In a medium bowl, combine flour and cornstarch; set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter and cream cheese with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in as much of the flour mixture as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour with a wooden spoon. Continue as directed in recipes on pages 4 and 5.

3. To store cookie dough, pack it into an airtight container and refrigerate up to 3 days or freeze up to 1 month. Take frozen dough from freezer a day before using and thaw in the refrigerator.

Nutrition facts per batch: 4,143 cal, 222 g fat, 768 mg chol, 3,506 mg sodium, 483 g carbo, 11 g fiber, 52 g pro.

Sugar Cookie Cutouts (recipe page 4)





Sugar Cookie Cutouts

BAKE 6 minutes per batch

1. Prepare Basic Cookie Dough on page 3. Divide in half. Cover and chill for 1 hour or until easy to handle.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll half the dough (keep remaining dough in refrigerator) until $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Cut into shapes using 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 3-inch cookie cutters. Place $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

3. Bake in 375° oven 6 to 7 minutes or until bottoms are light brown. Cool 1 minute; transfer to wire racks to cool.

4. In a bowl, mix 3 cups powdered sugar, 3 tablespoons milk and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla. Stir in additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, until glazing consistency. Tint with food coloring, if you like. Decorate cookies with icing and nonpareils. Let set. **Makes**

48 cookies.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 118 cal, 5 g fat, 17 mg chol, 66 mg sodium, 18 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 1 g pro.

Chocolate-Drizzled Crescents

BAKE 15 minutes per batch

1. Prepare Basic Cookie Dough as directed, except substitute 2 tablespoons whiskey, rum or brandy for vanilla. Wrap with plastic wrap; chill 1 hour.

2. Pinch off 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch balls of dough. Roll each into a 3-inch log; shape into crescents. Place on ungreased cookie sheets.

3. Bake in 325° oven 15 to 20 minutes or until bottoms are light brown. Cool 1 minute; transfer to wire racks to cool.

4. Drizzle with melted chocolate. Place on waxed paper; let stand until set. Or coat with powdered sugar. **Makes**

36 crescents.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 145 cal, 8 g fat, 23 mg chol, 91 mg sodium, 16 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 2 g pro.



Brown Sugar Thumbprints

BAKE 15 minutes per batch

1. Prepare Basic Cookie Dough as directed, except substitute $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar for sugar and add 1 teaspoon each ground cinnamon, allspice and ginger. Wrap dough in plastic wrap; chill for 1 hour.

2. In shallow dish, beat one egg white with 1 tablespoon water.



3. Shape dough into 1-inch balls; roll in egg white mixture, then roll in 1 cup finely chopped almonds. Place 2 inches apart on lightly greased cookie sheets. Press half a candied red cherry into each.

4. Bake in a 325° oven 15 to 17 minutes or until bottoms are light brown. Cool 1 minute; transfer to wire racks to cool.

Makes 55 cookies.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 101 cal, 5 g fat, 14 mg chol, 60 mg sodium, 13 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 1 g pro.

Coconut Dream Bars

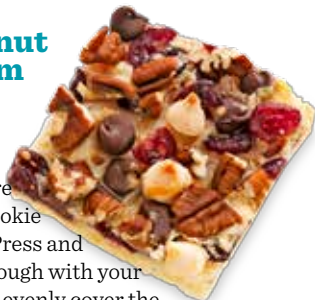
BAKE 30 minutes

1. Prepare Basic Cookie Dough. Press and flatten dough with your hands to evenly cover the bottom of an ungreased 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake in a 350° oven 10 minutes.

2. Sprinkle 1½ cups shredded coconut; 1 cup snipped dried apricots, cherries or cranberries; 1 cup chopped pecans; ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces and ½ cup white baking pieces evenly over dough. Drizzle 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk over all.

3. Bake 20 minutes more or until top is golden. Cool in pan on wire rack; cut into bars. **Makes 36 bars.**

Nutrition facts per bar: 221 cal, 12 g fat, 26 mg chol, 108 mg sodium, 26 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 3 g pro.



Shining Star Sandwich Cookies

BAKE 6 minutes per batch

1. Prepare Basic Cookie Dough.

Divide dough in half and tightly wrap each piece with plastic wrap. Cover and chill for 1 hour or until easy to handle.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll half the dough (keep remaining dough in refrigerator) until ⅛ to ¼ inch thick. Using a 2½- to 3-inch star-shape cookie cutter, cut dough. Using a 1- to 1½-inch star-shape cookie cutter, cut holes in the centers of half of the cookies. Place about 1½ inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

3. Bake in a 375° oven for 6 to 7 minutes or until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown. Cool on cookie sheet for 1 minute. Transfer cookies to wire racks and let cool.

4. For filling: In a medium bowl, stir together 2 cups powdered sugar; ⅓ cup cherry or currant jelly or apricot jam; ½ teaspoon almond extract; and ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg or cinnamon until well combined.

5. To assemble, sift additional powdered sugar over tops of cookies with holes in centers. Spread filling on the bottoms of the cookies without holes. Top each of these cookies with the remaining cookies, powdered sugar side up. Fill the hole of each cookie with a small spoonful of additional filling.

Makes 40 servings.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 147 cal, 6 g fat, 20 mg chol, 81 mg sodium, 23 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 1 g pro.



Fat Molasses Cookies

PREP 40 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour

BAKE 10 minutes per batch

- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup shortening
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 cup molasses
- Coarse sugar or finely chopped crystallized ginger

1. In a large bowl, combine flour, baking soda, ground ginger, cinnamon and salt. Set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, beat shortening for 30 seconds. Add brown sugar and beat until fluffy. Add eggs, the water, vinegar and molasses; beat until combined. Add flour mixture and beat until combined. Halve dough. Cover and chill for 1 hour or until easy to handle.

3. On a floured surface, roll out half of the dough (keep remaining dough in refrigerator) to ½-inch thickness. Cut dough using a 3-inch scalloped or round cutter. Place cookies 2½-inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Sprinkle with coarse sugar.

4. Bake in a 375° oven about 10 minutes or until edges are firm. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool. Store cookies at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Makes 26 cookies.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 239 cal, 8 g fat, 16 mg chol, 134 mg sodium, 38 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 1 g pro.

Hazelnut-Chocolate Chunk Cookies

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes per batch

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla or hazelnut liqueur
- 1 12-ounce package miniature semisweet chocolate pieces





6 ounces premium white baking chocolate, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch chunks
1 cup hazelnuts, toasted, skins removed and chopped, or 1 cup chopped pecans

1. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter and shortening with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugars. Beat until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat until combined. Gradually add flour mixture,

beating on low speed just until combined (dough will be stiff). Using a wooden spoon, stir in semisweet chocolate pieces, white baking chocolate chunks and hazelnuts.

3. Drop rounded tablespoons of dough 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets.

4. Bake in a 325° oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until edges are light brown. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to wire racks to cool. **Makes 60 cookies.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 154 cal, 9 g fat, 16 mg chol, 63 mg sodium, 18 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.



Chocolate Lovers' Oatmeal Delights

PREP 25 minutes

BAKE 10 minutes per batch

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 cups quick-cooking rolled oats
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1 cup peanut butter flavored pieces

- 1.** In a medium mixing bowl, mix flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds.
- 3.** Add sugar and beat mixture until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Beat in egg, the water and vanilla until combined. Beat in as much of the flour mixture as you can.
- 4.** Using a wooden spoon, stir in any remaining flour mixture and rolled oats. Stir in chocolate and peanut butter flavored pieces.
- 5.** Drop dough by rounded tablespoons 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in a 350° oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are set. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool.

Makes 48 cookies.

Nutrition facts per cookie: 133 cal, 7 g fat, 15 mg chol, 89 mg sodium, 15 g carbo, 2 g fiber,

Chocolate-Raspberry Tassies

PREP 40 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes

COOL 10 minutes

Chocolate Pastry (recipe follows)

6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, chopped (1 cup)

2 tablespoons butter

1 large egg, lightly beaten

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon raspberry liqueur or raspberry-flavored syrup

2 teaspoons vanilla

Chocolate Buttercream (recipe follows; optional)

1. Prepare Chocolate Pastry. Divide pastry into 24 balls. Evenly press each ball into bottom and up sides of 24 ungreased $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch muffin cups, using floured fingers if necessary; set aside.
2. For filling: In a small saucepan heat and stir chocolate and butter over medium-low heat until melted and smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in egg, sugar, liqueur and vanilla. Spoon 1 scant tablespoon filling into each pastry shell.
3. Bake in a 375° oven 12 to 15 minutes or until pastry is firm and filling is puffed. Cool in pans 10 minutes. Run sharp thin-blade knife around tassies edges; carefully remove from pans. Cool on wire rack. If you like, top with a small amount of Chocolate Buttercream.
4. To store, refrigerate tassies in single layer in airtight container up to 3 days.

Makes 24 tassies.

Chocolate Pastry: In a food processor, combine $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder and dash of salt; pulse

to combine. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold butter, cut up. Cover; process until crumbly. In a small bowl, whisk 1 egg yolk with 2 tablespoons cold water. Add to processor; pulse until a dough ball forms (add water if dry). If necessary, cover and refrigerate until easy to handle.

Chocolate Buttercream: In a medium mixing bowl, beat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup softened butter on medium-high for 30 seconds. Gradually beat in 1 cup powdered sugar and 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder. Beat in 2 tablespoons milk. Gradually beat in 1 cup powdered sugar until piping consistency.

Nutrition facts per serving: 138 cal, 7 g fat, 30 mg chol, 52 mg sodium, 16 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.



Vanilla Sablés

PREP 40 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour

BAKE 11 minutes per batch

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup unsalted or salted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Demerara sugar or coarse raw sugar

1. In a medium bowl, combine flour, salt and baking powder. Set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add powdered sugar and vanilla. Beat until smooth, scraping sides of bowl as needed. Beat in as much flour mixture as you can easily; with spoon, stir in any remaining flour mixture.

3. Divide dough in half. On a large piece of waxed paper, shape one portion of dough into a 16-inch log about 1 inch in diameter. Cut log in half crosswise. Sprinkle half of the Demerara sugar on the sheet of waxed paper; roll each log in sugar to coat evenly. Wrap in plastic wrap. Repeat with remaining portion of dough. Chill logs for 1 to 24 hours.

4. With a thin sharp knife, cut each log into sixteen $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on parchment paper-lined or ungreased cookie sheets. Bake in a 350° oven for 11 to 13 minutes or until tops are firm and edges are just starting to brown.

Transfer cookies to wire racks to cool. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days or in the freezer up to 3 months. **Makes 64 cookies.**

Nutrition facts per cookie: 47 cal, 3 g fat, 8 mg chol, 11 mg sodium, 5 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 0 g pro.



Holiday Cranberry-Orange Slices

PREP 25 minutes **CHILL** 3 hours

BAKE 8 minutes per batch

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup dried cranberries, finely chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped pecans
- 2 teaspoons finely shredded orange peel

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar and salt. Beat until combined, scraping

bowl occasionally. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour. Stir in cranberries, pecans and orange peel.

2. Divide dough in half. Shape each half into a 9-inch-long roll. Wrap in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill for 3 hours or until firm enough to slice.

3. Cut rolls into ¼-inch slices with a serrated knife. Place slices 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in a 350° oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are firm and lightly browned. Cool on cookie sheet 1 minute. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool. **Makes 56 cookies.**

Nutrition facts per cookie: 68 cal, 4 g fat, 13 mg chol, 22 mg sodium, 7 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 1 g pro.



Toffee Blondies in a Jar

PREP 15 minutes BAKE 25 minutes

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup miniature semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts
- ½ cup toffee pieces or butterscotch-flavored pieces
- ¼ cup butter, melted and cooled
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

1. Layer in a 1-quart glass jar or canister the following ingredients: brown sugar, chocolate pieces, flour, baking powder, salt, pecans and toffee pieces. Tap jar gently on the counter to settle each layer before adding the next. Cover jar.

2. Store at room temperature up to 1 month. Or attach baking directions and give as a gift.

3. Grease an 8x8x2-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, combine butter, eggs and vanilla. Stir in jar contents. Spread into prepared pan. Bake in a 350° oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until set and golden brown and edges just begin to pull away from pan. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

Makes 16 servings.

Nutrition facts per bar:

202 cal, 10 g fat, 36 mg chol, 108 mg sodium, 27 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 3 g pro.



Lemon Curd Bars

PREP 30 minutes **BAKE** 23 minutes

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 10- to 12-ounce jar lemon curd
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup flaked coconut
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup slivered or sliced almonds or coarsely chopped pecans, toasted

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Add flour and baking powder; beat until just combined and mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Reserve $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of crumb mixture; set aside.

2. Press remaining crumb mixture into the bottom of a greased 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Bake in a 375° oven for 5 to 8 minutes or until the top is golden. Remove from oven. Spread lemon curd over hot crust to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the edges of the pan.

3. In a medium bowl, combine reserved crumb mixture, coconut and almonds. Sprinkle over lemon curd.

4. Bake 18 to 20 minutes more or until edges are golden and topping is browned. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars. Cover and store in the refrigerator. **Makes 32 bars.**

Nutrition facts per bar: 156 cal, 9 g fat, 23 mg chol, 18 mg sodium, 20 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 1 g pro.





Candy Cane Cheesecake

PREP 30 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes

COOL 2 hours **CHILL** Overnight

- 8 ounces white baking chocolate, coarsely chopped, or $\frac{1}{3}$ cups white baking pieces
- 2 cups finely crushed graham crackers
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, melted
- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 1 8-ounce carton mascarpone cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon peppermint extract
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely crushed hard peppermint candies
- 2 ounces white baking chocolate, coarsely chopped, or $\frac{1}{3}$ cup white baking pieces
- Crushed hard peppermint candies

1. In a heavy small saucepan, heat and stir 8 ounces white chocolate over low heat until melted and smooth. Remove from heat; set aside.

2. In a medium bowl, stir together graham crackers and butter until combined. Press cracker mixture onto bottom of a 9-inch springform pan. Bake in a 325° oven 10 minutes; remove. Cool on a wire rack.

3. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, mascarpone, sugar and salt with an electric mixer until combined. Beat in melted chocolate and extract until smooth, scraping sides of bowl. Add eggs one at a time, beating on low speed after each addition just until combined. Stir in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup candy.

4. Pour filling into crust-lined pan. Place pan in a shallow baking pan. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes or until the outside edge appears set when gently shaken.

5. Cool in pan 15 minutes. Loosen cake from sides of pan; cool 30 minutes

more. Remove sides of pan; cool completely. Cover and chill overnight.

6. Melt 2 ounces white chocolate in a heavy small saucepan over low heat. Drizzle over cheesecake. If you like, top with additional candy. **Makes 12 servings.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 629 cal, 43 g fat, 151 mg chol, 400 mg sodium, 54 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 11 g pro.

Very Very Berry Cheesecake

PREP 45 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour **COOL** 2 hours
CHILL Overnight

- 40 vanilla wafers
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 3 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup berry-flavored vodka, blackberry or cherry brandy, or orange juice
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 2 cups fresh raspberries, blackberries and/or blueberries
- 1 tablespoon berry-flavored vodka, blackberry or cherry brandy, or orange juice
- Fresh raspberries, blackberries and/or blueberries

1. In a food processor, process wafers and ¼ cup sugar until wafers are crushed. With processor running, add melted butter through feed tube. Stop processor; scrape sides, making sure crumbs are evenly moistened.

2. Press crumb mixture evenly onto the bottom and 2 inches up sides of a 9-inch springform pan. Bake in 350° oven

10 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Cover outside bottom and sides of springform pan with heavy-duty foil; set aside.

3. In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, 1 cup sugar and the vanilla with an electric mixer until combined. Beat in sour cream and ¼ cup vodka until smooth. Stir in eggs.

4. Pour half of filling into crust-lined pan. Sprinkle 1 cup of berries on top of filling. Top with remaining filling.

5. Place remaining 1 cup berries in food processor or blender. Process or blend until berries are smooth. Place a fine-mesh sieve over a small bowl. Press berries through sieve; discard seeds. Stir 1 tablespoon vodka into sieved berries. Drizzle berry mixture in a thin stream over top of cheesecake.

6. Place springform pan in a large roasting pan. (Make sure there is at least 1 inch between springform pan and edges of roasting pan.) Place roasting pan on oven rack. Carefully pour enough hot tap water into pan to come halfway up sides of springform pan.

7. Bake in a 350° oven for 60 to 70 minutes or until edge of cheesecake is firm and center appears set when lightly shaken. Remove pan from water bath; transfer to a wire rack and cool 15 minutes. Remove foil. Run a knife around edge of springform pan to loosen crust from sides; cool 30 minutes more. Remove sides of pan; cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate overnight.

8. If you like, garnish with additional fresh berries. **Makes 12 servings.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 413 cal, 28 g fat, 110 mg chol, 259 mg sodium, 32 g carbo, 2 g fiber, 6 g pro.

Black-Bottom Pecan Pie

PREP 30 minutes BAKE 1 hour

- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla
- 1 unbaked packaged pie crust
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light-color corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup pecan halves

1. In a medium bowl, beat 3 tablespoons butter with an electric mixer on

medium speed for 30 seconds. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, the cocoa powder and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Beat in two eggs and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla. Pour filling into crust. Cover edge of pie with foil to prevent overbrowning.

2. Bake in 350° oven 20 minutes or until filling top is set. Remove from oven.

3. In a medium bowl, beat two eggs. Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, the corn syrup, flour, 1 tablespoon melted butter and 1 teaspoon vanilla; mix well. Add pecans.

4. Spoon topping over filling. Bake 25 minutes. Remove foil. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until a knife inserted comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Cover; chill. **Makes 8 servings.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 464 cal, 25 g fat, 123 mg chol, 264 mg sodium, 57 g carbo, 2 g fiber, 6 g pro.



Buttermilk-Coconut Pie

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 52 minutes

STAND 15 minutes **COOL** 1 hour

- 1 unbaked packaged pie crust
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup flaked coconut

1. Line pastry with double thickness of foil. Bake in a 450° oven for 8 minutes. Remove foil. Bake 4 to 6 minutes more or until crust is light brown. Remove from oven. Cool on a wire rack. Reduce oven temperature to 350°.

2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Stir in sugar and flour. Remove from heat; set aside.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk eggs lightly until combined. Add buttermilk and vanilla; whisk lightly. Gradually whisk buttermilk mixture into butter mixture until smooth. Stir in coconut.

4. Place partially baked pastry shell on the oven rack. Carefully pour filling into shell. Cover edge of pie with foil to prevent overbrowning.

5. Bake in the 350° oven for 30 minutes. Remove foil; bake pie about 10 minutes more or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean. Cool slightly on a wire rack. Serve warm. **Makes 8 servings.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 464 cal, 26 g fat, 113 mg chol, 281 mg sodium, 55 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 5 g pro.

Peppermint Brownie Pie

Shown on cover.

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 55 minutes

COOL 20 minutes

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter or margarine
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup mint-flavored semisweet chocolate pieces
- 1 unbaked packaged pie crust
- Whipped cream

1. In a heavy small saucepan, melt butter and chocolate over low heat, stirring frequently. Cool 20 minutes.

2. In a mixing bowl, combine eggs, sugar, flour and vanilla. Stir in the chocolate mixture and chocolate pieces. Pour filling into crust.

3. Bake pie in a 350° oven about 55 minutes or until filling is evenly puffed and edges are slightly cracked. Cool on wire rack (center will sink slightly as pie cools). Serve with whipped cream. **Makes 10 servings.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 542 cal, 31 g fat, 98 mg chol, 150 mg sodium, 64 g carbo, 3 g fiber, 6 g pro.



Chai Cupcakes

PREP 20 minutes **BAKE** 16 minutes

COOL 5 minutes

- 1 package 2-layer-size white cake mix
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups half-and-half or light cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooking oil
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons chai spice blend
- Buttercream Frosting (recipe follows)
or purchased vanilla frosting
- Chai spice blend

- 1.** Line twenty-four $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch muffin cups with paper bake cups. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large mixing bowl, combine dry cake mix, half-and-half, cooking oil, eggs and $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons spice blend. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 2 minutes. Spoon into bake cups, filling each about two-thirds full.
- 3.** Bake in a 350° oven 16 to 18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool cupcakes in pans on wire racks 5 minutes. Remove cupcakes from pans; cool completely on wire racks. Frost cooled cupcakes with Buttercream Frosting and sprinkle with additional chai spice blend. **Makes 24 cupcakes.**

Buttercream Frosting: In a large mixing bowl, beat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup softened butter with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Gradually add 1 cup powdered sugar, beating well. Beat in 3 tablespoons milk and $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla. Gradually beat in 3 cups powdered sugar. Beat in additional milk to reach spreading consistency, if necessary.

Nutrition facts per cupcake: 305 cal, 12 g fat, 33 mg chol, 184 mg sodium, 48 g carbo, 0 g fiber, 2 g pro.

Gingerbread Muffins

PREP 10 minutes BAKE 15 minutes

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- Dash salt
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- ⅓ cup molasses
- ⅓ cup water
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- Sifted powdered sugar (optional)

1. Line eight 2½-inch muffin cups with paper bake cups; set aside. In a medium mixing bowl stir together flour, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda and salt; set aside.

2. In a small mixing bowl, stir together egg white, molasses, the water and oil. Stir molasses mixture into flour mixture just until blended. Spoon mixture into prepared muffin cups.

3. Bake in a 350° oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until muffins spring back when pressed lightly in center. If you like, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Makes 8 muffins.

Nutrition facts per muffin: 137 cal, 5 g fat, 0 mg chol, 82 mg sodium, 20 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.





Holiday Bread

PREP 40 minutes **RISE** 1 hour 30 minutes

STAND 10 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes

- 1 package active dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup warm water (105° to 115°)
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups milk
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- $5\frac{1}{4}$ to $5\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raisins
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla

1. In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in the warm water; set aside.

2. In a medium saucepan, heat and stir milk, granulated sugar and salt just until warm (120° to 130°). Using a wooden spoon, stir milk mixture, egg and 2 cups of the flour into the yeast mixture until combined. Stir in walnuts and raisins. Stir in as much of the remaining flour as you can.

3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead in enough remaining flour to make a moderately stiff dough that is smooth and elastic (6 to 8 minutes total). Shape dough into a ball. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turning once to grease surface of dough. Cover; let rise in a warm place until double in size (1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours).

4. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Cover; let rest 10 minutes. Meanwhile, grease a large baking sheet. Roll dough to a 12x10-inch rectangle. Cut crosswise

into twelve (1-inch) strips. On the prepared baking sheet, twist and weave five of the strips together, pinching together the ends and tucking them under the braid. Twist and weave four more strips together and place atop the first layer. Braid the remaining three dough strips and place atop the first two. Brush the loaf lightly with oil. Use four wooden or metal skewers, pushing in from the top, to secure layers.

5. Cover and let rise in a warm place until nearly double in size (30 to 45 minutes). Bake in 325° oven 40 to 45 minutes or until bread sounds hollow when lightly tapped. Remove skewers; cool on wire rack.

6. In a small bowl, combine powdered sugar, milk and vanilla. Stir in additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, until icing is of drizzling consistency. Drizzle over bread. **Makes 1 loaf.**

Nutrition facts per serving: 191 cal, 5 g fat, 10 mg chol, 107 mg sodium, 34 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 5 g pro.

Eggnog Muffins

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 18 minutes

COOL 5 minutes

- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup eggnog
- ½ cup butter, melted and cooled
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon rum extract
- Nutmeg-Streusel Topping (recipe follows)

1. Grease twelve 2½-inch muffin cups or line with paper bake cups; set aside. In a medium bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and nutmeg. Make a well in center of flour mixture; set aside.

2. In another bowl, combine eggs, eggnog, melted butter, vanilla and rum extract. Add egg mixture all at once to the flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Spoon batter into prepared muffin cups, filling each two-thirds full. Sprinkle streusel topping over batter in cups.

3. Bake in a 375° oven 18 to 20 minutes or until golden and a toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean. Cool muffin cups on a wire rack 5 minutes. Remove muffins; serve warm. **Makes 12 muffins.**

Nutmeg-Streusel Topping: In a small bowl, mix ⅓ cup all-purpose flour, ⅓ cup sugar and ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg. Using pastry blender, cut in 2 tablespoons butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Nutrition facts per muffin: 312 cal, 12 g fat, 73 mg chol, 132 mg sodium, 46 g carbo, 1 g fiber, 5 g pro.



Gingerbread Scones

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried currants or raisins
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped crystallized ginger
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mild-flavored molasses
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon water
- Coarse sugar (optional)

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine flours, brown sugar, baking powder, ground ginger, salt, cinnamon and

baking soda. Using a pastry blender, cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in currants and crystallized ginger. Make a well in the center of the mixture.

2. In a small bowl, stir together egg, whipping cream and molasses; add all at once to flour mixture. Using a fork, stir until ingredients are combined.

3. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface. Knead for 10 to 12 strokes or until nearly smooth. Divide dough in half. Lightly pat or roll each half to a 5- to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch circle, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick. Cut each circle into six wedges. Place wedges 2 inches apart on a large ungreased baking sheet. Combine egg white and water. Brush on tops of scones and sprinkle with coarse sugar, if you like.

4. Bake in a 375° oven 12 to 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into scones comes out clean. **Makes 12 scones.**

Nutrition facts per scone: 210 cal, 8 g fat, 42 mg chol, 214 mg sodium, 32 g carbo, 2 g fiber, 4 g pro.



Chocolate-Pecan Coffee Cake

PREP 30 minutes **BAKE** 1 hour 5 minutes

COOL 50 minutes

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 8-ounce carton sour cream
- Coconut-Pecan Topping (recipe follows)

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add the sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Beat until well combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Alternately add flour and sour cream to butter mixture, beating on low speed after each addition just until combined.

2. Spread half of batter into greased and floured 9-inch springform pan. Sprinkle with half of the Coconut-Pecan Topping. Spoon remaining batter in mounds over coconut mixture. Spread evenly. Sprinkle with remaining Coconut-Pecan Topping.

3. Bake in a 350° oven 65 minutes or until a long wooden skewer inserted near the center comes out clean. If necessary, cover cake with foil for the last 15 to 20 minutes to prevent overbrowning. Cool on a wire rack for 20 minutes. Run a thin metal spatula around edge of cake. Remove sides of the pan. Cool about 30 minutes more.

Makes 12 servings.

Coconut-Pecan Topping: In a large bowl, combine 1 cup all-purpose flour, 1 cup packed brown sugar and 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon. Cut in ½ cup cold butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs; stir in ¾ cup semisweet chocolate pieces, ½ cup flaked coconut, and ½ cup chopped pecans.

Nutrition facts per serving: 561 cal, 29 g fat, 85 mg chol, 325 mg sodium, 71 g carbo, 3 g fiber, 6 g pro.



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