



## FAMILY FEATURES

The next best thing to baking cookies for many home chefs is baking cookies with friends. Dust off your favorite recipes, create a festive playlist and fill your home with the tantalizing aroma of baked goodies for the ultimate Christmas cookie party.

Turn things up a notch and swap classic sugar cookies for these festive Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies, Peppermint Truffle Cookies and Almond Gingerbread Cookies. Along with those tasty treats, don't let your guests go thirsty. Add peppermint extract to a slow cooker hot chocolate so guests can sip and be merry throughout the party.

Find more holiday recipes at McCormick.com.

**Peppermint Truffle Cookies**

- 8 ounces bittersweet baking chocolate
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 1 cup sugar, divided
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Pure Peppermint Extract
- 2 cups flour
- 36 milk chocolate kiss-shaped candies, unwrapped

Heat oven to 350 F.

In large, microwavable bowl, heat chocolate and butter on high 1-2 minutes, or until butter is melted. Let stand 10 minutes to cool slightly. Add 1/2 cup sugar, egg and peppermint extract. Beat with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Gradually beat in flour on low speed until well mixed.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Press chocolate candy into center of each ball, forming dough around candy to enclose it. Roll in remaining sugar to coat. Place 1 inch apart on greased baking sheets.

Bake 9-11 minutes, or until cookies are set. Cool on baking sheets 5 minutes. Remove to wire racks; cool completely.

# Throw a *Christmas Cookie* Party

**Almond Gingerbread Cookies**

- 3 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons McCormick Ginger, Ground
- 1 teaspoon McCormick Cinnamon, Ground
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Nutmeg, Ground
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) butter, softened
- 3/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1 1/3 cups sliced almonds

In large bowl, mix flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg and salt.

In separate large bowl, beat butter and brown sugar with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg and vanilla extract; beat well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Press dough into thick, flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 4 hours, or as long as overnight.

Heat oven to 350 F. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in sliced almonds, pressing almonds into dough. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake 8-10 minutes, or until edges of cookies just begin to brown. Remove to wire racks; cool completely. Store cookies in airtight container up to 5 days.

**Slow Cooker Peppermint Hot Chocolate**

- 1/2 gallon (8 cups) whole milk
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 package (12 ounces) dark chocolate chips

- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Pure Peppermint Extract

Place whole milk, condensed milk, chocolate chips and peppermint extract in slow cooker. Cover. Cook 60-70 minutes on high, or until chocolate is melted and mixture is heated through, stirring every 15 minutes.

Reduce heat to warm or low to serve.

**Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies**

- 1 2/3 cups flour
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons McCormick Red Food Color
- 1 teaspoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- nonstick cooking spray

In medium bowl, mix flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt; set aside. In large bowl, beat butter and granulated sugar with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, food color

and vanilla extract; mix well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Refrigerate 4 hours.

Heat oven to 350 F. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in confectioners' sugar to completely coat. Place 2 inches apart on baking sheets sprayed with nonstick cooking spray.

Bake 10-12 minutes, or until cookies are puffed. Cool on baking sheets 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks; cool completely.

