



...Fresh from the kitchens of our members – December 2015

Thank you to all of our members and guests for making our Annual Holiday Cookie Swap a marvelous success. There were many cookies swapped, stories shared, and happy memories made - a perfect recipe to start the holiday season!

Whether you bake for yourself, family and friends, coworkers, or neighbors, there is something about sharing our favorite cookies, recipes, and traditions that make this season just a little extra special

Nibby Buckwheat Butter Cookies | Shared by Helen Rennie

From the book *Pure Dessert* by Alice Medrich

Introduction

Bits of roasted cocoa beans are a perfect complement to the nutty flavor of buckwheat. Since buckwheat flour is low in gluten, it works like cornstarch (but with flavor!) to give cookies a fine sandy texture that is crunchy yet very tender. Serve the cookies with blackberry sorbet.

Ingredients

- 1¼ cups (5.6 ounces) all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup (3 ounces) buckwheat flour
- ½ lb. (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- ⅔ cup sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅓ cup cacao nibs
- 1½ tsp. pure vanilla extract



Steps

1. Whisk the all-purpose and buckwheat flours together in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, with the back of a large spoon or with an electric mixer, beat the butter with the sugar and salt for about 1 minute, until smooth and creamy but not fluffy. Mix in the nibs and vanilla. Add the flours and mix just until incorporated. Scrape the dough into a mass and, if necessary, knead it with your hands a few times, just until smooth.
3. Form the dough into a 12 by 2-inch log. Wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or, preferably, overnight.
4. Position the racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Line the baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Use a sharp knife to cut the cold dough log into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place the cookies at least 1½ inches apart on the baking sheets.
6. Bake until the cookies are just beginning to color at the edges, 12 to 14 minutes, rotating the baking sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through the baking. Cool the cookies in the pans on a rack, or slide the parchment liners carefully onto the rack to free up the pans. Let cool completely. The cookies are delicious fresh but even better the next day. They can be stored in an airtight container for at least 1 month.

Gingerbread Chip Biscotti Cookies | An original recipe by Lynne Gassiraro

3c flour
1 tbsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
½ c butter (softened)
½ c dark brown sugar (firmly-packed)
1 tbsp ground ginger
1 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp cloves
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
½ c molasses
½ c mini chocolate chips or crystallized ginger bits (optional)
Sanding sugar

Preheat the oven to 350. Line a large cookie sheet with parchment.

In a small bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.

In a standing mixer bowl, combine the butter, sugar, brown sugar, and spices. Beat on medium, scraping the bowl as needed with a rubber spatula, until well-combined.

Reduce the speed to low and add the eggs. Scrape the bowl and then beat on medium until incorporated. Add the molasses and vanilla. Beat on medium-high until mixed thoroughly.

To this, add the flour mixture and then beat at low speed increasing to medium-high until mixed well. Stir in the chocolate chips on low. The batter will be sticky.

Divide dough in half onto the parchment paper. Using dampened hands, shape each half into a thick rectangular log about 12" long and 2" wide. The dough will spread. Sprinkle the damp tops liberally with sanding sugar.

Bake 22-25min, turning halfway through baking until the logs are dry to the touch and slightly cracked on top. Remove from the oven and let them cool for 5-10min. Reduce the oven to 325. Using a spatula, carefully transfer the log onto a cutting board. Using a sharp knife, cut about 12 ½" biscotti on a slight diagonal (trim off the two ends on each log). Place the cookies cut side down back on the parchment and return to the oven for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven, flip the cookies to the other cut side, and return to the oven for another 7-10min until the cookies are dry and crisp. Cool completely.

Cream Cheese Spritz| Recipe via Good Housekeeping

Prep: 25 minutes

Bake: Approx. 12 minutes per batch

Makes: About 10 dozen cookies

(* About 35 cal, 4g carbs, 2g fat (1g sat), 20mg sodium)

1 c butter (2 sticks), softened

1 pkg (8 oz.) full-fat cream cheese, softened

1 c sugar

½ tsp salt

1 lg egg yolk

1 ½ tsp vanilla extract

2 ½ c all-purpose flour

Food coloring

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F
2. With mixer on med-high speed, beat butter, cream cheese, sugar, and salt until creamy. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla, scraping down side of bowl. With mixer on low speed, beat in flour until combined. Tint with food coloring as desired.
3. Load about ½ of batter into cookie press. Press cookies, about 2" apart onto lg. cookie sheet.
4. Bake 12-18 minutes or until deep golden brown around edges. Cool on cookie sheet on wire rack for 10min. With spatula, transfer foodies to rack to cool completely. Repeat pressing, baking, and cooling with remaining dough.
5. Store in airtight container up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 months.

Pecan Balls| Recipe via Good Housekeeping

Makes: About 4 dozen cookies

In step 2 of Cream Cheese Spritz (please see previous recipe), after beating in flour, mix in 1 1/2 c pecans (very finely chopped). Do not tint. In step 3, with sm (1tbsp) cookie scoop, form dough into balls and place on cookie sheet 2" apart. In step 4, roll cooled baked cookies in 1c confectioners' sugar. Store in airtight container up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 month.



Cookie S'Mores | [Recipe via Good Housekeeping](#)

Makes: About 3 dozen cookies

In step 2 of Cream Cheese Spritz, add 1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon to butter. Do not tint. In step 3, with sm (1tbsp) cookie scoop, form dough into balls and place on cookie sheets, 1" apart. Flatten tops slightly. In step 4, brush flat sides of half of cooled, baked cookies with 3oz melted semisweet chocolate. Spread flat sides of remaining cooled baked cookies with ½ c marshmallow crème. Sprinkle with 1/8 tsp salt. Sandwich cookies together. Chill to set, 2 hours. Store in airtight container between layers of waxed paper up to 3 days, or freeze up to 1 month.

Cinnamon Stars | [Recipe via Good Housekeeping](#)

Makes: About 10 dozen cookies

In step 2 of Cream Cheese Spritz, add 1tsp ground cinnamon, ½ tsp ground ginger, and ½ tsp ground allspice to butter. Do not tint. In step 3, after pressing (but before baking), sprinkle with ¼ c coarse sugar. Store in airtight container up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 months.



Christmas Macarons | Recipe via Good Housekeeping

Prep: 25 minutes plus standing and cooling

Bake: About 18 minutes per batch

Makes: About 3 dozen macarons

(*About 60 cal, 1g protein, 9g carbs, 9g fat (1g salt), 1g fiber, 20mg sodium)

1 c slivered almonds

2 c lightly packed confectioners' sugar

3 lg egg whites, at room temperature

¼ tsp salt

7 drops green liquid food coloring

¼ tsp almond extract

4 oz (4 sq) bittersweet chocolate, melted

1. Preheat oven to 300°F. Line 2 lg cookie sheets with parchment paper.
2. In food processor with knife blade attached, process almonds and 1c sugar until powdery, occasionally scraping down bowl. Add remaining sugar; pulse until combined. Transfer to lg bowl.
3. In mixer bowl, with mixer on med speed, beat egg whites and salt until soft peaks form. Beat in food coloring and almond extract. At high speed, beat just until stiff (but not dry) peaks form. With rubber spatula, fold egg whites into almond mixture to blend. Batter will be pourable and sticky.
4. Transfer batter to pastry bag fitted with ½" round tip. Holding bag about ½" above parchment, pipe 1" rounds, 1 ½" apart (batter will spread). Let stand 20min.
5. Bake, 1 cookie sheet at a time, 18-19 min or until bubbles around bases of macarons are firm to the touch but tops are not browned. Cool on wire rack. Repeat with second cookie sheet.
6. When cookies are cool, spread chocolate on bottoms of half of macarons (about ½ tsp for each). Top each with another macaron. Let stand 45 min to set chocolate.
7. Store in airtight container up to 3 days or freeze up to 1 month.

Peppermint Chocolate Shortbread

8oz cold butter
½ c sugar
1 ½ c flour
Pinch salt
½ c sifted cocoa powder
1 tsp peppermint extract
1/3 c sprinkles (optional)

Combine butter and sugar in a stand-mixer bowl and mix on low speed for 15 seconds using the paddle attachment.

Add flour, salt, and coca and continue to mix for 4-6 minutes until it comes together (it may take longer but it will all come together).

Add peppermint extract and sprinkles. Mix until just combined.

Roll dough into a log, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until very firm (at least 1 hour).

Preheat oven to 250°.

Slice cookies into rounds and bake for 45-60 minutes, depending on thickness.

Mini Chocolate Truffles with Cognac | From *Cakes, Cookies, Custards, and Chocolate* (pg 409)

½ c semisweet chocolate morsels (about 3 ounces)
3 tbsp heavy cream
1 tbsp cognac
1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

In a microwave oven, heat the chocolate and cream in a microwaveable bowl for about 45 seconds to melt the chocolate and heat the cream. Add the cognac and mix well with a rubber spatula until very smooth. Let cool, then refrigerate for about 1 hour, until the mixture is hard.

Using a small spoon, scoop out truffles the size of a medium olive and drop them onto a piece of plastic wrap (you should have about 15). Using your fingers, press each truffle into a rough, irregular ball so it resembles an actual truffle (the prized fleshy fungus eaten as a delicacy). Sprinkle the cocoa powder and shake the plastic wrap to roll and coat the truffles all over with it.

Arrange the truffles in a single layer in a container with a lid. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Rum/Bourbon Balls | Shared by Anne Rarich

Yields 48 balls

2 ¼ c vanilla wafer crumbs
1c finely-chopped pecans
½ c rum or bourbon
1c confectionary sugar
3 tbsp cocoa
2 tbsp light corn syrup

1. Finely chop vanilla wafers and pecans and set aside.
2. Place wet ingredients in blender and mix.
3. Put dry in with the liquid from blender and mix well.
4. Hand-shape dough into balls and roll in confectionary sugar.
5. Store in airtight container.

Anago Bistro's Lime Snickerdoodles | Shared by Isabel Chesak

Makes: About 2 ½ dozen cookies

1 ½ c all-purpose flour
1 tsp cream of tartar
½ tsp baking soda
pinch of salt
½ c unsalted butter
¾ c sugar
2 tbsp lime juice
1 tsp grated lime zest
1 egg
1 tbsp heavy cream
Sugar

Onto a piece of wax paper, sift flour, cream of tartar, baking powder, and salt.

With an electric mixer, beat butter and ¾ c sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in lime juice and zest, egg, cream, and flour mixture. Cover and refrigerate until well-chilled and dough can be shaped (2 hours – overnight). Preheat oven to 350 degrees. With wet hands, shape dough into 1 inch balls. Roll in sugar. Arrange 2 inches apart on lightly-greased cookie sheets. Bake 12-15 minutes or until edges start to turn golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.

Gail Simmons' Chocolate Butterscotch Shortbread | Shared by Rachel Elias (via *People Magazine*)

Makes: 32 cookies

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

2 sticks unsalted butter, softened

$\frac{3}{4}$ c dark-brown sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

2 c flour

1 tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ c butterscotch chips

8 oz dark chocolate, melted

1. Preheat oven to 300°. In the bowl of a stand mixer (using the paddle attachment), beat butter and sugar on medium-high speed until light in color and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
2. Add vanilla, reduce speed to low, and slowly add flour and salt until just combined. Mix in butterscotch chips and stir until evenly distributed, scraping down paddle if needed.
3. Grease a 9x9-in. baking pan. Using a rubber spatula, press dough evenly into pan and refrigerate for 20 minutes. Score dough into eights in one direction and quarters in the other, to make 32 rectangular cookies. Pierce dough all over with a fork.
4. Bake until firm and slightly golden brown around the edges, 50-60 minutes. Immediately cut through all scoring to separate cookies. Let cool completely in pan.
5. Remove cookies and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Dip half of each cookie in chocolate, gently scraping off any excess, and place back on baking sheet. Refrigerate until chocolate is set, about 30 minutes. Cookies can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to two weeks.



Cappuccino Biscotti | Shared by Maria Armstrong

From Isabelle Boucher's Crumb: A Food Blog

Serves: 40

2 c flour
½ c sugar
½ c brown sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp instant coffee granules
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt
¼ c cold butter, cut into small cubes
1 c milk chocolate chips
½ c chopped toasted walnuts
3 eggs, lightly beaten
3 tbsp coffee liqueur (optional)
Egg wash (1 egg, lightly beat with 2 tbsp milk)



1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, brown sugar, baking powder, coffee granules, cinnamon, and salt. Using a pastry cutter or two knives, cut in the butter until the mixture is fine and crumbly.
3. Stir in chocolate chips, walnuts, eggs, and coffee liqueur (if using) until the dough is just barely moistened. Turn out onto a lightly-floured surface and knead lightly until the dough is soft and slightly sticky, about 8-10 times.
4. Using floured hands, divide the dough into quarters. Shape each quarter into a 9" long roll. Place two rolls 4 inches apart on each of the prepared cookie sheets, gently flattening each one into a 2" wide slab. Brush the top and sides of each log with egg wash.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until the top of the slabs feel firm and dry. Remove from the oven, but do not turn off the heat. Set the slabs on a wire rack to cool for 10 minutes.
6. Once the slabs are cool enough to handle, cut crosswise into ½" thick slices. Place slices upright, ¼" apart, on cookie sheets.
7. Place the slices on the baking sheet, cut sides down, and return to the oven to bake for 10 minutes. Turn cookies over and continue baking for another 10 minutes (the cookies should be just a bit soft in the center – don't worry, they'll harden up once they cool). Transfer onto a wire rack to cool completely, then store in airtight containers.

Almond Cloud Cookies | Shared by Karen Moss

From King Arthur Flour

Prep: 15-20mins

Bake: 20-25mins

Makes: 21 cookies

10 oz almond paste

1 c sugar

¼ tsp salt

2 large egg whites, lightly beaten

¼ teaspoon gluten-free almond extract

1/8 tsp extra-strong bitter almond oil

Confectioners' sugar or glazing sugar (for topping)

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Lightly grease (or line with parchment) two baking sheets.

Blend the almond paste, sugar, and salt until the mixture becomes uniformly crumbly; this is best done with a stand mixer.

Add the egg whites gradually, while mixing, to make a smooth paste.

Stir in the flavorings.

Scoop the dough by heaping tablespoons onto the prepared pans.

Sprinkle the cookies heavily with confectioners' sugar, then use three fingers to press an indentation into the center of each cookie.

Bake the cookies for 20 to 25 minutes, until they're brown around the edges. Remove them from the oven and let them cool right on the pan.

Tips:

- The traditional version of these cookies features a hint of lemon or orange. Use 1/8 tsp lemon or orange oil in place of the bitter almond, if desired.
- For a chocolate-almond version: Add 1 cup of chocolate chips to the dough right after you've added the egg whites. Bake as directed. Yields 28 cookies.
- For an Italian pignoli version: Use about 2/3 cup (3 ½ ounces) pine nuts (pignoli), dip the tops of unbaked cookies in the nuts. Flatten them gently on the baking sheet and bake as directed.
- To make a pistachio or hazelnut version of this cookie, use 6 ounces almond paste and 4 ounces of pistachio or hazelnut paste; 2/3 cup sugar, and 1/8 to ¼ teaspoon pistachio or hazelnut flavoring.

Parmesan-Black Pepper Shortbread with Pistachios | Shared by Lisa J

Recipe by Jean Kressy

Makes: 28

Setting the block of dough on its side with the wide side facing up makes it easier to slice. The salted pistachios are a stylish and tasty addition. Serve these with drinks.

1 ½ c flour
3 ounces (¾ cup) finely-grated Parmesan
¼ tsp salt
1 ¼ tsp coarse ground black pepper
10 tbsp (1 stick plus 2 tbsp) unsalted butter, at room temperature
Flour (for sprinkling)
1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tsp milk or water
3 tbsp salted, roasted green pistachio nuts, finely chopped

1. In a bowl, whisk the flour, Parmesan, salt, and pepper to blend them.
2. In an electric mixer, beat the butter until smooth. With the mixer set on its lowest speed, beat in the flour mixture until blended.
3. On a lightly-floured counter, shape the dough into a 7-inch block that is 1 ½ inches wide. Wrap in foil; chill for 1 hour or until firm.
4. Set the oven at 325. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
5. Set the dough on its side. With a thin, sharp knife, cut the block in to ¼ inch slices. You should be able to make 28 rectangles. Arrange the slices on the baking sheet ½ inch apart. Brush with the egg mixture. Sprinkle about ¼ teaspoon pistachios in the center of each shortbread, pressing the nuts lightly into the dough.
6. Bake for 15 minutes or until the bottom edges are golden. Transfer the baking sheet to a wire rack to cool for 5 minutes. With a spatula, transfer the shortbreads from the paper to the rack to cool completely.

Walnut Puffs | Shared by Lee Van Kirk

Lee Van Kirk's family's favorite cookies from Joy of Cooking's "Pecan Puffs"

½ c butter
2 tbsp sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1 c walnuts, ground
1 c sifted flour

Preheat oven to 300°.

Beat butter until soft. Add sugar and blend until creamy. Add vanilla. Stir the walnuts and the flour into the butter mixture.

Roll the dough into small balls. Place balls on a greased cookie sheet and bake about 30 minutes.

Roll while hot in confectioners' sugar (to glaze, put sheet back into the oven for a minute). Cool and serve.

These freeze well!