

The Mini Page

Issue 50, 2019

Founded by Betty Debnam

**CELEBRATING
50 YEARS!**

Next Week:
Celebrate
Kwanzaa!

Everybody Loves Cookies!



photo by Jeff Sandquist

Mini Fact:

If you clean up spills, dirty dishes and trash as you go along, the final cleanup will be much easier.

Here at The Mini Page, we've been combing through our recipe box for holiday cookie recipes and baking tips to share with you. Your sweet treats will not only be delicious, but they'll also make great gifts that you can have fun creating. Cut out these classic recipes and save them to make every year!

Orange Muffin Cookies

You'll need:

- 2/3 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- juice of 1 medium orange
- grated peel of 1 orange

What to do:

1. Cream together butter and sugars in a medium bowl. Beat in eggs.
2. In a separate bowl, combine flour, salt, baking powder and nutmeg. Add to creamed mixture and mix well.
3. Stir in orange juice and peel, mixing well. Chill for at least 1 hour.
4. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
5. Roll dough into 1-inch balls and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Press balls with a fork until slightly flattened.
6. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Makes 2 dozen.



Reindeer Cookies

You'll need:

- 1 (16.5-ounce) tube refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- 32 tiny twisted pretzels
- 16 red cinnamon candies or red-coated chocolate candies

What to do:

1. Cut sugar cookie dough into 16 half-inch slices.
2. Bake as directed.
3. During the last 5 minutes of cooking, remove cookie sheet and gently press pretzel twists at the top of each cookie slice to create reindeer antlers. Place red candy in the center for the nose.
4. Finish baking for 5 minutes. Makes 16 cookies.



Tasty Shortbread Squares

You'll need:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour

What to do:

1. Mix butter and sugar in large bowl until smooth and creamy.
2. Add flour and mix well.
3. Press mixture in the bottom of a rectangular glass baking dish.
4. Bake in pre-heated 350-degree oven for 30 to 35 minutes. Makes 20 to 24 squares.



TIP: Present your cookies on a festive plate to make your gift more appealing. Or wrap them in colored cellophane and tie with a ribbon.

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Mini Baking Hints

- Wash your hands with soap before beginning.
- Wear an apron or an old shirt to protect your clothes.
- Take refrigerated ingredients, such as butter or cream cheese, out of the fridge before you begin. This will give them time to soften.



photo by Gregor Smith

- Read through the recipe first. Gather all the ingredients and supplies you'll need.
- Follow the instructions in the recipe carefully. In baking, it does matter how the ingredients are mixed together.
- Check cookies before the baking time is up. Some ovens are hotter than others.

Sending your treats?

- Cookies will arrive in good shape if you:
 - let them cool completely before packing.
 - include a slice of bread or apple to help them stay moist.
 - use waxed paper to wrap the cookies. Wrap each kind separately.
 - use bubble wrap or plastic peanuts to protect your gift.
 - send the package while the cookies are still fresh.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPbakingtips

At the library:

- "A World of Cookies for Santa: Follow Santa's Tasty Trip Around the World" by M.E. Furman

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of baking cookies are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



BAKING, BUTTER, CELLOPHANE, COOKIE, FESTIVE, FLOUR, GIFTS, HOLIDAY, INGREDIENTS, MOIST, RECIPE, RIBBON, SALT, SUGAR, SWEET, TIME, TIPS, TREATS, WRAP.

Y K M A T R I B B O N M P N P
T Q V E A H U G I F T S X A J
I C E F E S T I V E R U O L F
P W B U T T E R R A G U S V T
S L O S T N E I D E R G N I I
H O L I D A Y N M O I S T X M
A R G N I K A B F J S A L T E
Q C E L L O P H A N E J I R L
R E C I P E M P I T R E A T S
C P A R W R E I K O O C H L F

Cook's Corner

Peanut Butter Cocoa Crisps

You'll need:

- 1 (6-ounce) package milk chocolate chips
- 2/3 cup chunky peanut butter
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

- 4 1/2 cups cocoa crispy rice cereal



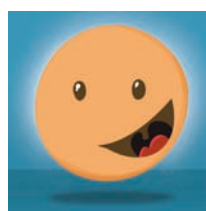
* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. In a medium pan on low heat, melt chocolate chips and stir in peanut butter and vanilla.
2. Slowly stir in cereal.
3. Pour mixture into a 9-by-9-inch pan coated with cooking spray. When it cools (about 20 minutes), cut into bars. Makes 9 to 12 bars.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.



1. group of trees (5) _____
2. one of a kind (7) _____
3. job around the house (5) _____
4. soft place to sit (5) _____
5. person who helps the sick (6) _____
6. walk behind (6) _____
7. computer tablet (4) _____

AL	LL	TOR	RE
CO	CHO	OW	SPE
IP	GR	UCH	AD
CI	DOC	FO	OVE

Answers: grove, special, grove, special, chore, couch, doctor, follow, follow, iPad.

Mini Jokes



- Carmen:** When does Santa finish delivering toys to all the children?
Carlos: Just in the St. Nick of time!

Eco Note



Japanese researchers say they have discovered a previously unknown creature living in the mouth of a whale shark. The shrimplike amphipod was discovered when a dive team used a suction pump to collect samples from the gills of a whale shark. Hundreds of the creatures were extracted by the divers. Researcher Ko Tomikawa says the shark's mouth is a great habitat for the guests because of the constant flow of water and the safety from predators it provides.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

For later:

Look in your newspaper for other favorite holiday cookie recipes.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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