

An Unlikely Culinary Column: All Things Peppermint

By Karen Kain

I often refer to my old standby recipes for holiday sweets but this year I wanted to try something new. I have never really cooked with peppermint and have never made Biscotti, so, of course, I had to give it a whirl. I must add, while making Biscotti was a bit time consuming, it is a simple recipe to follow. I definitely will make this again.

Just a warning... the other two recipes are very sweet. I knew when I found them they would be rich, but as they say, "A little dab will do ya!" I really enjoyed cooking this pepperminty theme. I think each of these sweet treats will go perfectly with your afternoon tea.

Thank you to those who have been giving me great recipe ideas, I am working on a few fabulous dishes. Have a great holiday season folks.

Peppermint Biscotti

Ingredients:

Biscotti:

- ¾ Cup Butter softened
- ¾ Cup Sugar
- 3 Eggs
- 2 Teaspoons peppermint extract
- 3 ¼ Cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ Teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup crushed peppermint candies



Frosting:

- 2 Cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
 - 2 Tablespoons shortening
 - ½ Cup crushed peppermint candies
- (In lieu of making your own frosting you can use Dolci Frutta hard chocolate shell.)

Instructions:

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; stir in peppermint candy. Gradually add to creamed mixture, beating until blended (dough will be stiff).

Divide dough in half. On an ungreased baking sheet, shape each portion into a 12-in. x 2½-in. rectangle. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Carefully remove to wire racks; cool for 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; cut diagonally with a sharp knife into ½-inch slices. Place cut side down on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.

In a microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until

smooth. Drizzle (or brush) over biscotti; sprinkle with candy. Place on waxed paper until set. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** about 3½ dozen

become lightly browned. Remove to wire racks and cool.

For frosting – Beat butter until fluffy. Add confectioner's sugar, milk, extract; beat until smooth. Spread over cooled cookies; sprinkle with crushed candies. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 3 ½ dozen.



Peppermint Candy

- 2 Cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 Cans (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 Cup white baking chips
- 2 Teaspoons peppermint extract

3-4 Drops green food coloring

Instructions:

In a small saucepan, melt 1 cup of chocolate chips with ¾ cup condensed milk. Heat over low heat and stir frequently. Line an 8 inch square dish with waxed paper then butter the paper. Once the chocolate is melted spread over the waxed paper. Allow to chill. Melt the white chocolate in ½ cup of condensed milk, stirring frequently. Once the chocolate is melted and combined remove from heat and stir in the peppermint extract and food coloring. Spread over the chocolate layer and refrigerate to set. Cook the remaining 1 cup of chocolate and condensed milk until melted and spread over the layered mixture. Refrigerate and cut into 1 inch pieces.

You can contact Karen Kain by email: karenkain8@icloud.com.



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