



THE 1ST ANNUAL

12 RECIPE HOLIDAY COOKIE SERIES

December 2023



EXPLORATION
COMMONS
AT 50 EAST

INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 1 cup butter softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar sifted
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon red food coloring
- crushed candy canes, if desired

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 375°F.
- **Dough:** In a large bowl using a mixer, beat the butter until softened. Add powdered sugar and beat until fluffy. Add the egg, vanilla, peppermint extract, and salt and mix in. Add flour and beat until it forms a dough.
- **Color Dough:** Divide the dough in half. Take 1/2 half of the dough out of the bowl. With the remaining half, mix in the red food coloring until well combined. Cover each half and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
- **Make Candy Canes:** Take 1 teaspoon of red dough and 1 teaspoon of white dough. Roll each into a 4-inch rope. Place both ropes beside each other and push together. GENTLY roll one end away from you and the other end toward you to form a twisted rope. Place on an un-greased baking sheet. Form top into a cane shape.
- **Bake:** Bake in a preheated 375° F oven for 8-10 minutes or until edges start to slightly turn golden brown. Remove from oven, sprinkle with crushed candy canes if desired and cool.



INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup packed light or dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour (spooned & leveled)
- 1/2 cup + 2 Tablespoons unsweetened natural cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup mini or regular size semi-sweet chocolate chips

Rolling

- 3 Tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar, for rolling

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar together on medium high speed until fluffy and light in color, about 2-3 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla extract, and then beat on high speed until combined. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl as needed.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt together until combined. With the mixer running on low speed, slowly pour into the wet ingredients. Beat on low until combined and then beat in the chocolate chips. The cookie dough will be thick and very sticky. Cover dough tightly and chill in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours and up to 3 days. Chilling is mandatory for this sticky cookie dough.
3. Remove cookie dough from the refrigerator and allow to sit at room temperature for 10 minutes. If the cookie dough chilled longer than 3 hours, let it sit at room temperature for about 20 minutes. This makes the chilled cookie dough easier to scoop and roll.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Line large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. (Always recommended for cookies.) Set aside.

5. Scoop and roll dough into balls, about 1.5 Tablespoons of dough each. A medium cookie scoop is helpful here. Roll each ball very lightly in granulated sugar, then generously in the confectioners' sugar. Place 3 inches apart on the baking sheets.
6. Bake the cookies for 11-12 minutes or until the edges appear set and the centers still look soft. Tip: If they aren't really spreading by minute 9, remove them from the oven and lightly bang the baking sheet on the counter 2-3x. This helps initiate that spread. Return to the oven to continue baking.
7. Cool cookies for 5 minutes on the baking sheet, and then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely. The cookies will slightly deflate as they cool.
8. Cookies stay fresh covered at room temperature for up to 1 week.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Butter 2 Sticks, Softened
- 1 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 Egg
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- ½ teaspoon Almond Extract
- 3 ¼ cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon Baking Powder
- ½ teaspoon Salt
- Standard size marshmallows
- Decorating items (sprinkles, chocolate piped frosting, etc)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar with an electric stand mixer or hand mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, and vanilla and almond extracts.
2. Mix together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add dry ingredients to butter mixture 1 cup at a time, mixing after each addition. Once the dough mixes into a ball, you're done mixing. Test that the dough is sticky and holds a shape but doesn't stick to your fingers. Do not chill dough.
3. Divide the dough into 2 balls, then form them into 2 inch thick rectangles discs. This will keep the dough from falling apart while rolling, and the rectangular shape will help you cut more cookies out of each rolling.
4. On a floured surface, roll each ball into a circle approximately 12 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick. Dip the cookie cutter in flour before each use and cut out shapes.
5. Cut 2" circles with a cookie cutter.
6. Bake the cookies on an ungreased baking sheet(s) with parchment paper (optional). Bake for 8-11 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned. Move the cookies to a cooling rack to cool completely.

DECORATING:

1. Mix a small batch of royal icing or use buttercream (make or purchased)
2. Coat the top of each cookie with white frosting or icing.
3. Add a marshmallow to one side of the cookie. This is the snowman's head!
4. Add decorations like nose, eyes, piped arms on the cookie, and button sprinkles on the cookie/melted 'body' of the snowman.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup peanut butter smooth, 240g
- 5 tbsp unsalted butter 70g
- 2 cups powdered sugar 240g
- 1 tsp vanilla extract 5mL
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate 340g
- 2 tbsp coconut oil

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cream the peanut butter and butter together with the vanilla extract.
2. Add powdered sugar and mix on low until combined. Scrape down bowl and mix again.
3. Pinch off tablespoon sized pieces and roll into balls. About 20g if you're weighing.
4. Transfer balls to a baking sheet and chill until firm. At least 20 minutes.
5. Add chocolate and coconut oil to a medium bowl and melt on 50% power in the microwave. Stir to combine and set aside to cool to room temperature.
6. Use a skewer or toothpick to dip the peanut butter balls into the chocolate. Leave a bit of the peanut butter exposed for that signature buckeye pea look.
7. Chill to allow the chocolate to firm up and enjoy. If you want to remove the holes left from the skewers, run a small knife or spatula over the tops

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup butter (softened ((2 sticks))
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup raspberry jam (can use any flavor jam)

DIRECTIONS:

Get prepped

1. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Make the dough

1. Cream the butter and sugar together until pale and slightly fluffy.
2. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, beating in between each.
3. Add the vanilla extract.
4. While mixing, add the salt and flour gradually until well incorporated.

Scoop, roll and fill

1. Using a small cookie scoop, scoop the dough into even sized balls and place on the baking sheets leaving space (about 2 inches) between each.
2. Using your thumb, make an indent into each cookie without pressing all the way to the bottom.
3. Spoon raspberry jam into each cookie.

Bake

1. Bake for 12-15 minutes. Cookies will be lightly browned underneath.
2. Remove from oven and cool for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup shortening (Crisco)
- 1 ¼ cup light brown sugar packed
- ¾ cup creamy peanut butter
- 3 tablespoon milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1 ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- chocolate covered pretzel twists (for the antlers)
- Candy for noses
- chocolate chips (for the eyes)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 375F degrees. Spray baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a separate bowl, combine flour with baking soda and salt. Using a fork, stir well.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer or a large mixing bowl, combine shortening, brown sugar, peanut butter, milk and vanilla. Beat at medium speed until smooth and well-blended.
4. Add in egg and mix well.
5. Slowly begin adding the flour mixture to the peanut butter mixture. Only adding a little at a time as you mix it to make sure flour doesn't fly everywhere. Don't overmix, just stir until combined.
6. Form dough into 1-inch balls and place on cookie sheet about 2 inches apart. I find this easiest with a spring loaded cookie scoop.
7. Then, to make the reindeer face, pinch the bottom half of the cookie. Then smush it down a bit with your hand.
8. Bake cookies (one sheet at a time) for about 8 minutes.
9. While the cookies are baking, start getting all your embellishments organized. As soon as the cookies come out, you are going to be working kinda fast.
10. Once cookies are finished, while still warm, start adding the noses (red candies). Then add the chocolate chip eyes fairly close to the nose. Just make sure you put them in pointy side up.
11. Now add the antlers. This part can be just a bit tricky because those antlers are heavy. So it's important that you don't put them too far to the edge of the cookie. They need to be solidly on the cookie, near the eyes, and gently apply a bit of pressure to make sure they stay in place. Allow to finish cooking.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Butter 2 Sticks, Softened
- 1 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 Egg
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- ½ teaspoon Almond Extract
- 3 ¼ cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon Baking Powder
- ½ teaspoon Salt

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar with an electric stand mixer or hand mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, and vanilla and almond extracts.
2. Mix together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add dry ingredients to butter mixture 1 cup at a time, mixing after each addition. Once the dough mixes into a ball, you're done mixing. Test that the dough is sticky and holds a shape but doesn't stick to your fingers. Do not chill dough.
3. Divide the dough into 2 balls, then form them into 2 inch thick rectangles discs. This will keep the dough from falling apart while rolling, and the rectangular shape will help you cut more cookies out of each rolling.
4. On a floured surface, roll each ball into a circle approximately 12 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick. Dip the cookie cutter in flour before each use and cut out shapes.
5. Cut several sizes of cookies with a wavy-edged cutter. You want at least three to four sizes in order to have a stack that gets smaller as the cookies stack to the top. We stack the cookies after baking.
6. Bake the cookies on an ungreased baking sheet(s) with parchment paper (optional). Bake for 8-11 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned. Move the cookies to a cooling rack to cool completely.

DECORATING:

1. Mix a small batch of royal icing with green coloring.
2. Carefully dip the tops of each cookie in the royal icing and top with sprinkles as 'ornaments'.
3. Before the icing dries, stack three to four cookies, starting with the largest size on bottom. Allow to dry completely before eating.

INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- ¼ cup milk, room temperature
- 2 ½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon anise extract

Frosting

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- ½ pound confectioner's sugar
- 6 tablespoons milk
- Colored sprinkles

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
- In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream together the butter and the sugar.
- Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well. Stir in the anise.
- Add 1/3 of the flour and mix well. Add ½ of the milk and mix well. Repeat. Add remaining flour until combined.
- Turn dough onto a floured board and knead until dough is firm and not sticky, adding more flour if necessary.
- Break off a handful of dough at a time and roll into a long pencil, cut into 5-6 pieces. Shape into an 'S' shape and place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake approximately 8-10 minutes. Remove to cool on rack, then frost.
- Frosting: In a large bowl, melt 1 tablespoon of butter. Add in ½ pound confectioner's sugar. Stir in milk to desired consistency. Brush onto cookies. Apply icing to 2-3 cookies, add sprinkles and repeat with remaining cookies. Return to rack to set.
- Cool completely and store in an airtight container.

NOTES: These are a delicious cake/bread like cookie to have with breakfast or with a cup of tea or coffee. Traditionally made for Christmas and Easter in many Italian homes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup pure cane sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1½teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper (Pfeffer)
- 1/8 teaspoon allspice
- 1/8 teaspoon ginger
- powdered sugar for dusting

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 300°F and line cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- Beat eggs and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes.
- Add spices, mixing to combine.
- Whisk baking powder and flour together, then add ½ cup at a time until incorporated, the mixture will be thick and stiff. Knead in the mixer on low for 2 minutes.
- Scoop using a small cookie scoop. Arrange on parchment lined baking sheet.
- Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes, remove and cool for 5 minutes, then carefully coat in powdered sugar if desired. Let cool completely on wire rack.

Notes: Store these cookies in an airtight container for 4 days before serving. The flavors deepen even more. They do get hard the longer they sit. They become more like a biscotti, a great tea or coffee dipping cookie.

Two tablespoons of diced candied orange or lemon peel and/or ¼ teaspoon ground anise see can be added to the dough.

INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 12 tablespoons butter, softened
- 6 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 1/2 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate mini morsels
- 1/4 cup finely chopped nuts
- Powdered sugar (for coating)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 375°F.
- Beat butter, sugar, vanilla extract, and salt in large mixer bowl until creamy.
- Gradually beat in flour.
- Stir in morsels and nuts.
- Shape level tablespoons of dough into 1 1/4-inch balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets.
- Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until cookies are set and lightly browned. Remove from oven. Sift powdered sugar over hot cookies on baking sheets. Cool on baking sheets for 10 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely.
- Roll in powdered sugar, if desired.
- Store in airtight containers.

INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder
- Assorted Jolly Rancher Hard Candies, crushed

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare two baking sheets by lining them with parchment paper.
2. Cream the butter, then gradually add the sugar, beating until light.
3. Add the egg, vanilla, and cream. Beat thoroughly.
4. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder.
5. Add to flour to the butter/sugar mixture and blend well.
6. Prepare a clean flat surface by covering it with flour.
7. Using a floured rolling pin, roll dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick.
8. Using the larger cookie cutter, cut shapes into the dough.
9. Transfer the cut-outs to prepared cookie sheets.
10. Center the smaller cookie cutter in the larger cut-out and gently remove.
11. Bake cookies for 5 minutes, until slightly set.
12. Remove tray from oven and with a small spoon sprinkle crushed Jolly Rancher candy into the center of each cookie.
13. Return tray to oven and bake for 5-7 minutes more, until candy has melted and cookies are golden.
14. Allow to cool on baking sheet for about 5 minutes before setting on wire rack to cool completely.

INGREDIENTS:

Cookies

- 1 cup butter, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Food color, if desired
- Currants, raisins, candies, colored sugar, finely chopped nuts, candied fruit or fruit peel, if desired

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 400°F.
2. Beat butter and sugar in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed, or mix with spoon.
3. Stir in flour, salt, egg, and almond extract.
4. Divide dough and stir in a few drops of food color, as desired.
5. Place dough in cookie press. Form desired shapes on ungreased cookie sheet. Decorate as desired.
6. Bake 5 to 8 minutes or until set but not brown.
7. Immediately remove from cookie sheet to wire rack.
8. To decorate cookies after baking, use a drop of corn syrup to attach decorations to cookies.

Cookie Press Instructions:

Roll your dough into a cylinder shape that is about the size of your cookie press.

Insert dough into your cookie press opening.

Squish it down to fill in all the air pockets. Take off any excess.

Put on your cookie stencil and twist on the top of your press until tight.

Place the cookie press down on the cookie sheet and hold firm.

Press down on the lever of your press until you feel the dough release through the stencil. Gently lift up press to reveal the cookie. This may take a little practice.

Repeat until you run out of dough. Change discs as desired.

Add sprinkles to your cookies before baking if you want.