

Christmas Memories

Christmas is all about childhood memories, so it's a great time to bring kids into the kitchen to create some.

What were some of your favorite things to do in the kitchen when you were a child? Think back to your own memories growing up, and try to bring those same pleasant experiences to your own family this year.

Pass Down Traditions

Most families have their own holiday treat recipes that have been passed down for generations. Getting children involved can help them learn these same traditions and remember where they came from.

The taste of Grandma's Christmas goodies is something they'll cherish after they're grown. Memories of actually baking those treats with Grandma could be cherished even more.

Ask for Input

Before the holiday season begins, talk over your plans with your children and see what they'd like to add. When kids get a chance to have input on what you're doing, they're more likely to enjoy it and get excited about the process.

Ask them how much food they think you should make and who you should give it to. Letting them pick some of their friends' families to get Christmas treats is a good way to teach young children the spirit of generosity.

Ingredient Dumping

Choose recipes that involve measuring ingredients that are easy for children to dump into mixing bowls. Let each child take turns pouring things like sugar and flour into a bowl so they feel like they're really participating in the Christmas baking process.

When the food comes out of the oven, they'll know they played a part in how delicious it tastes. Be sure to remind them that their help is part of the reason it tastes so good.

Creativity

Decorating foods such as sugar cookies can help your child use their imagination. Using unconventional foods like licorice and colorful candies to decorate their cookies gives them the freedom to make their own baked artwork.

One fun thing to do is simply provide the decorating tools and let the children make their own decisions about how to decorate their own treats. You never know what they might come up with: a Christmas dinosaur on a cookie, or ice princesses on a cake. Whatever they make, take pictures so you can remember the fun after your children are grown.

Forgiving by Design

You should choose recipes that don't require looking perfect so that when children bake with you, you won't have to nitpick their work.

When food needs to look perfect, one good idea is making two batches: one for the kids to help create and eat, and the other to look prettier for your guests. That way children can have fun and actually bake their own treats – which is both a good way to make memories and teach them about cooking at the same time – without worrying about presentation.

Wash Up

Use the holidays to teach your children how to prepare to cook. Younger children, especially, can enjoy getting involved in preparing the kitchen and washing their hands before they start to make foods.

CHRISTMAS

at



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