

A VERY SPECIAL
COLLECTION OF

Holiday Sweets



Shared with you by some of your
favorite party ladies for a very
special cause!

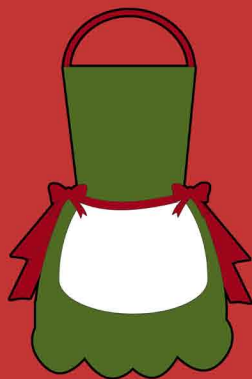
A Moment to Say "thanks"!

I never expected to receive such a wonderful response from all of our fellow party ladies when we first brought up the idea of this little cookbook. I know that everyone's so busy, and at this time of year, that only worsens. So, thank you, for taking the time to help us out. I know that together we're going to do something special for the children of St. Jude's Childrens Research Hospital!

To Melissa, my friend and partner in crime, I couldn't imagine a better person to work with on this project. You're hardworking, dedicated, and have an attitude that is admirable. Thanks for all the e-mails, texts, and tweets we've exchanged throughout this process.



Thanks again, everyone, and Merry Christmas to you all!
Carrie ~ The Sweet Spot Candy Bar



I am beyond honored to be involved with the "Holiday Sweets from the Party Peeps" cookbook to help raise money for St Jude Children's Research Hospital. Being in the party planning business I get to help put a smile on a child's face for their special day, to be able to help give back is more than heartwarming. Thinking of others during the holiday season is what it's all about, so I hope you enjoy all the yummy recipes that so many of our fellow "party peeps" have contributed. I would like to thank all the party ladies for taking time out to share your favorite holiday recipes along with such touching memories. I also want to send a loving thanks to the cookbook creator, Carrie from the Sweet Spot Candy Bar, without you we wouldn't have the ability to contribute to such a great cause, THANK YOU!



Happy & "sweet" Holidays!
Melissa C ~ Truly Chic Inspirations

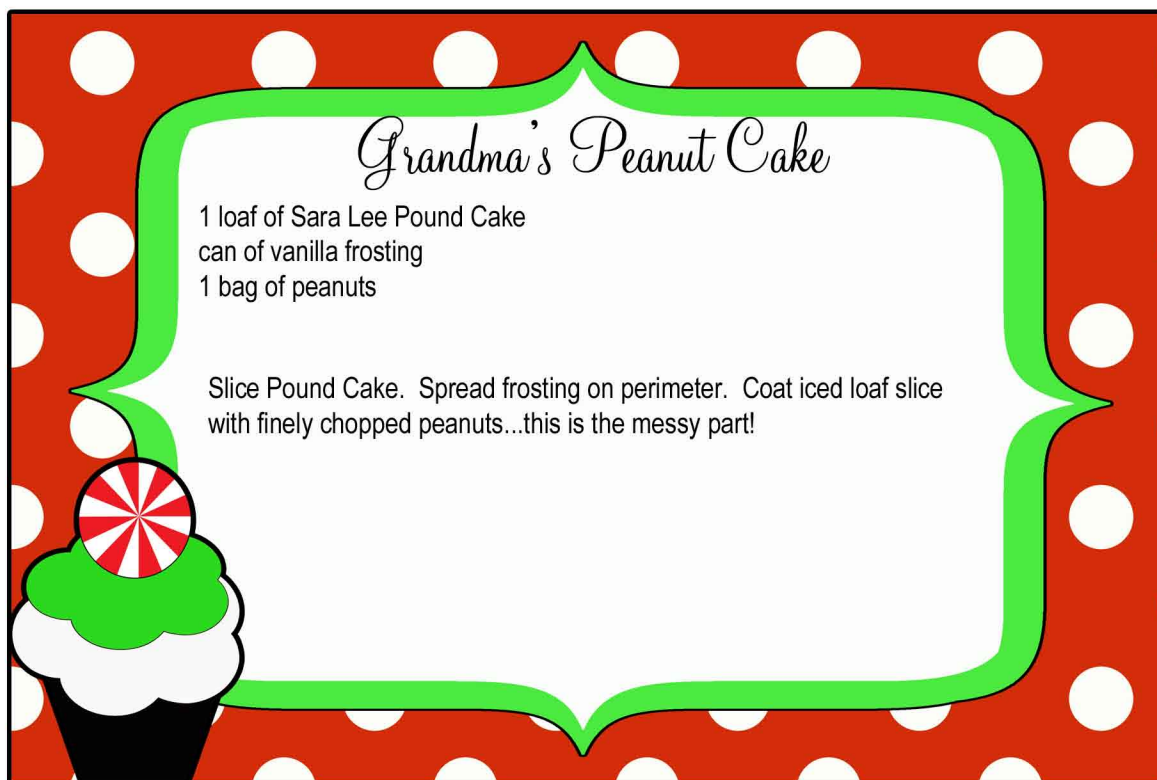
Bri, The Savvy Moms Guide, <http://thesavvymomsguide.blogspot.com>

I grew up in a traditional Italian family on my dad's side. We always used to have a plethora of cookies on Christmas (20-30 different cookies). My favorite were always Pizelle's. I loved making them with my grandma and cousins. This will be the 1st year I make them with my children.



Amy, The Savvy Moms Guide, <http://thesavvymomsguide.blogspot.com>

Everyone looks forward to this dessert. It is served at every Holiday and Gathering. I used to help make it when I was a little girl. The memory makes me "Smile~"!!



Dawn Smith, Not Just a Mommy, <http://dawnypoo.blogspot.com>

I'm sending you my sister's recipe for sweet potato cupcakes! My sister is a baker, so the cupcakes are named after her business, Kaleidoscope Cupcakes. They are a variation on the sweet potato pies our mom used to make when we were younger. My sister thought it would be a great way to modern up the recipe and make it perfect for her bake shop.

Kaleidoscope Sweet Potato Cupcakes

Cake:

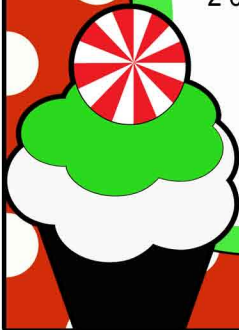
3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled, boiled and mashed
1 c white sugar
1 c brown sugar
2 sticks salted butter, softened
2 t vanilla
2 c flour
1/4 to 1/2 c milk
1 T baking powder
1/2 t salt
2 T cinnamon

Filling:

1 pkg cream cheese, softened
1 egg
1 T cinnamon

For Frosting:

Use your favorite store bought/homemade buttercream or cream cheese frosting. We use store bought cream cheese and cream with 1/2 c honey.



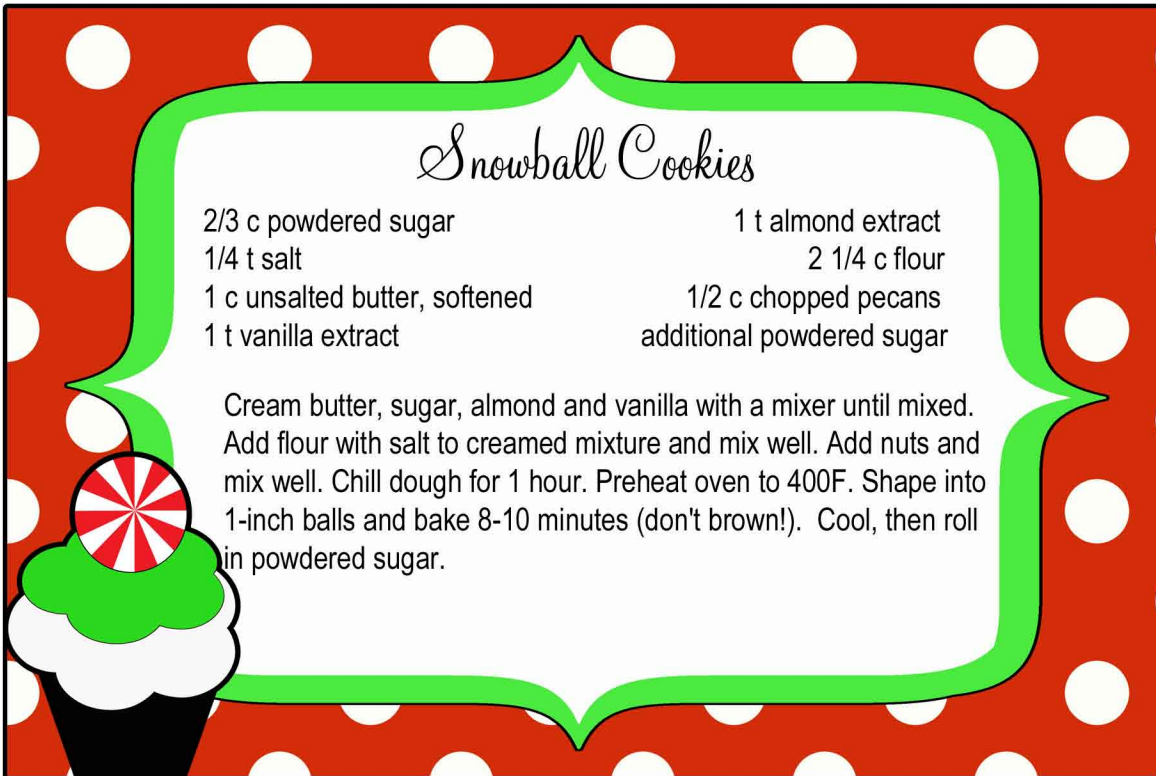
Kaleidoscope Sweet Potato Cupcakes (continued)

1. In a large mixing bowl, cream the sugars, butter and vanilla together, then add the mashed sweet potatoes and continue mixing.
2. In another bowl, combine the flour, cinnamon, salt and baking powder, then add the dry mixture to the large mixing bowl and continue mixing.
3. Your batter will be thick but if you find that it is too thick to spoon out, add 1/4 to 1/2 cup of milk to thin out the batter to your liking.
4. Now it's time to make the filling. Don't worry, you will have extra, Cream the package of cream cheese, egg and cinnamon together.
5. Fill your cupcake liner half way with the batter, then add a heaping tablespoon of the filling to the center. If you'd like, you can fill the liner with less batter, add the filling, then add more batter to cover the filling. Just don't fill more than half way.
6. Bake cupcakes at 350° for 30 minutes, rotating them halfway through. Check on them at about 25 minutes, testing with a toothpick.
7. Once your cupcakes are done and cooled, frost them and dust lightly with a little cinnamon and enjoy!



Courtney Dial, Founder and Editor, www.pizzazzerie.com

My mom makes this recipe every year and it's the first one the family digs in to around the holidays. She usually has to hide them because they're addictive!

A recipe card for Snowball Cookies. The card has a red background with white polka dots. A green decorative border frames the text. In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of a cupcake with green frosting and a red and white striped candy on top.

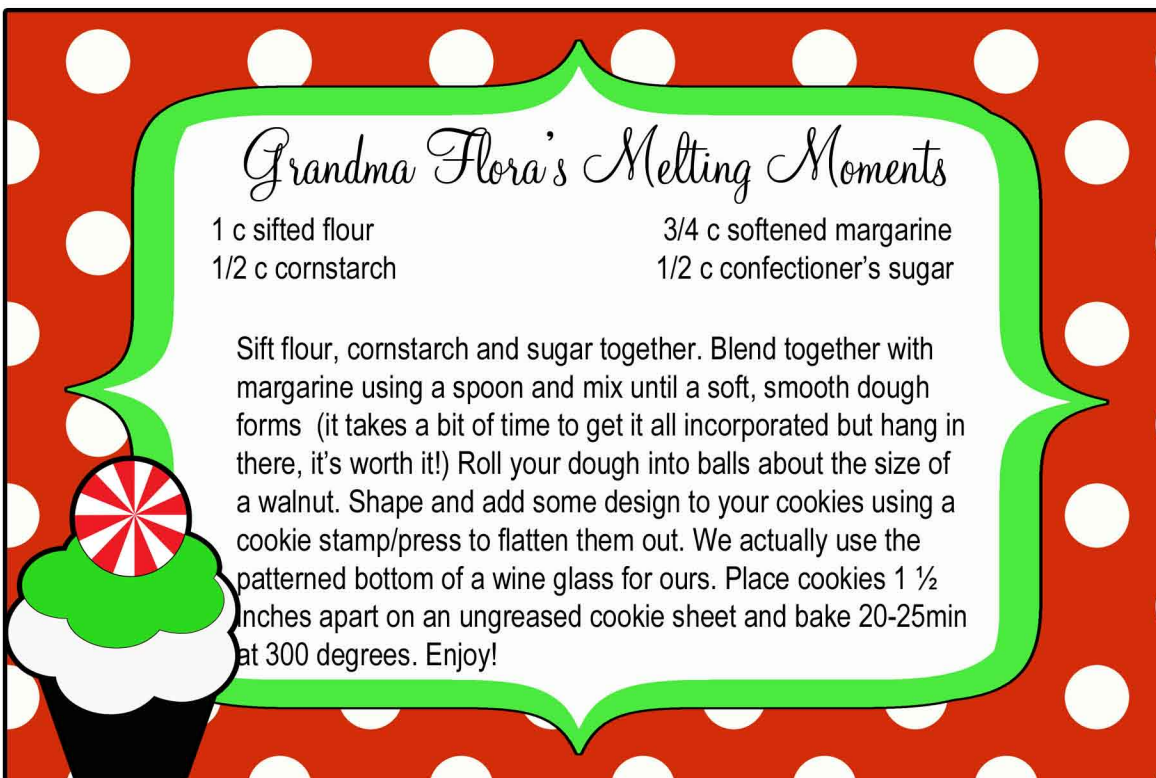
Snowball Cookies

2/3 c powdered sugar	1 t almond extract
1/4 t salt	2 1/4 c flour
1 c unsalted butter, softened	1/2 c chopped pecans
1 t vanilla extract	additional powdered sugar

Cream butter, sugar, almond and vanilla with a mixer until mixed. Add flour with salt to creamed mixture and mix well. Add nuts and mix well. Chill dough for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400F. Shape into 1-inch balls and bake 8-10 minutes (don't brown!). Cool, then roll in powdered sugar.

Crista Scibelli, creationsbycristamarie.com and contributing writer, www.pizzazzerie.com

These delicious cookies are my absolute favorite holiday treats! Every year for as long as I can remember, my sister and I have devoted a pre-Christmas evening to baking them with our Grandma (who is the most amazing cook you'll ever meet!). It's something we look forward to each season and I'm happy to share her tasty recipe with you-they will literally 'melt in your mouth'...

A recipe card for Grandma Flora's Melting Moments. The card has a red background with white polka dots. A green decorative border frames the text. In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of a cupcake with green frosting and a red and white striped candy on top.

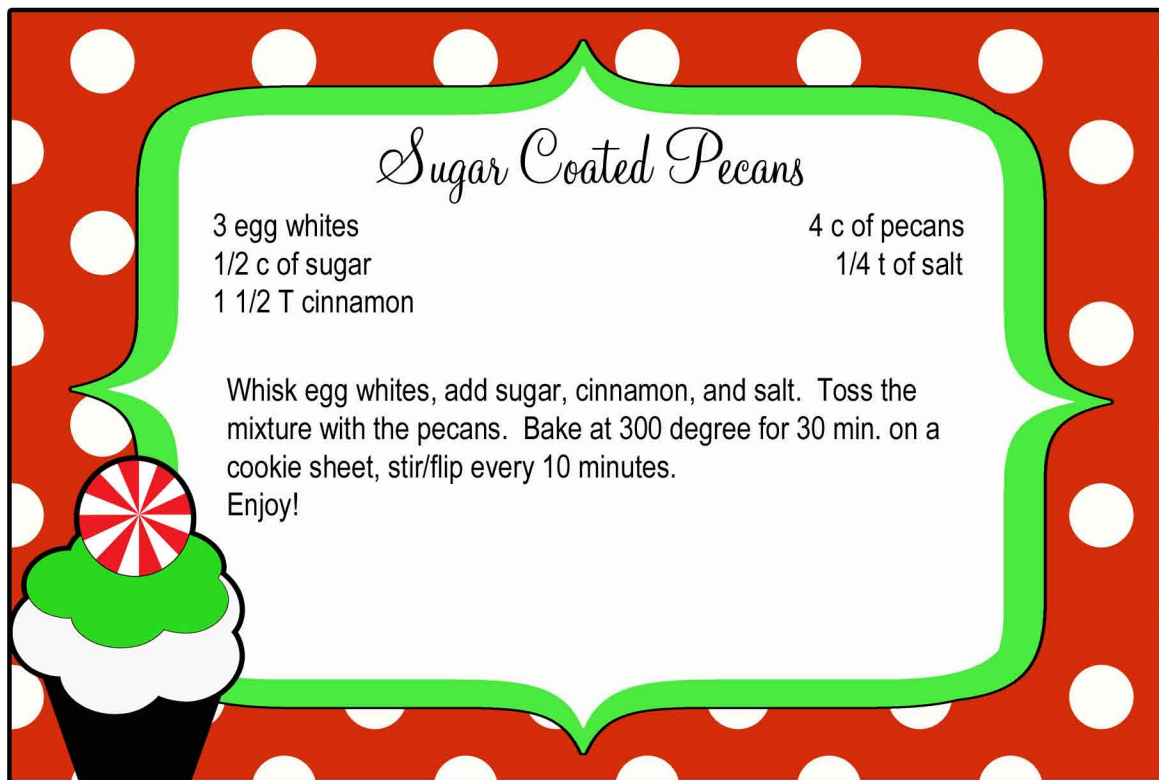
Grandma Flora's Melting Moments

1 c sifted flour	3/4 c softened margarine
1/2 c cornstarch	1/2 c confectioner's sugar

Sift flour, cornstarch and sugar together. Blend together with margarine using a spoon and mix until a soft, smooth dough forms (it takes a bit of time to get it all incorporated but hang in there, it's worth it!) Roll your dough into balls about the size of a walnut. Shape and add some design to your cookies using a cookie stamp/press to flatten them out. We actually use the patterned bottom of a wine glass for ours. Place cookies 1 1/2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet and bake 20-25min at 300 degrees. Enjoy!

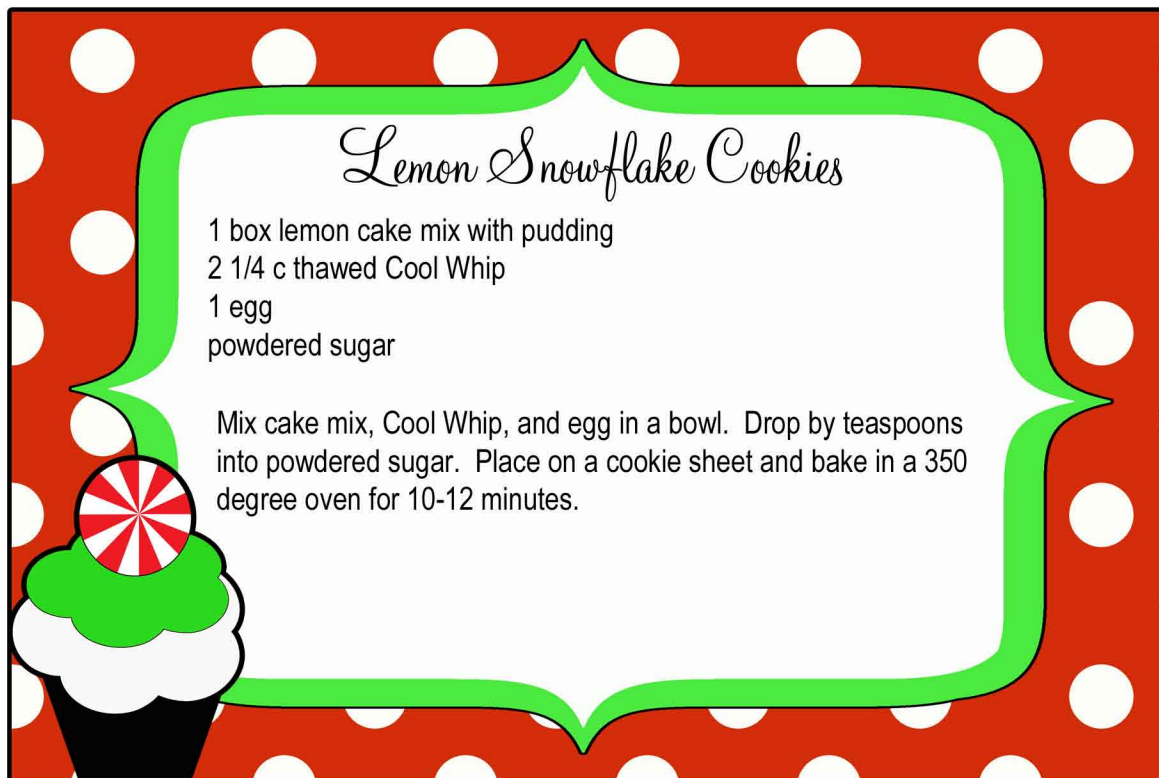
Melissa Chambers, Truly Chic Inspirations, <http://trulychicinspirations.blogspot.com>

My mom makes these every year! It has always been hard for her to bag them for friends because we can't keep our hands out of them. Plus, they make me think of home ;)



Carrie Harris, The Sweet Spot Candy Bar, www.thesweetspotcandybar.com

This recipe comes from one of my closest friends who makes these every Christmas for our book club cookie exchange. Each and every year I look forward to them, they are delicious and better yet, simple to make yourself!



Kim Stoegbauer, The TomKat Studio, <http://www.tomkatstudio.blogspot.com>


Ever since I can remember, my mom has made Chocolate Scotcheroos. Always during the holidays, but also throughout the year because we all love them so much! They are really easy to make and so delicious!



When you make Chocolate Scotcheroos in your own home this holiday season, don't forget to print off the lovely labels that Kim generously provided as well!



Over the years, there were several candies that my mom would make and I always loved the day she made her cinnamon hard candy. The entire house would smell of this sugar and cinnamon. I can't imagine that the smell permeated the neighborhood but it always seemed like neighbors would drop by the day she made this. It was always a fight to see if this candy would end up red or not. Without the coloring it takes on this clear, kind of yellowy color that reminds me of stained glass. We would also bring this candy along on our long car trips on summer vacation. But I can attest that you DO NOT want to inhale the cinnamon oil.




Hard Cinnamon Candy

4 c white sugar
1 1/2 c light corn syrup
1 1/2 c water
1 1/2 t cinnamon oil (found at cake decorating stores)

red food coloring (optional)

Mix sugar, corn syrup and water in a saucepan. Using a candy thermometer, cook to 300 degrees. Take off heat and let sit to begin cooling. Add red food coloring to your desired hue. Add 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon oil (stir oil in well and be sure to not inhale the fumes – your nose will be on fire if you do...) Pour on buttered cookie sheet. Let it sit until hard and dry. Do not make when the humidity is high.

These cookies totally remind me of fall. And I love that they are a little bit different from the standard holiday cookie. The butterscotch chips are heavenly and everyone who has ever eaten them asks for the recipe. It was a fun recipe to make because someone could be chopping the apples while someone else started the rest of the recipe. Add in some holiday music and you've got yourself a really fun afternoon.




Apple Scotch Cookies

1 1/4 c brown sugar, packed
1/2 cup soft butter or margarine
2 c sifted all-purpose flour
1/2 t salt
1/2 t cloves
1 1/2 c chopped apples
1 pkg butterscotch baking pieces

2 eggs
1/4 c milk
1 t baking powder
1 t cinnamon
1/2 t nutmeg
1 c chopped walnuts (optional)

Cream together brown sugar and butter. Add eggs and milk, beat well. Mix and sift flour, baking powder, salt and spices in a separate bowl. Once mixed well, stir in to creamed mixture. Stir in apples, walnuts and butterscotch chips. Drop by tablespoon on well greased baking sheets. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from baking sheet immediately; cool on racks. Makes about 4 dozen cookies.

This recipe is, by far, the BEST caramel corn recipe ever invented. I am not being overly dramatic here. I take my sweets very seriously and this one blows minds. Because you stir it while cooling, it is not sticky in any way. You are left with the most amazing buttery flavor and an amazing crispy texture. My grandmother who would bring it to our house on Christmas Eve in the biggest container she could find usually made this recipe. I liked to think she was bringing it just for me, but everyone always wanted their share. I would also request this instead of birthday cakes for my birthday. And whenever I make it for parties, you have to break through a clump of people just to get to the bowl. I would gladly go up a size in jeans for this caramel corn.



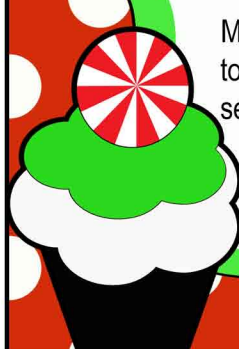
Caramel Corn

- 1/2 c white corn syrup
- 8 quarts air popped popcorn
- 2 c brown sugar
- 1 c butter
- 1 t salt
- 1 t baking soda

You will need to have the popcorn popped and ready. It is best made in a large pan, a disposable pan (that might fit a turkey) works great.

Combine brown sugar, corn syrup, butter and salt in a saucepan. Heat to boiling and let boil for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add baking soda (this will make it foam up like crazy. Don't be scared, just be ready). With a greased spoon mix well with the popcorn. Bake at 250 degrees for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes. Stir caramel corn while it's cooling to prevent it from sticking in big clumps.

This pie was a recipe we learned from my grandmother. We always looked forward to going to her house just after Christmas to open presents. We knew that this pie would also be attending. It wasn't until years later that we learned just how easy it is to make. The flavor is sweet and smooth and the pie almost sparkles when it comes out of the freezer. We don't make this one, anymore, due to my son's food allergies, but that doesn't mean I don't crave it. It's fantastic and always a crowd pleaser when taken to parties.



Peanut Butter Pie

- 1/2 c milk
- 3 oz. cream cheese
- 1/2 c smooth peanut butter
- 1 container Cool Whip
- 3/4 c powdered sugar
- Graham cracker crust or chocolate cookie crust

Make sure to soften the cream cheese. Mix all ingredients together well and put into pie crust. Put in freezer and freeze for several hours before serving.

Sharon Garafalow, Cupcakes & Cutlery <http://cupcakesandcutlery.blogspot.com>

This is another super easy recipe that my mom always would make at Christmas. Although her recipes were never hard, there was always the greatest dessert buffet to grab from on Christmas day. You could stand by this bowl and just grab handful after handful because you didn't want their sugary goodness to end.



Cinnamon Nuts

3 cups whole walnuts or walnut halves
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
5 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine all ingredients except vanilla. Cook on low heat until mixture dissolves. Add vanilla and walnuts. Separate and spread on greased cookie sheet to cool.

Staci Golden, Lizard & Ladybug <http://lizardnladybug.blogspot.com>

I make it every year (and usually end up eating it all myself) and is it YUMMY warm with a little butter. OMG - my mouth is watering!!



Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Bread


3 c all-purpose flour	4 eggs
2 tsp ground cinnamon	2 c sugar
1 tsp salt	2 c canned pumpkin
1 tsp baking soda	1 1/2 c canola oil
1-1/2 c (6 oz) HERSHEY'S Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips	

In a large bowl, combine the flour, cinnamon, salt and baking soda. In another bowl, beat the eggs, sugar, pumpkin and oil. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in chocolate chips.

Pour into two greased 8-in. x 4-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 60-70 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. Yield: 2 loaves (16 slices each).

Lisa Fliehm, The Sweet Talk Shop www.thesweettalkshop.com

I love this recipe because they are great with dinner or for a snack. I don't feel as guilty eating them because they are mini and a muffin. (healthy) Plus my Mother-in-Law (Nila) normally makes them for me!



Pecan Pie Muffins

1 c brown sugar, packed	2 eggs, beaten
1/2 c all purpose flour	1 c chopped pecans
2/3 c butter, melted (only use real butter)	


Preheat oven to 350 degrees; grease and flour mini muffin pans. (do not use paper liners)

In a larger bowl combine butter and eggs well. Then stir in flour mixture just until moistened. Fill muffin pans 2/3 full, bake for 25 mins or until toothpick comes out clean. Remove immediately to cool on wire rack

Yield: 2 1/2 dozen

Sandy, Sandy's Baking Memories www.sandysbakingmemories.com

It's my great Grandma's recipe and my Mom makes it every year for Thanksgiving and Christmas. And every year we have a little disagreement as to whether or not to put gravy on it. My Mom says yes to gravy as everything gets covered in gravy at Thanksgiving and I say no because it's more like a sweet bread. Either way its delicious and reminds me of home!



Carrot Pudding

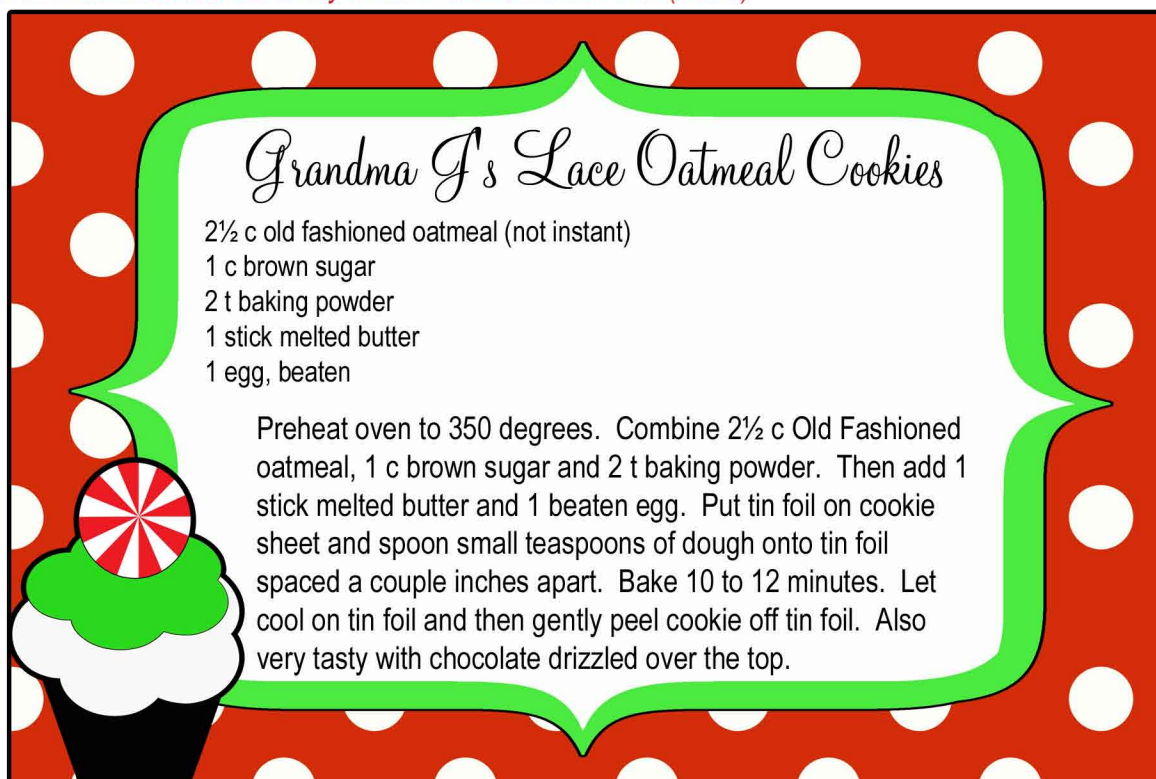
2 cans drained carrots	1 stick melted butter
2 eggs	1 t baking powder
2 c flour	1 t baking soda
1/2 c sugar	cinnamon & sugar

Crush carrots well. Add all remaining ingredients and mix. Pour into a greased, round casserole dish. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes or until light golden brown. Remove from oven and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Serve warm!

We received 2 slightly different versions of the same recipe, so you KNOW these must be absolutely delicious!

Melissa Becker and Kellie Roberts, Icing Designs, <http://icingsonline.blogspot.com>

This recipe comes from my Uncle Tom's mother-in-law, Grandma Joan. Even though she was not blood related, she was Grandma Joan to everyone. Grandma Joan was a part of every family holiday celebration and she made these cookies, along with many others, every Christmas. Years ago I asked her for this recipe and she wrote it down on the outside of an envelope for me that I still have to this day. I make these cookies every Christmas and think of her. (Kellie)



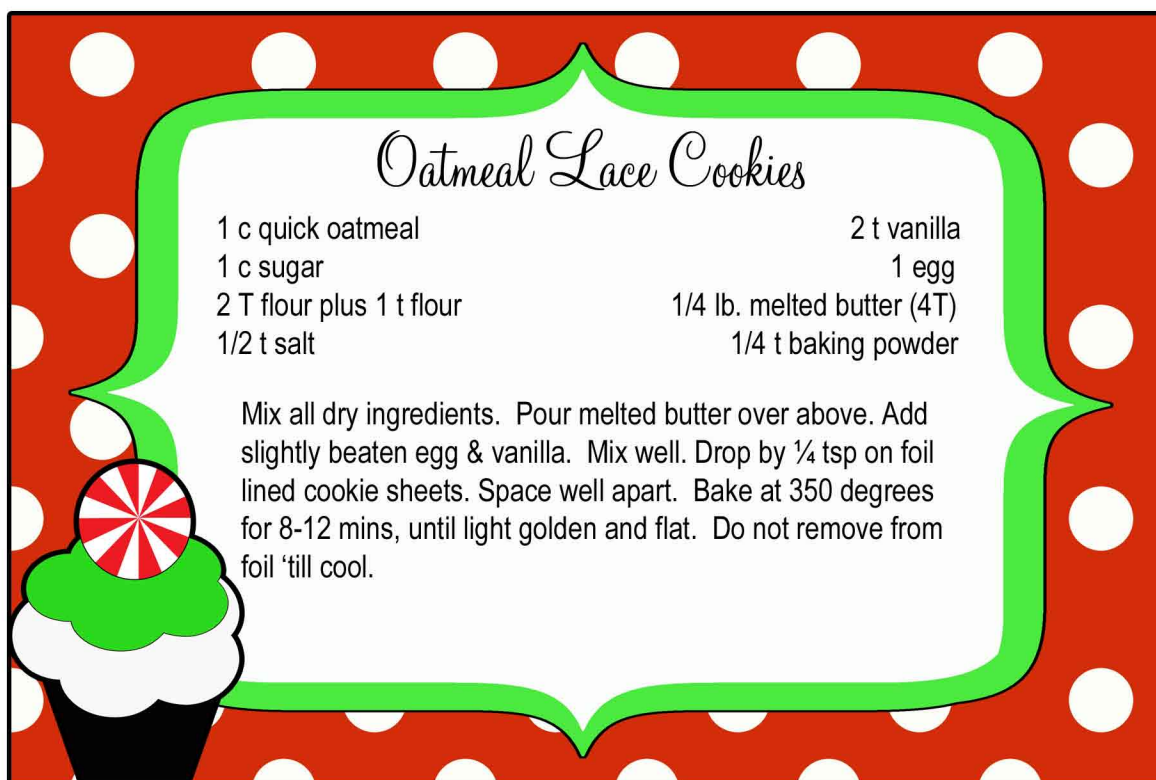
Grandma J's Lace Oatmeal Cookies

2½ c old fashioned oatmeal (not instant)
1 c brown sugar
2 t baking powder
1 stick melted butter
1 egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine 2½ c Old Fashioned oatmeal, 1 c brown sugar and 2 t baking powder. Then add 1 stick melted butter and 1 beaten egg. Put tin foil on cookie sheet and spoon small teaspoons of dough onto tin foil spaced a couple inches apart. Bake 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on tin foil and then gently peel cookie off tin foil. Also very tasty with chocolate drizzled over the top.

Jenny Batt, Hank & Hunt, <http://hankandhunt.blogspot.com>

These were my brother's and my favorite EVER. My mother made these all the time. We lost the recipe for a few years and just found it about two years ago on the original 1980's shell shaped notecard. Enjoy!




Oatmeal Lace Cookies

1 c quick oatmeal	2 t vanilla
1 c sugar	1 egg
2 T flour plus 1 t flour	1/4 lb. melted butter (4T)
1/2 t salt	1/4 t baking powder

Mix all dry ingredients. Pour melted butter over above. Add slightly beaten egg & vanilla. Mix well. Drop by ¼ tsp on foil lined cookie sheets. Space well apart. Bake at 350 degrees for 8-12 mins, until light golden and flat. Do not remove from foil 'till cool.

This is one of the first recipes I made back when I began hosting our annual Christmas Cocktail party. I'm from North Carolina and pecans, in some form, are a staple at most Holiday & family gatherings. These bars are an easy pick-up treat, and the key is to line the baking pan with parchment paper or aluminum foil.



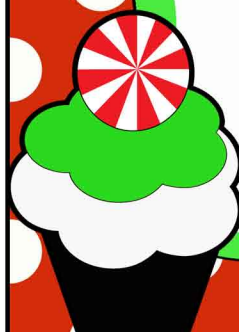
Pecan Pie Bars

Crust:
2 c all-purpose flour
1/2 c sugar
1/8 tsp salt
3/4 c butter, cut up

Filling:
1 c firmly packed brown sugar
1 c light corn syrup
1/2 c butter
4 lg eggs, lightly beaten
2 1/2 c finely chopped pecans
1 tsp vanilla extract

For crust:
Line a 13" x 9" bar pan with parchment paper or aluminum foil to prevent sticking.

Combine flour, sugar, & salt in large bowl; cut in the butter with a pastry blender or fork, until mixture resembles very fine crumbs. Press mixture into pan. Bake at 350 for 17-20 minutes, or until lightly browned.

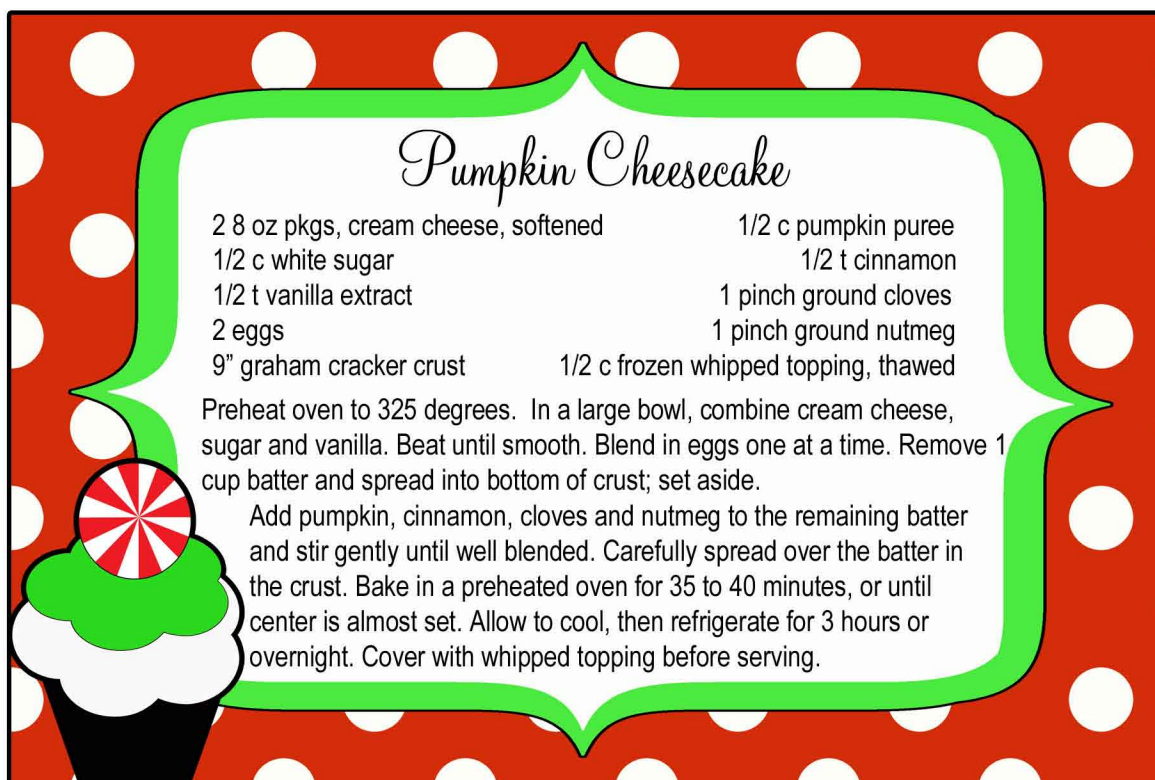


Pecan Pie Bars (continued)

For filling:
Combine brown sugar, corn syrup, and butter in a saucepan; bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring gently. Remove from heat. Stir 1/4 of hot mixture into beaten eggs, slowly to prevent curdling. Add to remaining hot mixture & stir in pecans and vanilla. Pour filling over crust. Bake another 35 minutes or until set.

Cool completely in pan on a cooling rack before cutting into bars.

Enjoy!



Pumpkin Cheesecake

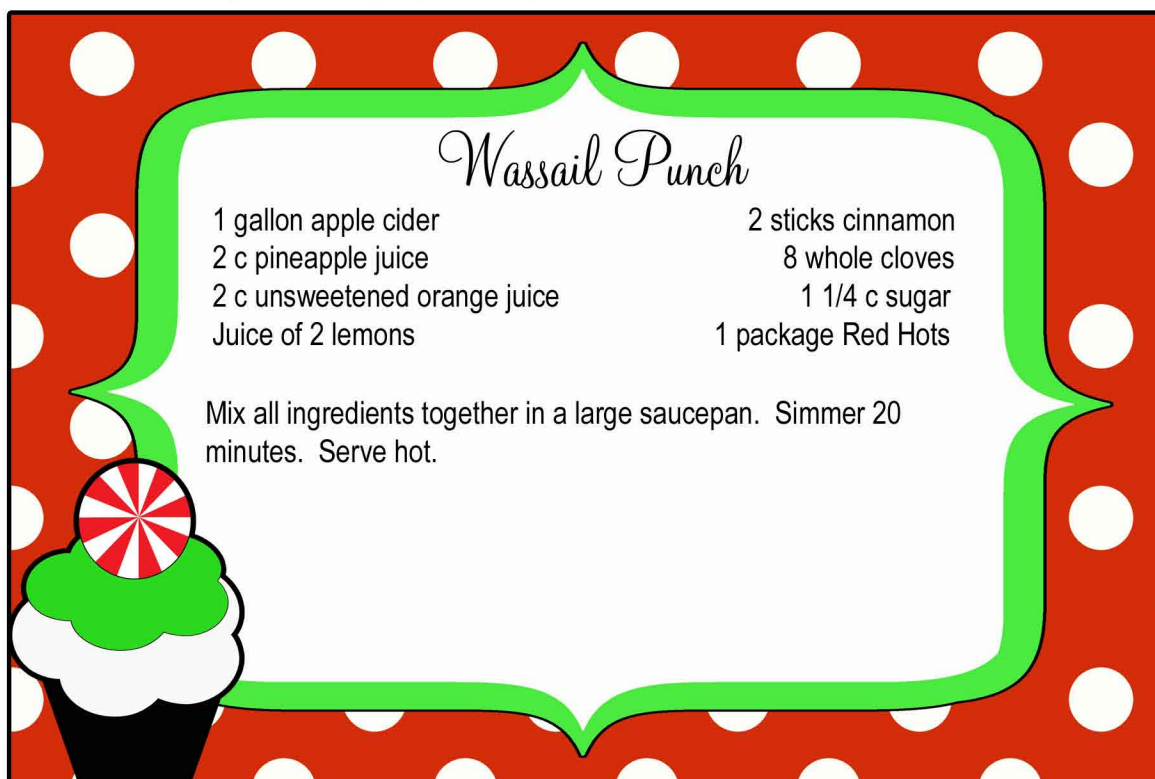
2 8 oz pkgs, cream cheese, softened	1/2 c pumpkin puree
1/2 c white sugar	1/2 t cinnamon
1/2 t vanilla extract	1 pinch ground cloves
2 eggs	1 pinch ground nutmeg
9" graham cracker crust	1/2 c frozen whipped topping, thawed

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. In a large bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Blend in eggs one at a time. Remove 1 cup batter and spread into bottom of crust; set aside.

Add pumpkin, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg to the remaining batter and stir gently until well blended. Carefully spread over the batter in the crust. Bake in a preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until center is almost set. Allow to cool, then refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight. Cover with whipped topping before serving.

Natalie Clause, Southern Belle's Charm, www.southernbellescharm.com

My parents have always hosted the most amazing Christmas Parties every year. There would be wonderful food, activities, great music and lots of laughter. The event has been a staple of what Christmas means to our family. Every year, my father would make Wassail Punch. As guests would enter our home they would be greeted with a mug full of hot wassail. The smells of cinnamon and red hots would fill our home all night as we would prepare to celebrate. As I have grown older, this tradition is now something I share with my family. Wassail Punch is a Canadian recipe that was originally an English Christmas drink. Carolers drink this as they sing Christmas songs and celebrate the holidays. My father first tasted Wassail at a college Christmas party hosted by his Choir Director.



Wassail Punch

1 gallon apple cider	2 sticks cinnamon
2 c pineapple juice	8 whole cloves
2 c unsweetened orange juice	1 1/4 c sugar
Juice of 2 lemons	1 package Red Hots

Mix all ingredients together in a large saucepan. Simmer 20 minutes. Serve hot.

I grew up in a Salvadorean household. The Holidays were filled with food, family and loud music. We didnt make cookies for the Holidays. Last time I checked, you still cant fry those! LOL:) But I did grow up to have fond memories of my Mom teaching us how to make Plantaine Empanadas. She would scream at my sister and I forgetting to close to the frying pan while we danced in the kitchen and would always make it up to us by letting us roll the empanadas in the sugar. The smell of fried plantaines is a sentimental favorite to this day. Here is the recipe. I hope you will give them a try.....just don't tell my mom I gave you the recipe!

Plantain Empanadas

4 ripe plantains
4 c water
1/2 t salt
1 can (16 oz.) Refried Black Beans
1/4 c vegetable oil for frying
ground cinnamon...to taste
1/2 c sugar

You will also need a sauce pan, a frying pan, plastic wrap, food processor or hand masher, rolling pin..... and some latin music playing in the background (the music is totally essential!)

1. Cut each plantain into 4 equal parts including the skin. In a sauce pan bring your water to a strong boil and add your salt.
2. Next add the cut plantain and cook until its very soft (about 10-15 minutes) and drain.
3. Peel plantain and discard skin and mash plantain until smooth using food processor or a hand masher.
4. Scoop about 4 T of mashed plantain and place between two pieces of plastic wrap.



Plantain Empanadas (continued)


5. With a rolling pin shape an empanada to make a 4 inch circle about 1/4 inch thick. ...like a thick little tortilla:)
6. Now stuff it! Remove the top layer of plastic wrap and add about 1 T of refried beans on the middle of the empanada.
7. Use the bottom layer of plastic plastic wrap- lift and fold it over in half to form a half circle but be careful not to spill the beans! :)
8. With your fingers, fold over and seal the open edge of empanada. You can repeat using all the plantain mixture to make about 6-8 empanadas.
9. In a skillet heat 1/4 cup oil and fry the empanadas until lightly browned on both sides
10. Let the empanadas sit on paper towels to drain.


Now my favorite part! In a bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon. While still warm, roll empanadas in sugar and cinamon mix to coat on both sides. Serve warm.



Maureen Anders, Anders Ruff Custom Designs, <http://andersruff.blogspot.com>

These both bring back the best memories of baking with my mom as a little girl (and enjoying them, of course!) Every year we would go to a family holiday dinner and we would bring a classic tin of mixed treats. We would always include these 2 items. Frosted Short Bread Cookies and Christmas Bark. Delish. I remember the years when I was little and could only watch my mom bake them, and I also remember the years when we would work together. She would turn on our record player and play classic Christmas music and it just filled me with warmth. It still does remind me of those special moments! I love my mom dearly and she gave us so many special memories. Now she can do the same with my children!

RECIPE FOR <i>Frosted Shortbread Cookies</i>	
FROM THE KITCHEN OF	SERVINGS
INGREDIENTS 1 c butter 1 c brown sugar 1 egg yolk 2 c flour 1 t vanilla 1 1/2 c chocolate chips 1 c pecans, <i>finely chopped</i> dash of salt	INSTRUCTIONS Preheat the oven to 350. Combine all of the ingredients and pat the batter evenly over an ungreased cookie sheet. Pat down with floured hands. Batter will be bumpy. Dough will not cover the entire cookie sheet. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and sprinkle 1 1/2 chocolate chips over the cookie. Put back in the oven for 1-2 minutes. Remove and spread the melted chocolate chips evenly around the entire cookie. Sprinkle with the finely chopped pecans. Let cool and cut into squares or diamonds when cool. Eat the remaining edges (because there are no calories) ;-) 

RECIPE FOR <i>Christmas Bark</i>	
FROM THE KITCHEN OF	SERVINGS
INGREDIENTS 1 sleeve saltine crackers 1 c butter 1/2 c light brown sugar 12 oz. chocolate chips	INSTRUCTIONS Preheat oven to 350. Place crackers in one layer on parchment lined cookie sheet (with sides). Melt brown sugar and butter in saucepan, stirring often. Once the mixture boils, cook for 3 minutes stirring constantly. Pour brown sugar mixture over the crackers. Spread evenly. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with chocolate morsels. When they appear melted, spread evenly over the entire layer of crackers. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Crack into pieces. 

Please see the last page of our cookbook where you will find "From the Kitchen of" labels, generously donated by the ladies of Anders Ruff!

Mini Piña Colada Tarts

1 box phyllo dough
4-6oz containers pineapple yogurt
1/2 tub Cool Whip

1/2 c chopped kiwi
1/2 c chopped pineapple
1 c coconut (reserve a bit for topping)

Layer phyllo dough into a mini cupcake tin, bake as directed until golden brown.

Mix yogurt, coconut and cool whip, then chill.

Just before serving, spoon filling into baked mini phyllo cups and top with chopped pineapple, kiwi and a sprinkle of coconut.

Enjoy!!

You can soak the pineapple and kiwi in coconut rum before topping for an adult kick




'Cin'fully Delicious Strawberry Cake

1 premade Angel Food Cake
1 c French Vanilla Pudding
1/2 c Cool Whip
1 tub frozen strawberries, thawed
1 Hersheys Chocolate Bar

Mix pudding and Cool Whip together. Slice the angel food cake through the middle so that you have two layers. Remove the top layer and set aside. Drizzle bottom layer with juice from tub of strawberries. Then add a layer of strawberries and shavings from Hersheys Chocolate Bar. Place top layer back on cake. Spread pudding mixture over the entire cake. Top the cake with strawberries and more chocolate shavings. Refrigerate at least an hour before serving.






Pumpkin Cheesecake

Crust: 1 1/2 c graham crackers, crushed 2 T unsweetened applesauce
1 t ground ginger 2 T melted butter

Filling: 2 8 oz. containers reduced fat cream cheese, softened
3/4 c plus 2 t raw sugar 2 eggs
2 1/2 t vanilla extract 1 1/4 t ground cinnamon
1 1/8 t nutmeg 15 oz. can pumpkin
1/4 t apple cider vinegar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium bowl, mix together the crushed graham crackers, butter, applesauce, and ground ginger. Press into the bottom, and about 1 inch up the sides of a 9-inch springform pan. Bake crust 10 minutes in the preheated oven. Set aside to cool.



Pumpkin Cheesecake (continued)


In a medium bowl, mix together the cream cheese, 1/2 c raw sugar, and vanilla until smooth. Mix eggs in one at a time, blending well after each. Set aside 1 c of the mixture. Blend 1/4 c raw sugar, pumpkin, cinnamon, apple cider vinegar and nutmeg into the remaining mixture.

Spread the pumpkin flavored batter into the crust, and drop the plain batter by spoonfuls onto the top. Swirl with a knife to create a marbled effect.

Bake 1 hour in the preheated oven, or until filling is set. Run a knife around the edge of the pan. Allow the cake to cool before removing pan rim. Chill for at least 4 hours before serving.

**This recipe can be found at www.bethenny.com*

The "legend" of this cake says that the person who discovers the one whole almond in their piece will have good luck all year. My Mom serves this every year with Christmas breakfast making it a long standing tradition for our family. I still get excited about the possibility of finding the almond! Although as a once a year treat, just getting to taste the cake seems lucky enough to me! Enjoy!




Almond Legend Cake

Cake:
1 yellow cake mix
1/2 c water
1/2 t almond extract
1/2 c slivered almonds
1/2 c orange juice
1/3 c oil

Glaze:
1/2 c apricot preserves
2 T orange juice

Preheat the oven to 350°. To blanch the one whole almond, boil it in water for a few minutes and then put it directly into a bowl of ice cold water. The skin of the almond should peel off easily.

Generously butter a Bundt pan and sprinkle the sliced




Almond Legend Cake (continued)

(or slivered) almonds into the bottom of the pan. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cake mix, water, almond extract, orange juice, oil and eggs until moistened, and then on high speed for 2 minutes. Gently fold in the 1 whole almond. Pour into the prepared pan. Bake for 35 to 45 minutes, or until a tooth pick inserted into the middle comes out clean.

In a small sauce pan, warm the apricot preserves and orange juice over medium-low heat. When the preserves have melted, pour over the cooled cake

We do a cake called "Tres Leches" which means "Three milks". We are Hispanic and it is a pretty famous cake. Me and my husband made this dish our first Christmas together from when we moved in together and we have made it every Christmas since then but with a small change now our son helps us make the cake as well. He helps us mix and soak the cake, throughout the process we are listening to Christmas music and just having so much fun. It's these small traditions that we will cherish forever.




Tres Leches Cake

Cake:
10 eggs kept at room temperature for 1/2 hour
1 c all-purpose flour, sifted
1 T baking powder
1 c granulated sugar
Confectioners' sugar
1 T vanilla extract

Soaking liquid:
3/4 c sweetened condense milk
1/2 c heavy cream
1 c evaporated milk

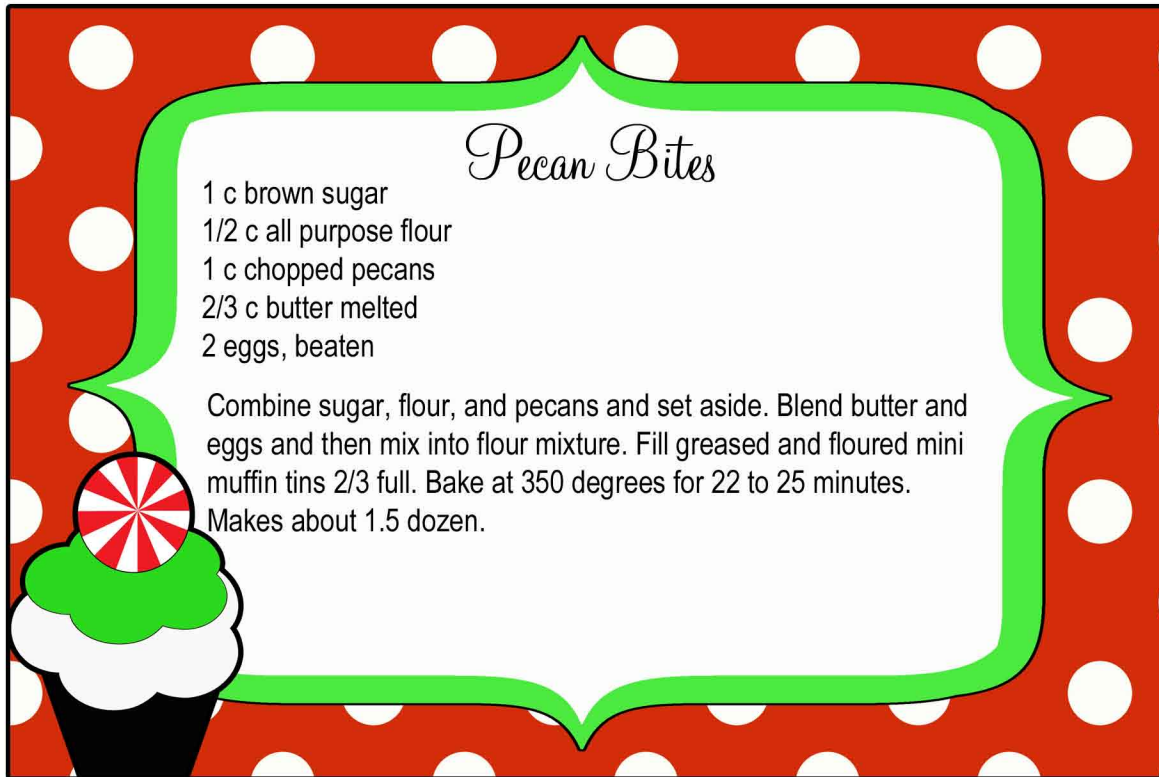
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Oil a baking pan and line it with waxed paper oiled on both sides. Separate the yolks and whites in 2 bowls. Sift the flour and baking powder together.



Tres Leches Cake (continued)

Beat the yolks until light and lemon colored, about 20 minutes. The consistency should be very thick, and when you lift the beaters, the mixture should fall in one solid mass. Add 1/2 cup of the sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time. Add the vanilla and beat 3 minutes more. Whip the egg whites until soft peaks form. Add the remaining 1/2 cup sugar slowly until it makes a meringue. Add the whites to the yolks one-third at a time and fold in with a rubber spatula. Add the flour all at once and fold in.

Spread the batter in the pan and bake for 20 to 30 minutes or until the cake comes away from the sides of the pan. Let it rest for 5 minutes, then remove it from the pan and place on a cooling rack.



Joyce Harris (Carrie's mother-in-law!), <http://theherbalgourmet.blogspot.com>

Truffles, Truffles, Truffles!

BASIC TRUFFLES:

Place 16 oz semisweet chocolate chips in bowl. Bring 1c heavy cream to scalding point and add to chocolate and allow to sit 1-2 mins before stirring then gently whisk until smooth to form a ganache. Pour into small bowl, cover and refrigerate several hours. Use melon baller to form truffles or simply roll in balls between your hands.

CHOCOLATE MINT TRUFFLES

Combine 1c heavy cream and 1Tbs spearmint in saucepan and bring to scalding point, strain and discard leaves.

COATING: powdered sugar or coconut

ORANGE-ALMOND TRUFFLES

Add 1Tbs grated orange peel and ½ c chopped almonds

COATING: cocoa powder

CHOCO-PEANUT BUTTER TRUFFLES

Add 1/2 c chunky peanut butter

COATING: powdered sugar, chopped peanuts

FRENCH CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

Use 8oz unsweetened chocolate & 4oz German sweet chocolate plus sweetened condensed milk

COATING: crushed nuts

FRUIT & NUT TRUFFLES

Add 1c dried cherries, cranberries or raisins and 1c roasted pistachios, pecans, peanuts or walnuts

COATING: cocoa, powdered sugar

SPICY TRUFFLES

If you want to try something different: add a pinch of cayenne pepper.

COATING: cocoa

BASIC CREAM CHEESE TRUFFLES

Cream 1-8oz package cream cheese, add crushed cookies or powdered sugar, roll into balls and dip in melted chocolate.

CHOCOLATE OREO TRUFFLES

Crush 6 Oreo cookies and set aside. Crush 36 Oreo cookies to fine crumbs and add cream cheese

COATING: melted chocolate and sprinkle with reserved cookie crumbs

CHERRY ALMOND TRUFFLES

Add 1c chopped toasted almonds, 1/2c chopped maraschino cherries, and 1c powdered sugar

COATING: white chocolate

Black Forest Cake

For the cake:

1 2/3 c all purpose flour	1 1/2 c white sugar
2/3 c unsweetened cocoa powder	2 eggs
1 1/2 t baking soda	1 t vanilla extract
1 t salt	1 1/2 c buttermilk
1/2 c shortening	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray two 8 inch pans with nonstick spray. Sift together flour, baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt, set aside. Cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Add in flour mixture, alternating with the buttermilk until combined. Pour into two 8 inch round pans. Bake at 350 degrees 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool completely. Cut each layer in half horizontally, making 4 layers total.

For the filling:

2 c sugar	2 15 oz cans dark sweet pitted cherries in heavy syrup
1 c water	2 T cornstarch
1 1/4 c Kirsch	

Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar, and cook for 2 more minutes. Remove from heat and let cool completely. Stir in 1 cup of the Kirsch and stir to mix. In another saucepan over medium heat, bring the cherries to a boil in their syrup. In a small bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in the remaining 1/4 cup kirsch and add to the cherry mixture. Whisk until it thickens, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool completely.

Assemble the cake:

Brush the tops of all the cake layers with equal amounts of the sugar syrup (you will not need all of the syrup). Let the liquid soak into the layers for about 30 minutes. Place the bottom layer on a large cake plate (I use round cake boards with mine). Spread 1 cup of the cherry filling over this layer, then top with the second layer of cake. Spread 1 cup of the filling evenly over it. Repeat the same process with the third layer and another cup of the filling. Top with the fourth layer. Some of the filling will spill over the sides. Let as much come out as it needs, wait 30 minutes and then wipe up the spill overs with a spatula.

For the frosting and garnish:

1 pound confectioners sugar	1/3 - 1/2 c boiling water
1/2 c unsweetened cocoa powder	1 1/2 c heavy cream
1 stick butter, at room temperature	2 t sugar
1 1/2 t vanilla extract	3 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, shaved

Sift together the confectioners sugar and cocoa powder into a medium sized bowl. Add the butter and mix with an electric mixer until incorporated. Add 1 teaspoon of the vanilla and 1/3 cup of the boiling water and mix until smooth. Keep adding water until you get the consistency you like. This frosting will dry firm as not to let any of the cherry filling seep through it. Frost the sides and top of the cakes evenly with the chocolate frosting.

Combine the cream, the remaining 1/2 teaspoon vanilla and the sugar in a medium sized mixing bowl. Using an electric mixer, mix until soft peaks form. Spoon the whipped cream over the top of the cake and sprinkle with chocolate shavings. Slice and serve the cake.

Holiday Baked Goods Enclosure Cards



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