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Drizzled Ginger Snaps

Ginger snaps are a holiday favorite. This traditional spice flavored cookie is a classic, but you can dress it up with a little drizzle of white chocolate to make it truly special. This one is sure to become a go-to for years to come. Friends and family will want to know your secret recipe.

Make extra batches and box them up in these adorable [Christmas Cookie Gift Boxes](#) to send home with your guests. You're sure to be everyone's favorite party host!

Ingredients:

2 cups sugar
1-1/2 cups canola oil
2 large eggs
1/2 cups molasses
4 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons baking soda
3 teaspoons ground ginger
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar
2 packages white baking chips
1/4 cup shortening

1. Combine sugar and oil in a large bowl, then beat in eggs. Next, add molasses and mix throughout with a spoon. Combine the next 5 dry ingredients in a separate bowl. Slowly add to the creamed mixture while stirring well.
2. Roll into $\frac{3}{4}$ inch balls. Then roll balls in extra sugar to coat them. Place balls 2 inches apart on baking sheets that are ungreased. Bake at 350° 10 - 12 minutes. Cookies should spring back when lightly touched. Place on wire racks to cool.
3. Melt white baking chips and shortening together in microwave and stir until smooth. Drizzle cookies with mixture. Transfer to wax paper to allow chocolate to set.

Chocolate Crinkle Cookies

Chocolate crinkle cookies are sure to be a hit at your holiday gathering. Their chewy, fudgy goodness will be loved by guests of all ages. These delights are easy to make, but have a look that's fun and reminiscent of the holidays. The powdery white crackled tops are reminiscent of snow against the dark cocoa colored backdrop.

You can make these beauties at any time of the year, but they definitely add a special touch during the winter holiday season. If you want to add a bit of glamour, serve them up on a fancy [silver tray](#). that will impress your guests!

Ingredients:

1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 cups granulated sugar
1/2 cup unsalted butter
4 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup powdered sugar

1. Beat cocoa powder, sugar and butter at medium speed. Then add 1 egg at a time, beating at low speed until combined. Then mix in each of the remaining ingredients individually except for the powdered sugar. Cover the bowl and refrigerate mixture for 4 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. These [parchment sheets](#) are precut and simple to use. Roll dough into 1-inch balls, then coat in powdered sugar. Add to baking sheet, allowing at least 2 inches between each.
3. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cookies rest on sheet out of the oven for 1 minute. Then transfer to wire rack to cool completely.

Red Velvet Cake

Is any holiday complete without a beautiful red velvet cake? I think not. This classic cake is rich and decadent in both color and flavor. It adds the perfect touch of simple elegance to any celebration's table.

Plus, it's not as complicated as it looks. You'll be sure to impress your guests with this dessert without adding much stress to your prep time. It's definitely a win-win.

Here's a tip. This cake can be as fancy or as festive as you choose to make it. A nice cake stand can set either mood. Try a [shiny silver cake stand](#) to add elegance or a [fun and zany stand](#) for some personality.

Ingredients:

1 (2-layer size) box of German chocolate cake mix
1 (8-oz) container of sour cream
1/2 cup cooking oil
3 eggs
2 tablespoons red food coloring
White chocolate cream cheese frosting (see recipe below)

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Use two 9x1 ½ round cake pans and coat with nonstick cooking spray or grease and flour.
2. Beat cake mix, sour cream, water, oil, eggs and food coloring in large bowl with electric mixer on low for 30 seconds. Scrape sides of bowl and beat again on medium speed for 2 minutes.
3. Spread batter evenly into your pans. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. A toothpick inserted into the centers should come out clean when done.
4. Remove cakes from pans and cool completely on wire racks.
5. Spread white chocolate cream cheese frosting (recipe below) between layers, then on sides and on top of cake. .

White Chocolate Cream Cheese Frosting

Ingredients:

4 ounces white baking chocolate
1/2 cup butter, softened
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 tablespoon milk
4 cups powdered sugar

1. Melt white baking chocolate over low heat in small saucepan, stirring frequently. Then set aside and allow to cool for 10 minutes.
2. While baking chocolate cools, beat butter, cream cheese and vanilla on medium speed for 30 seconds in large bowl.

3. Gradually beat in 2 cups of powdered sugar. Beat in 1 tablespoon of milk. Then beat in remaining 2 cups of powdered sugar, gradually.
4. Beat in melted white chocolate until mixture is combined well.
5. If frosting is too thick, add additional milk 1 tablespoon at a time and beat until desired consistency forms.

Old-Fashioned Sugar Cookies

Sugar cookies are an old-fashioned favorite. This version offers a distinct hint of nutmeg and a crispy, puffy texture that's sure to please. Because the dough is prone to spreading a bit, it's best to stick with circles for these cookies. Simple shapes could work, too.



These cookies are fantastic unfrosted. Or feel free to touch them up with some canned frosting or even your favorite homemade icing. [Holiday Sprinkles](#), jimmies or other decorations could be a fun addition, as well. These old-fashioned sugar cookies can be presented in whatever way fits your get-together.

Ingredients:

4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1-1/4 cups shortening
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
3/4 cup buttermilk

Frosting, sprinkles, jimmies, other decorations (optional)

1. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and nutmeg into a medium bowl.
2. Beat shortening for 30 seconds in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar and beat until fluffy.
3. Next, add eggs and vanilla. Then beat well into the shortening and sugar mixture.
4. Add your flour mixture and buttermilk alternative to the new shortening mixture. Beat until mixed.
5. Divide final mixture in half. Wrap and chill for at least three hours.
6. Preheat oven to 375°. Roll dough $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick onto a lightly floured surface. Cut into desired shape with a 2" cutter. Place cookies 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets.
7. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to wire rack to cool. If desired, frost and decorate.



Peanut Butter Blossoms

Peanut Butter Blossom Cookies are one of our favorite cookies. Make sure to add some to your Christmas tray!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup dark brown sugar (packed)
- 1 cup butter (2 sticks)

1 cup smooth peanut butter
2 eggs
1/4 cup milk
2 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. salt
3-1/2 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda
1- (12 oz.) package of Hershey's kisses

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, cream the sugars, butter and peanut butter.
2. Beat in eggs, milk, and vanilla. Sift flour, salt and baking soda together and add slowly to the peanut butter/sugar mixture, mixing well until totally combined.
3. Shape into small balls (a little bigger than an inch) and roll in additional white sugar to coat.
4. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet for 12 minutes. Remove from oven, and press kiss into the center of cookie. Makes 4 dozen.

Buckeyes

Ingredients

1 lb. peanut butter
1-1/2 lbs. powdered sugar
1/2 lb. margarine, softened
1/2 tsp. vanilla
2 (12 oz.) pkgs. chocolate chips (milk or semi-sweet)

1. Blend the peanut butter, sugar, margarine, and vanilla in a large bowl. Shape into balls, set on a cookie sheet, and chill in freezer until hard.
2. Melt the chocolate chips in a double boiler. Using a toothpick, dip the balls in the melted chocolate to look like buckeyes.
3. Put on wax paper (on top of the same cookie sheets) and freeze until the chocolate is hard, or refrigerate for two hours. Can store in bags in the freezer. Yield: About 5 dozen

Gingerbread Men Cookies

Gingerbread men are just plain fun and nostalgic. They should have a spot on every holiday baking list. These cute little guys really stand out. Plus, they allow you to experiment with personalization and creativity.



You can decorate them to fit a specific theme or even to look like family members. Letting everyone decorate their own gingerbread person is also a fun activity for people of all ages. Be sure to pick up these awesome [gingerbread man cookie cutters](#) to have on hand for now and seasons to come.

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/3 cup molasses
1 large egg, room temperature
2-2/3 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
Your choice of frosting

1. Cream brown sugar and butter until mixture is light and fluffy. Beat in molasses, egg and water.
2. In separate bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients except frosting. Then, gradually beat into creamed mixture.

3. Divide dough in half. Shape each into a ball and cover. Refrigerate for approximately 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°. Roll each ball to ½” thick on lightly floured surface. Cut with floured ¼” cookie cutter. Then, place 2” apart on prepared baking sheets.
5. Bake about 8 - 10 minutes until edges are firm. Cool completely on wire racks.
6. Frost and decorate as desired.

Holiday Spritz Cookies

This delightful holiday cookie recipe is in many homes. They're buttery and spicy. Substitute a quality almond extract for the rum extract if you desire a sweeter version of this cookie. Don't forget, you'll definitely need a [cookie press](#) to get perfectly-shaped, fluffy cookies.

Have fun with the decorating. Brightly colored [edible stars](#) or shiny [sugar pearls](#) are perfect accents for these dainty little treats. Kids love to get involved in making these. This is one cookie that's sure to become a family tradition.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners sugar
1/4 cup salt
1 large egg, room temperature
1-1/2 teaspoons rum extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Cream butter, confectioners sugar and salt until fluffy. Beat in egg and extract. Then, gradually, beat in flour.
2. Using cookie press with the disc of your choice, press dough onto greased cookie sheets 1 inch apart.
3. Bake 6 - 9 minutes until bottoms are light brown. Allow to cool on pans for about 2 minutes, then remove to wire racks to cool completely.
4. Decorate as desired.

Hungarian Walnut Cookies

You may not be familiar with this cookie by name, but it's one you may recognize when you see it. These yummy little confections contain a simple walnut filling sweetly wrapped in a buttery dough.

If these are new to your holiday celebration, you're in for a treat. They're sure to become an annual favorite at your table or in your cookie swaps. Because these cookies are so cute, you'll want to consider gifting them in [clear-top boxes](#) like these for all your friends.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese, softened
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Filling:

2 large egg whites
1/3 cup sugar
3-1/2 cups ground walnuts
Confectioners sugar

1. Cream butter and cream cheese in large bowl until well blended. Gradually beat flour into creamed mixture. Divide dough into three portions. Shape each into circles and cover in plastic. Refrigerate 1 hour so that dough is firm enough to roll.
2. Preheat oven to 375°. To make filling, beat egg whites and vanilla on medium speed in a small bowl. Gradually add sugar 1 tablespoon at a time, blending on medium after each, until well blended. Finally, stir in walnuts.
3. Coat work surface with generous amount of confectioners sugar. Roll one portion of dough 1/8" thick. Sprinkle with extra confectioners sugar as necessary to keep dough coated. Cut dough into 16 3" squares.
4. Next, take 2 tablespoons of filling and shape into a 2"-long log. Place on a square of dough diagonally. Then, overlap corners of dough over filling, pinching to seal. Repeat with remainder of dough and filling, placing finished cookies 2" apart on
5. greased cookie sheets.
6. Bake 9 - 12 minutes until bottoms are golden brown. Place immediately on wire racks to cool. Then dust with confectioners sugar.

Eggnog Cheesecake

Eggnog is a uniquely holiday taste. Not everyone enjoys the texture of the creamy drink, but you'd be surprised how receptive they might be to eggnog flavor in deliciously decadent dessert. That's where this extraordinary cheesecake comes in.

The mellow spiced flavor of eggnog combines beautifully with creamy cheesecake. Rum extract gives this recipe just the right amount of special warmth. The cheesecake lover on your list will thank you for preparing this recipe.

Ingredients:

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
2 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons butter, melted

Filling:

3 (8 oz.) packages of cream cheese, softened
1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3/4 cup eggnog
1/2 teaspoon rum extract
Dash of ground nutmeg
Optional whipped cream and additional nutmeg

1. Place a greased 9" springform pan on a double layer of aluminum foil. Then, wrap the foil around the edges of the pan securely.
2. Combine cracker crumbs, sugar and butter in small bowl. Press into bottom of prepared pan. Place pan on baking sheet and bake in 325° oven for 10 minutes. Allow to cool on wire rack.
3. Beat cream cheese, sugar and flour in large bowl until smooth. Add eggs and beat on low speed just until combined. Stir eggnog, rum extract and nutmeg gradually into mixture. Pour filling over crust.
4. Place springform pan in large baking pan and add 1" of hot water to bottom of large pan.
5. Bake at 325° for 45 - 50 minutes until top looks dull and center is set. Remove springform pan from water bath and allow to cool on wire rack for 10 minutes. Run knife carefully around edges to loosen. Cool for another hour. Refrigerate overnight if you'd like. Garnish with optional whipped cream and nutmeg if desired.

Fig and Almond Cookies

Buttery, flaky fig and almond cookies may not be a household name, but they may soon be a new family favorite. These cookies bring unique flavors together with the decadence of figs and the crunch of almonds. A light, sweetened glaze drizzled on top is the finishing touch that completes this complex cookie.

You'll need a food processor to grind the almonds. If you don't have one and aren't ready to invest in a fancy model, give this [food chopper by Ninja](#) a try. It's highly rated on Amazon and seems well-worth the reasonable investment.

Ingredients:

2 large eggs, room temperature
1 tablespoon cold water
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 cups confectioners sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons cold butter, cubed

Filling:

8 oz. or 1-1/3 cups dried figs
3 tablespoons unblanched almonds
2 tablespoons apricot preserves
4 teaspoons orange juice

Glaze:

1 cup confectioners sugar
2 tablespoons 2% milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. In a small bowl, whisk together eggs, cold water and vanilla until blended. Add flour, confectioners sugar, baking powder and salt in food processor and pulse until blended. Add butter, pulse until texture is crumbly. Continue pulsing while adding egg mixture. Pulse until combined.
2. Divide dough in half and shape each into a ball. Cover. Refrigerate an hour until it's firm enough to roll.
3. Wipe food processor out, then add figs and almonds. Pulse until chopped. Add preserves and juice. Pulse until combined.
4. Preheat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured work surface, roll each circle of dough into a 10" x 8" rectangle. Cut each of those lengthwise into four 2" wide strips.
5. Spread approximately 2 tablespoons of your filling down the middle of each strip. Fold dough over filling, pinching edges to seal. Roll each gently into log shape. Cut into 1" pieces.

6. Place cookies 1" apart on baking sheets lined with parchment paper. Bake 10 - 12 minutes until lightly brown. Place cookies on wire racks to cool completely.
7. Mix glaze ingredients in small bowl until smooth. Drizzle over cookies. Then, let stand until set.

Italian Christmas Cookies

The secret ingredient in these Italian favorites is ricotta cheese. It makes them extra moist and delicious. You'll definitely want to make extra to share with friends, family and co-workers. Everyone loves these simple, yet flavorful, little batches of love.

Consider picking up a [cookie carrier](#) to take a batch of these Italian Christmas Cookies to the office party or your friend's potluck. This recipe is sure to be a hit at any type of gathering.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 (15 oz.) carton ricotta cheese
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

Frosting:

- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 3 to 4 cups confectioners sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 to 4 tablespoons milk

Colored sprinkles (optional)

1. Cream butter and sugar in a large bowl.. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each. Beat in ricotta and vanilla. In small bowl, combine flour, salt and baking soda. Gradually add to creamed mixture.
2. Drop by the tablespoon 2" apart onto greased baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 10 - 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Place on wire racks immediately to cool.

3. In a large bowl, cream butter, confectioners sugar and vanilla, with enough milk to ensure frosting is spreadable. Frost cookies and immediately decorate with sprinkles if desired.

Brown Butter Pound Cake

This brown butter pound cake recipe is so decadent, yet rather simple. Its tasty glaze tastes just like pralines. You'll want to devour it all by itself. It will make a festive ending to any family holiday meal, and your guests will surely rave.

You'll want a good **quality bundt pan** to make this cake look fancy and to ensure it bakes up spongy and even. Try [this one](#) with a 95% five-star rating on Amazon.

Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups unsalted butter, softened
2-1/4 cups packed brown sugar
5 large eggs, room temperature
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup sour cream

Glaze:

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/4 cup chopped pecans
1 cup confectioners sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
Dash salt
2 to 3 tablespoons half and half

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour your bundt pan.
2. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Beat in vanilla.
3. In separate bowl, whisk flour, baking powder and salt. Add to creamed mixture, alternating with sour cream. Beat well after each addition until just combined.
4. Transfer mixture to prepared pan. Bake 55 - 60 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Then, remove to wire rack to complete cooling.

5. For glaze, combine butter and pecans in small pan over medium heat. Stir constantly 4 - 5 minutes until butter is a light golden brown color. Stir into bowl with confectioners sugar. Add vanilla and salt, with enough cream to reach consistency for drizzling. Drizzle over top of cake, allowing glaze to run down sides. Then let set completely.

Chocolate Marshmallow Delights

(These are easy and very good if you love chocolate.)

2 pkgs. (12 oz. each) semi-sweet chocolate chips
1/2 stick butter
6 cups. chocolate rice cereal (like Cocoa Krispies)
4 cups. mini marshmallows

1. Spray a 9x13 pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large, deep saucepan, melt the chocolate chips and margarine over low heat, stirring constantly until smooth and all chips are melted. Remove from heat.
3. Add the cereal and the marshmallows to the melted chocolate, stirring until all is well-coated. Spread mix evenly in pan, and refrigerate until firm. Cut into squares. Store leftovers in refrigerator.

Holiday Almond Bars

Want a quick and easy dessert that makes a statement? These holiday almond bars just might fit the bill. They're dense, yet flaky, and their almond flavor is so sweet and rich. You might be tempted to keep them all for yourself!

You'll need a [13 x 9 baking dish](#) for these bars. A classic Pyrex dish with a lid works great, as it's easy for storage and transport.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup almond paste
2-1/4 cups sugar, divided
2 large eggs, room temperature
1 teaspoon almond extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup slivered almonds

1. Cream butter, almond paste and 2 cups sugar in large bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and extract. Gradually add in flour, mix just until moistened.
2. Spread into greased 13 x 9 baking dish. Sprinkle with what's left of the sugar. Top with almonds.
3. Bake at 350° for 30 - 35 minutes until toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Cool on wire rack. Cut into squares and store in the refrigerator.

Pecan Meltaways

Chances are, you'll recognize these sweet little balls covered in confectioners sugar. Pecan meltaways are a favorite at the holidays and any time of the year. They look festive on cookie trays. But you can make them for any occasion, and folks will love them.

These crunchy treats are elegant in appearance, yet so simple to make. You'll want to whip up a batch any time. They're especially loved during the holidays, though. You'll definitely want to add them to your holiday cookie roster.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup chopped pecans
Additional confectioners sugar

1. Cream butter and sugar in large bowl until light and fluffy. Then, beat in vanilla. Combine flour and salt in separate small bowl. Gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in pecans. Refrigerate until chilled.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. Roll dough into 1" balls and place on ungreased cookie sheets 1" apart. Bake until set, approximately 10 - 12 minutes. Roll warm cookies in confectioners sugar. Allow to cool completely on wire racks. Then roll once more in confectioners sugar.

Snickerdoodles

Snickerdoodles are a holiday classic. They're coated in cinnamon, crispy on the outside and soft in the middle. An added bonus is the lovely scent that will waft throughout your home as you bake them.



Their simplicity and deliciousness have made them a popular winter holiday tradition for generations. And isn't "snickerdoodle" just the cutest word? These cookies can be made ahead and frozen, which can really help to lighten your holiday baking load.

Ingredients:

Cinnamon Sugar Coating:

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon

Cookies:

- 1 cup shortening
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Lightly line baking sheets or line with parchment paper.
3. Combine cinnamon and sugar in shallow bowl or pie plate.
4. Beat shortening until smooth and creamy in mixing bowl. Gradually beat in 1 ½ cups of sugar. Beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add eggs and beat well. Stir in vanilla extract.
5. Sift flour, baking soda, salt and cream of tartar in separate bowl. Add these to creamed mixture and stir until blended.
6. Shape dough into 1" balls. Roll in cinnamon sugar mixture.
7. Place cookies 1" apart on prepared baking sheets.
8. Bake for about 6 minutes or until lightly browned. Place immediately on wire racks to cool.

Flourless Peanut Butter Cookies

Peanut butter cookies are a favorite of many. They're perfect for any time when you get a craving for something sweet, but they really do make a nice addition to any [holiday cookie tray](#).

This version is flourless. That makes it perfect for anyone with a wheat allergy or sensitivity to gluten. In addition, it uses almond milk, so it works for those who are lactose intolerant or who may be allergic to dairy. Enjoy making these simple treats any time of the year.

Ingredients:

1 cup peanut butter
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup light brown sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon unsweetened almond milk
1 tablespoon baking soda

1. Preheat oven to 300°.
2. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Cream peanut butter and sugars in large bowl with electric mixer until well combined.
4. Add egg, mixing until combined. Then the baking soda. Mix until combined.
5. Drop the dough by the teaspoon onto the prepared sheet. Bake 10 - 12 minutes until golden brown and surfaces crack.
6. Allow to cool completely in the pan.

Christmas Tree Cake

Bring back the nostalgia of retro Christmas trees past with this festive cake. It's pretty, bright and chic all rolled up in one. Plus, this cake is simply delicious and moist. Topped with classic buttercream icing, you can't go wrong.

Not to mention the fun shape! You'll need this nifty [Christmas tree-shaped cake pan](#) and [edible decorative light bulbs](#) to complete the look. This cute little number is perfect for a family gathering, office get-together or for a kids' classroom party. Everyone will want a piece.

Ingredients:

Cake:

Baking spray with flour
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour, leveled
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2/3 cup whole milk, room temperature

Buttercream:

2 cups confectioners sugar, sifted
1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Coat Christmas tree pan with baking spray. In small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt.
2. Beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy with electric mixer, 2 - 4 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each. Beat in vanilla. Reduce speed to low, add flour and milk, alternating between the two, until incorporated.
3. Spread batter into prepared pan. Bake 25 - 30 minutes, until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack for 10 minutes. Then, invert onto rack to cool completely.

4. To make frosting, beat sugar, butter and salt with electric mixer on medium until light and fluffy, about 2 - 3 minutes. Next, beat in milk also until fluffy, another 2 - 3 minutes. Beat in vanilla. Then, frost top and sides of cake. Place lightbulb decorations randomly on top of cake to decorate.

Walnut Crescent Cookies

These cookies full of nutty goodness and covered in confectioners sugar are a classic. Their crescent moon shape is recognizable and will take you back to childhood. However, this is one cookie that isn't overdone. So, you're sure to get a ton of oohs and ahs when you add it to your cookie display or bring it to your next holiday gathering.

These crescent shapes aren't as tricky as they look. You can easily cut them out with a [crescent-shaped cookie cutter](#). As an alternative, you could even choose to make full-moon shapes with the bottom of a glass or cookie cutter. The choice is up to you.

Ingredients:

4 oz. butter, room temperature
1/3 cup sugar
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup ground walnuts
Dash of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup confectioners sugar

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. In medium bowl, beat butter and sugar with electric mixer until light and fluffy.
3. Add flour, walnuts, salt and vanilla. Mix together to form a smooth dough.
4. Roll out dough to 1/4" thick. Use cookie cutter to cut out crescent or other desired shapes. Gather scraps of dough, reroll and cut into shapes.
5. Bake on parchment lined cookie sheets for 10 - 12 minutes until set.
6. Allow to stand for 2 minutes, then roll warm cookies in confectioners sugar. Place on wire racks to cool.
7. When completely cool, reroll cookies in confectioners sugar. Store in airtight container.

Peppermint Bark Cheesecake

A signature flavor of the holidays is peppermint. It's yummy and refreshing. Add chocolate, and the combination is even better. You might think it's not possible to improve on a classic, but you'd be wrong.

This peppermint bark cheesecake is a unique, yet sophisticated, flavor combination that's sure to wow your guests. The crunch of the candy canes and the smooth texture of the cheesecake offer a lovely contrast. Plus, it's simply a lovely dessert for your holiday table.

Ingredients:

Crust:

24 Oreos, crushed
4 tablespoons butter, melted
Pinch kosher salt

Cheesecake:

4 (8 oz.) blocks cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup salt
3 large eggs
1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
9 oz. white chocolate, chopped, melted and slightly cooled
6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1/2 cup chopped candy canes, plus extra for topping
Whipped topping for garnish
Chocolate shavings for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Coat 8" springform pan with cooking spray. In large bowl, mix together Oreos, melted butter and salt. Press into bottom and sides of prepared pan.
2. In large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth with no lumps. Add eggs, one at a time, then stir in peppermint extract. Add flour and salt. Beat until combined.
3. Fold in white chocolate until smooth. Then, fold in semi-sweet chocolate and candy canes. Pour mixture over crust.

4. Wrap bottom of pan in aluminum foil. Place in large roasting pan. Add boiling water, enough to reach halfway up sides of baking pan.
5. Bake an hour and 20 minutes, or until center of cheesecake jiggles slightly. Turn off heat. Prop oven door open and allow cheesecake to cool for an hour.
6. Remove foil. Refrigerate cheesecake until chilled, at least 5 hours or overnight.
7. Spread layer of whipped topping on cheesecake. Dollop more topping around the edges.
8. Sprinkle top with crushed candy canes and chocolate shavings for garnish.

Pumpkin Cake

Pumpkin isn't just for fall. This seasonal favorite flavor can easily transition into the winter months. That's why this easy pumpkin cake belongs on any holiday baking list. It's so moist and fluffy. You and your guests won't be able to stop at just one piece.

This delicious recipe calls for a 9" x 13" rectangle cake pan, but you can also use two 9" round pans to make a beautiful double layer cake. We like the simple option of one layer and just one pan to clean, but the choice is up to you.

Ingredients:

Cooking spray

2 cup. all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened

1 cup packed brown sugar

1/2 cup granulated sugar

4 large eggs

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin puree

Frosting:

1 (8 oz.) block cream cheese, softened

4 tablespoon butter, softened

2 cup powdered sugar

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Pinch kosher salt

Crushed gingersnaps, for topping

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 9"-x-13" baking pan with parchment paper and coat with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, and ginger.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars together until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each one. Add vanilla and pumpkin puree and beat until incorporated. Add dry ingredients and mix until combined.
3. Pour batter into prepared baking pan. Smooth top with spatula. Bake until a toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean, 30 minutes. Let cool completely.
4. Make frosting: In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar and beat until no lumps remain, then add vanilla and a pinch of salt.
5. Lift cake out of pan by parchment paper and place on serving platter or cutting board. Frost cake with an awesome [offset spatula](#) top with crushed gingersnaps.

Tres Leches Cake

Looking for a light and airy dessert to add a touch of culture and class to your holidays? This cake is a Latin American tradition. The name means "three milks", and that's because there are, indeed, three different types of milk used in the recipe.

This version uses sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk and whole milk in the cake recipe. Heavy cream is used in the topping to add an extra bit of decadence. You're in for a real treat if you've never tried this simple, yet delicious cake.

Ingredients:

Cake:

Cooking spray

1-1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon. kosher salt

5 large eggs, separated

1-1/4 cup granulated sugar, divided

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/2 cup milk

1/4 cup melted butter, cooled

Filling:

1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Whipped cream:

2 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup sugar

Garnish:

1/4 cup [cinnamon sugar](#)
Sliced strawberries, for serving

1. Preheat oven to 350° and grease a 9" x 13" baking pan with cooking spray. In a large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. In another large bowl, beat together egg yolks and 1 cup of sugar until stiff ribbons form, then beat in vanilla and set aside.
3. In a third large bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form then gradually add in remaining 1/4 cup sugar and continue beating until stiff peaks form.
4. Add yolk mixture to dry ingredients and beat together. Add in milk and melted butter and beat until combined. Gently fold in egg whites until just combined. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake until a toothpick inserted into middle of cake comes out clean, 30 minutes. Let cool.
5. In a medium bowl whisk together sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk, milk, and vanilla. Using a fork, poke holes all over cake, then pour milk mixture evenly over cake. Cover and place in refrigerator until all of the mixture is absorbed, at least 1 hour.
6. When ready to serve make whipped cream: In a large bowl, beat together heavy cream and sugar until stiff peaks form. Frost cake with whipped cream and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Serve with strawberries or other fresh fruit.

Meltaway Butter Cookies

These simple butter cookies are so rich, yet easy to make. They're a versatile addition to your cookie lineup because you can shape them in whatever way you wish. Cylinders, logs or cutout cookies are all possible with this flexible dough.

You and your guests will adore the vanilla and almond extract combination of this particular recipe. The melt in your mouth texture is a lovely surprise. Give these a try, and they'll be sure to be an annual holiday favorite in your household.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, room temperature
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2/3 cup confectioners sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour, sift before measuring
Optional: 1/2 cup sugar or [colored sugar](#)

1. Cream butter until light and fluffy. Beat in salt, almond extract, and vanilla extract.
2. Gradually blend in confectioners sugar. Then blend in sifted flour.
3. Chill for about 1 hour or until dough becomes firm.
4. Preheat oven to 400°.
5. Shape dough into rolls about 3/4" diameter, then cut to 3/4" length.
6. Place, ends up, on ungreased baking sheets. Press lightly with the bottom of a glass covered with a damp cloth. Optionally, sprinkle cookies with colored sugar or granulated sugar.
7. Bake at 400° for about 10 minutes.

Three-Ingredient Coconut Macaroons

The holidays are a busy time of the year. While baking can be a lot of fun, it can also be time-consuming. That's why quick and easy recipes like this one for coconut macaroons that contain only a few ingredients should be a part of your holiday routine.

Another great thing about this recipe is that these macaroons are gluten-free. They're a great treat for those with allergies or sensitivities. Plus, they're quick to whip up when you need a last-minute addition to a potluck or festive gathering.

Ingredients:

5-1/2 cups sweetened flaked coconut, gently packed
1-14 ounce can sweetened condensed milk
2 to 3 teaspoons vanilla extract

1. Heat the oven to 325°.

2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper or nonstick foil. Spray the paper or foil with nonstick cooking spray.
3. In a bowl, combine coconut, sweetened condensed milk and vanilla extract. Blend well.
4. Grease a teaspoon or cookie scoop or spray it with nonstick cooking spray. Using the teaspoon or cookie scoop, drop coconut mixture onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving about 1 1/2 inches between the cookies.
5. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until lightly browned around the edges.
6. Immediately move cookies to rack to cool.

Chocolate Almond Torte

This torte is absolutely chocolatey and decadent. It looks so sophisticated and complex, yet the recipe only calls for 5 simple ingredients. Make this holiday season all about simple elegance by adding this lovely torte to your table.

It's moist and luscious. Your guests will think you've slaved all day over a hot stove. You don't need to tell them just what a breeze this number was to make. This is a great option to throw together before the extended family potluck or to take as a hostess gift for that last-minute party you were invited to.

Ingredients:

2 sticks unsalted butter
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
9 ounces good-quality dark chocolate
6 large eggs
1 cup superfine sugar
2 ounces of almonds

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly butter 10" springform cake pan, then set aside.
2. In a heatproof bowl over a pan of gently simmering water, melt butter and chocolate together. Stir until combined. Set aside to cool.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks with sugar until pale and fluffy. Gradually pour melted chocolate into egg mixture. Stir constantly. Fold in almonds. Set aside.
4. In a large bowl, beat egg whites on medium until stiff peaks form. Fold egg whites into chocolate mixture just until combined. Then, pour mixture into prepared pan and bake for 35 minutes. Place torte to wire rack to cool in pan completely for at least an hour.

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