

# Baking Goodies For Santa? Then Let The Flour Fly!

BY DAPHNE McWHITE



Hey, don't overlook the kitchen when it comes to spending special holiday time with your kids. Believe me, cooking with your child can be fun, and the happy memories far outweigh the mess!

**McWHITE** You just haven't lived until you see a 5- and 2-year-old up to their elbows in flour making cookies for Santa and his reindeer!

One of the most intriguing questions for children at Christmastime is, "Which goodies would you like to leave for Santa on Christmas Eve?" This week's food section features recipes that give kids lots of answers to that magical question!

So, come on, parents and grandparents, join your little ones in the kitchen, have the time of your life, and let the flour fly!

The first four recipes are from a fantastic cookbook for kids called *My Very Own Christmas* by Robin West, 1993, Carolrhoda Books. The book has recipes and crafts well-suited for children. Thanks to Lisa Andrews, a kindergarten teacher at Union Primary, for sharing this book with my children and me.

## RUDOLPH'S PEANUT BUTTER OAT TREATS

½ cup margarine, melted  
½ cup peanut butter  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 cup oatmeal (not instant)

In a medium bowl, combine melted margarine, peanut butter and brown sugar. Stir well. With your hands, roll oatmeal mixture into 1-inch balls and place on waxed paper. 20 treats.

## BEST CINNAMON BREAD

¼ cup margarine, melted  
1½ cup brown sugar  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1 tsp. vanilla  
3 cans buttermilk refrigerated biscuits (10 per pkg.)  
1 cup chopped pecans

Grease a bundt pan. In a small bowl, combine melted margarine, sugar, cinnamon and vanilla. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Set aside.

Separate biscuits. Cut each biscuit into quarters. Sprinkle ½ cup pecans in bottom of pan. Arrange ½ of biscuit pieces on top of pecans. (Biscuits will be crowded.) Pour ¼ of syrup mixture over biscuits. Repeat the layers 2 more times.

Bake at 350 for 30-40 minutes or



until toothpick inserted in a biscuit comes out clean. Serves 8.

## FANTASTIC FUDGE

3 cups chocolate chips  
14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk  
¼ cup butter or margarine  
1½ tsp. vanilla  
1 cup chopped walnuts

Grease an 8 X 8 pan. Combine chips, milk and butter in medium saucepan. Cook over medium low heat, stirring constantly, until chips are melted. Remove pan from heat. Stir in vanilla and nuts. Pour chocolate mixture into pan and smooth with a spoon. Refrigerate one hour or until set. Cut into small squares; 50-60 pieces.

## CHOCOLATE DIPPED APPLE SLICES

2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
2 cups water  
3 large apples, cored and cut into half-inch wedges  
1 bottled prepared hardening chocolate sauce (such as Magic Shell)

Line a baking sheet with waxed paper. In a large bowl, combine lemon juice and water. Place apples in lemon juice mixture. Set aside.

Place apple slices on a paper towel and pat dry with another paper towel. Arrange apple slices on baking sheet and drizzle with chocolate. Refrigerate slices for one hour or until chocolate is set. 30 apple slices.

## EASY PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk  
¾ cup peanut butter  
2 cups biscuit baking mix  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
Granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, stir together milk, peanut butter, biscuit mix and vanilla. Shape into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Place two inches apart on ungreased baking sheet. Flatten with a fork and bake 6-8 minutes.

## WALNUT BALLS

Cream together:  
½ pound butter (2 sticks)  
¼ cup sugar

Add:  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 cups walnuts, broken up

Roll into small balls. Bake at 325 degrees until light brown. Roll in confectioners' sugar while still warm. Cool. Store in airtight plastic containers for up to 1 month. After tasting these treats, people always ask for the recipe!

## CHOCOLATE SNOWFLAKE COOKIES

2 cups sugar  
¼ cup vegetable oil  
4 1-oz. squares unsweetened chocolate, melted  
4 eggs  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
½ tsp. salt  
¼ cup sifted powdered sugar

Combine first 3 ingredients and beat at medium speed with an electric mixer until blended. Add eggs and vanilla. Mix well.

Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Add ¼ of dry mixture at a time to chocolate mixture, mixing after each addition. Cover and chill dough 2 hours.

Shape into 1-inch balls and roll in powdered sugar. Bake on greased cookie sheet at 350 degrees 10-12 minutes. Cool on wire racks. Makes 8 dozen.

## CRUNCHY CHOCOLATE CHIPSTERS

½ cup Butter Flavor Crisco  
½ cup granulated sugar  
½ cup firmly packed brown sugar  
2 Tbsp. milk  
1 egg  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1½ cups all-purpose flour  
½ tsp. baking soda  
¼ tsp. salt  
2 cups crisp rice cereal  
1 cup miniature semi-sweet chocolate chips

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease baking sheet with Crisco. Set aside.

2. Cream Crisco, sugars and milk in a large bowl. Blend at medium speed of electric mixer until blended. Beat in egg and vanilla.

3. Combine flour, soda and salt and add to creamed mixture. Mix well. Stir in cereal and chocolate chips. Drop level tablespoonsful of dough 2 inches apart onto baking sheet. Bake 9 minutes. Makes 4

dozen 2-inch cookies.

—Sue Inman

## CUT OUT COOKIES

6 oz. cream cheese at room temperature  
1 cup butter or 2 sticks margarine at room temperature  
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar  
1 tsp. salt  
2 tsp. vanilla  
¾ cups flour

Combine first 5 ingredients in a large bowl and stir by hand until well-blended. Then add flour to mixture until mixture forms a ball. Cover and refrigerate one hour.

Divide dough in quarters. On a floured surface, roll one portion at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Press cookie cutters into dough.

Place on ungreased cookie sheet and decorate with colored sugar. Place on third shelf in oven and bake at 350 degrees 8-10 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Yield: 4 dozen cookies.

—Barbara Kosanki

The next two recipes were featured in December 1994 issue of Parent Life magazine and were the creation of Lorri Cardwell-Casey.

## PEPPERMINT STICK STRAWS

Roll around an orange on the countertop until "squishier." This loosens up the juice. Cut an X deep into one side. Stick in an old-fashioned porous peppermint stick. See who tastes the orange flavor first. See whose peppermint can last the longest. Sweet sippin'!

## GINGERBREAD REINDEER

Prepare a package of gingerbread mix and roll out. Press horse cookie cutter into dough and place on baking sheet. After baking, add pretzel antlers and red cinnamon candy noses.

Use icing or colored sprinkles for sparkle. Make several and attach them together, using red licorice for reins.

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## Handle, Prepare Food Safely To Prevent Illness

During the holiday season you might find yourself cooking more—for parties and especially the Christmas meal with family and friends. Handling and preparing the food safely can prevent any chance of foodborne illnesses that could spoil a holiday.

"Many foodborne illness cases can be traced back to improper food storage, handling or preparation," says Gary McDonald, the Brunswick County Health Department's program specialist for food and lodging. "People most at risk are young children, senior citizens and people with

damaged immune systems."

In an effort to eliminate possibilities of foodborne illness, he offers the following tips:

- Thoroughly wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling raw meat.
- Keep meat refrigerated or frozen. Thaw meat in the refrigerator or microwave rather than at room temperature. Separate raw meats and their juices from other foods.
- Wash working surfaces (including cutting boards), utensils, and hands after touching raw meat or poultry.

- Cook ground beef all the way through, until the center is no longer pink. Beef roasts and steaks should be well-browned on the surface, but the interior will be slightly cooked to medium rare.
- Remember to keep hot foods hot (above 140F.) and cold foods cold (below 40F.).
- When handling leftovers, refrigerate the food immediately after serving (within two hours) or discard.
- Freeze leftovers that you won't be eating within a few days.
- When preparing leftovers, cov-

er and reheat until steaming hot. Stir foods while you reheat them to ensure that all the food reaches the appropriate temperature.

- Reheat sauces, soups, and gravies to a boil for at least 1 minute before serving.

For specific questions about foodborne illness or safe handling of food or to receive the brochure, "Playing it Safe: A Market-to-Meal-time Checklist For Keeping Food Safe," contact Gary McDonald at the Brunswick County Health Department.

## Visit Santa!

Santa will be at  
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