



DON'T HESITATE giving a gift from your kitchen for those with little and those with much do appreciate a thoughtful remembrance that has taken your time and talent with the mixing bowl and recipe file. This sort of Christmas gift is particularly appreciated by those unable to cook, who have no facilities or time. Right now is the time to get busy before you are swept up in that wonderful last minute chaos that women all love, admit it or not.

FOOD GIFTS ALWAYS WELCOME

The gay holiday season is fast approaching, and with it comes the popular tradition of making festive Christmas cookies. Now is a good time to invite a few friends over for a cookie-baking, recipe-sharing party.

New recipes to share are candy cookies, rich cookies made to look like your favorite candy. Easy-to-make, crisp Peanut Fingers are topped with chocolate and nuts making an unusual taste treat. And Ambrosia Balls, with orange and coconut right inside, are a delightful variation of the familiar Russian tea cakes.

Following the old tradition of hanging cookies on the tree, why not create a candy cookie tree by trimming a miniature tree with Painted Pops? Copied from the kids' favorite lollipops, Painted Pops are fun for the whole family to make—and even the young pre-schooler can help "supervise" the decorating of his own Painted Pops.

AMBROSIA BALLS
1 cup soft butter
1/2 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
2 1/4 cups sifted flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1 cup finely cut coconut
1 tbsp. grated orange rind
Mix butter, sugar, vanilla thoroughly. Sift flour and salt and stir in. Mix in coconut and orange rind. Chill dough. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Form into one inch balls. Place about two inches apart on ungreased baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, until set but not brown. While still warm, roll in confectioners' sugar. Let cool, then roll again in sugar. Makes about 4 dozen.

PEANUT FINGERS
1/2 cup soft shortening
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar (packed)
1 egg
1 1/4 cups sifted flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. soda
1/4 tsp. salt
4 small plain chocolate bars, melted
1/2 cup salt peanuts, crushed
Mix shortening, peanut butter, sugars, egg thoroughly. Sift dry ingredients together; stir in. Chill about 1 hr. Heat oven to 375 degrees (quick mod.). Put through cookie press, making 2 1/2 inch

length cookies. Use star shape plate. Bake on greased baking sheet about two inches apart. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, until lightly browned. When cool dip one end in melted chocolate and then in crushed peanuts. Makes about 6 dozen cookies.

Melt chocolate in glass custard cup over hot water. Keep over hot water while dipping cookies.

PAINTED POPS
1 1/2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
1 cup butter
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla
1/4 tsp. almond flavoring
2 1/4 cups sifted flour
1 tsp. soda
1 tsp. cream of tartar

Mix sugar and butter. Add egg, flavorings; mix thoroughly. Sift dry ingredients; stir into butter mixture. Refrigerate 2 to 3 hours. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Roll on lightly floured pastry cloth 3-16 inch thick. Cut into 1 1/4 inch circles. Paint half the cookies with Egg Yolk Paint (recipe below). Bake 6 to 8 minutes.

To assemble, spread Easy Creamy Icing (recipe below) on flat side of baked cookie. Place a colored pick or two inch length of colored plastic straw across the middle letting one end extend beyond edge of cookie. Place another cookie on top (flat sides together); press down slightly. Makes 6 doz.

Egg Yolk Paint: Blend 1 egg yolk, 1/4 tsp. water. Divide into 2 or 3 custard cups. Add food coloring as desired. Paint designs with small paintbrushes, using a separate brush for each color. If paint thickens on standing, add a few drops of water.

Easy Creamy Icing: Blend 2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar, 1/4 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. vanilla or other flavoring and about 2 tbsp. water or 3 tbsp. cream.

Butter, before it was known to be edible, was used by the ancient Greeks as a lamp oil. Today, butter is one of the most important staples in the American diet.

Specialties in Gourmet

By RUTH KING

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Time To Make Date Fruit Cake

When rich, wonderfully-flavored "Desert Fruit Cake" is cut, each slice has a colorful, mosaic-like appearance, with fresh California dates, raisins, candied cherries, Brazil nuts and almonds studding the light cake batter.

Festively decorated with additional fresh dates and candied cherries, the cake is neither difficult nor time-consuming to make. For a gala holiday dessert, serve thin slices with hot mulled wine or spiced cocoa with a whipped cream topping.

DESERT FRUIT CAKE

2 cups fresh California dates

1 cup golden raisins
1/2 cup candied cherries
1 1/2 cups Brazil nuts
1 1/2 cups blanched almonds
1/2 cup sifted all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 eggs
1/4 cup light brown sugar (packed)
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons soft butter or margarine

Pit dates and cut in halves. Rinse, drain and dry raisins. Combine dates, raisins, whole cherries and nuts. Add 1/4 cup of the flour and toss to coat. Sift remaining 1/2 cup flour with baking powder and salt. Beat eggs well. Gradually beat in sugar, beating until very thick. Add vanilla and butter and beat until well blended. Fold in flour mixture, then fruit-nut mixture. Turn into two greased and floured loaf pans (8 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches). Bake in moderately slow oven (325 degrees F.) 45 to 50 minutes. Turn out and cool on wire racks. Wrap cakes in foil or waxed paper and let stand at least four days before serving. Cut into very thin slices to serve. Makes two loaves.

Note: Cake may be baked in 9-inch square pan, if desired.



HANDSOME "Desert Fruit Cake" is rich with the flavor of sun-ripened, rich-flavored California dates. For a gala holiday dessert serve thin slices with hot mulled wine or spiced cocoa with whipped cream topping.

TOKAYS SPARK SALAD

Texture and color are so important in salads. To capture these pleasing qualities, combine crisp shredded cabbage and carrots with halved, seeded Flame Tokay grapes. Tossed with your favorite vinegar and oil—or mayonnaise dressing—they make a sparkling fall salad attractive on the table and delicious to taste.

GOLDEN PANCAKE SYRUP

Are you tired of ordinary pancake syrup and in need of a change? Here's an unusual one you can whip up yourself while the pancakes are on the griddle. Add 1-3 cup brown sugar (packed) to 2 cups apricot whole fruit nectar and heat to boiling... a golden delicious syrup in no time at all.

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