

BEST BAKING GUIDE

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CHRISTMAS COOKIES — A BAKER'S DOZEN

Beatrice Cihak

A basic vanilla-flavored dough is the start for an assortment of holiday cookies. With simple additions and substitutions, you can make 12 more delicious kinds. And this easy dough can be rolled, pressed in a cookie gun, molded or dropped for different shapes, too—try our combos, or make your own!

VANILLA COOKIES

Makes 2½ dozen cookies (without glaze) for 86¢.
Bake at 350° 10 to 12 minutes.

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
 - ½ teaspoon baking powder
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - 3 tablespoons margarine
 - ½ cup granulated sugar
 - 1 egg
 - ½ teaspoon vanilla
- Vanilla Glaze (recipe follows)**

1. Stir together flour, baking powder and salt in medium-size bowl.
2. Beat butter, margarine, sugar, egg and vanilla in bowl until well blended. Stir in flour mixture. Shape into ball; wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate several hours or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 350°. Coat cookie sheet with cooking spray.
4. Roll out dough on lightly floured surface to ⅜-inch thickness. Cut into rounds with 2½-inch cookie cutter. Place on prepared cookie sheets, spacing 1½ inches apart.
5. Bake in preheated 350° oven 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly browned at edges. Remove cookies to wire rack to cool. Frost with glaze, if you wish.

Nutrient Value Per Cookie (without glaze): 43 calories, 1 g protein, 1 g fat, 7 g carbohydrate, 33 mg sodium, 3 mg cholesterol. Exchanges: ⅓ starch/bread, ¼ fruit, ¼ fat.

Vanilla Glaze: Gradually stir 1 to 2 tablespoons milk into 1 cup 10X



(confectioners') sugar until smooth and slightly runny. Add ¼ teaspoon vanilla. Lemon juice, lime juice, orange juice or water can be substituted for the milk, if you wish.

COOKIE DOUGH VARIATIONS: FLAVORS

- SPICE** Omit vanilla. Substitute ¼ cup firmly packed dark-brown sugar for ¼ cup of the granulated sugar. Stir 1 teaspoon ground ginger and ¼ teaspoon each cinnamon and allspice into flour mixture.
- LEMON** Omit vanilla. Add 1½ teaspoons each grated lemon rind and lemon juice to butter mixture.
- COCONUT** Omit vanilla. Add ½ teaspoon coconut extract to butter mixture; stir ½ cup shredded coconut into flour mixture.
- NESSELRODE** Omit vanilla. Add ½ teaspoon rum extract to butter mixture; add ½ cup chopped mixed glacé fruits to flour mixture.
- COFFEE** Reduce vanilla to ¼ teaspoon. Dissolve 1 teaspoon instant coffee in 1 teaspoon very hot

water; add to butter mixture. Add 1 teaspoon unsweetened cocoa powder to flour mixture.

CHOCOLATE Add 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder to flour mixture.

ORANGE Omit vanilla. Add 1 teaspoon grated orange rind to butter mixture.

MAPLE WALNUT Omit vanilla. Substitute ¼ cup firmly packed light-brown sugar for ¼ cup of the granulated sugar; add ½ cup finely chopped walnuts to flour mixture.

MINT Omit vanilla. Add ¼ teaspoon mint extract to butter mixture.

HAZELNUT Add ½ cup finely chopped toasted hazelnuts to the flour mixture.

LIME Omit vanilla. Add 2 teaspoons each grated lime rind and lime juice to butter mixture.

ALMOND Omit vanilla. Add ½ teaspoon almond extract to butter mixture. Add ½ cup finely chopped toasted blanched almonds to flour mixture.

(Recipes continue on page 116)

COOKIE SHAPES

VANILLA TREES (p. 114) Cut out rolled Vanilla Cookie dough with 3½-inch tree cutter. Bake as directed. Frost with green-tinted Vanilla Glaze when cool; decorate as desired with frosting garlands and small candy "ornaments."

SPICE KIDS (p. 107) Cut chilled Spice Cookie dough into 16 pieces. Roll, cut out kids, bake as in Vanilla Cookies, page 114. Remove from pan to rack to cool. Frost with Vanilla Glaze. Add blue icing hair, red licorice mouth, colored dragee eyes and chocolate nonpareil buttons.

LEMON BLOSSOMS (p. 107) Place Lemon Cookie dough, chilled for 1 hour, in cookie gun with blossom tip. Press out onto cookie sheet following package directions. Bake as directed. When cool, frost with Lemon Glaze; sprinkle with chopped pistachio nuts.

COCONUT THUMBPRINTS (p. 114) Shape rounded measuring teaspoonfuls Coconut Cookie dough into round balls. Place on cookie sheet. Press small chocolate nonpareil into center of each. Or roll balls in shredded coconut, place on cookie sheet and place a chocolate kiss in center. Bake as directed.

NESSELRODE DROPS (p. 114) Drop rounded measuring teaspoonfuls Nesselrode Cookie dough onto cookie sheet. Press glacé cherry half into center of each. Bake as directed.

COFFEE WREATHS (p. 114) Cut chilled Coffee Cookie dough into 16 equal pieces. Roll each piece on lightly floured surface into 20-inch rope. Cut in half. Fold each piece in half; twist loosely together. Shape each into a circle, pinching ends together. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. Brush with Vanilla Glaze when cool. Add a glacé cherry "bow" or top with sprinkles.

CHOCO-ORANGE PINWHEELS (p. 114) Roll half the Chocolate Cookie dough into 10 x 7-inch rectangle on lightly floured waxed paper. Repeat with half the Orange Cookie dough. Place orange dough on top of chocolate dough so waxed paper is on top and bottom. Peel off top paper. Starting with a long side, roll up doughs tightly, jelly-roll fashion, using bottom waxed paper to lift dough. Wrap and refrigerate until firm. Cut into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. Decorate with icing spirals.

CHOCO-ORANGE BULL'S EYES

With half the Chocolate Cookie dough, make an equal number of cookie balls, using a rounded measuring teaspoon and a rounded measuring half teaspoon. Repeat with half the Orange Cookie dough. Press an indentation into large balls. Press small balls into indentations, using both doughs for each cookie. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, swirl or drizzle melted semisweet chocolate or white icing over top of cookies.

MAPLE WALNUT PACKAGES (p. 107) Cut out rolled-out Maple Walnut Cookie dough with 2½ x 1¾-inch rectangular cutter. Place on cookie

10X (confectioners') sugar just before serving.

LIME SLICES (p. 107) Cut out rolled-out Lime Cookie dough with 2¼-inch round cookie cutter. Cut rounds in half. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, frost with Lime Glaze. Divide into "segments" with darker green icing.

ALMOND ICE-BOX SLICES (p. 107) Shape chilled Almond Cookie dough into 12-inch roll. Wrap and chill until very firm. Cut into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, dip half in melted semisweet chocolate.

WREATH COFFEECAKE

Makes 20 servings for \$3.29. Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes.

- ¾ cup water
- ¾ cup milk
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 5¼ to 5½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup sugar
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon grated orange rind
- 1 package (¼ ounce) quick-rising yeast
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup golden raisins
- Orange Glaze (recipe, page 118; optional)
- Pecan halves (optional)

1. Combine water, milk and butter in small saucepan. Heat on low heat until very warm (125° to 130° on instant-read thermometer).

2. Combine 3 cups of the flour, the sugar, salt, nutmeg, orange rind and yeast in large bowl of electric mixer. Add milk mixture. Beat on medium speed for 3 minutes. Stir in pecans and raisins. Stir in 2 cups of flour to make a soft dough.

3. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface. Knead 20 times, adding more flour as needed to prevent sticking. Place in a large greased bowl, turning to coat. Cover and let rise in a warm place, away from drafts, until doubled, 30 minutes.

4. Coat large baking sheet with cooking spray. Punch down dough. Transfer to the center of the prepared sheet. Pat or roll out dough into a 14-inch circle.

5. Using a plain round 2-inch cookie cutter or drinking glass, cut out circle in center of dough circle.

(Recipe continues on page 118)

Food Fact

BAKING HELP IS JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY!

Dial 1-800-782-9606, the Land O' Lakes Holiday Bakeline, where home economists are standing by to answer all your baking questions.

- When: From November 1 to December 24, 1993
- Time: From 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. (CST), 7 days a week

Bonus!
All callers will receive a free booklet, *Bake a Holiday Tradition*, which features favorite baking recipes from around the world—plus helpful baking tips for holiday time.

sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, frost with Vanilla Glaze. Pipe on an icing "ribbon."

MINT CANDY CANES (p. 107) Cut out rolled-out Mint Cookie dough with 4-inch candy cane cutter. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, frost with Vanilla Glaze. Add red licorice stripes, or sprinkle with chopped peppermint candies.

LINZER (HAZELNUT) TARTS (p. 114) Cut out rolled-out Hazelnut Cookie dough with 2-inch round cookie cutter. With ¾-inch round cutter, cut out centers in half the circles. Place on cookie sheet. Bake as directed. When cool, sandwich a whole and cutout cookie together with raspberry preserves. Sprinkle with