

Holiday Recipes

Flavorful Dishes and Desserts
for the Season of Celebrating

Baked Brie

with Blackberry
Compote &
Spicy Candied
Pecans



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A roast turkey

to serve as the centerpiece of a holiday meal

Turkey might only be prepared on the rarest of occasions, but it certainly takes center stage come the holiday season. As families prepare to spend time together during this special time of year, hosts undoubtedly recognize turkey as a potential centerpiece of the holiday meal. With that in mind, hosts can utilize the following recipe for “Whole Roast Turkey With Cranberries and Bay Leaves” from Lines+Angles.

Whole Roast Turkey *with Cranberries and Bay Leaves*

Serves 15

1 whole fresh turkey, approximately 15 pounds, rinsed and patted dry
10 tablespoons butter, softened
3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh sage
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
4 bay leaves, plus extra to serve
2 large carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 large celery stalks, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 small onions, quartered
4 cups chicken stock, kept warm on stove over very low heat
10 ounces fresh cranberries, washed (optional)
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black peppercorns



1. Remove turkey from fridge 1 hour prior to preparation.
2. Mash together butter, chopped herbs, 1 teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper in a bowl; alternatively, pulse together in a food processor.
3. Preheat oven to 450 F. Season main cavity of the turkey with plenty of salt and pepper. Stuff cavity with bay leaves and vegetables.
4. Place turkey on a trivet or wire rack set inside a large roasting pan. Rub herb butter all over outside of turkey and season with more salt and pepper.

5. Roast in oven until lightly brown, about 45 minutes. Reduce oven to 350 F and continue to roast until thickest part of thighs register at least 160 F on an instant-read thermometer, 2 to 2½ hours; baste turkey every 15 to 20 minutes with warm chicken stock.
6. Remove from oven and let rest, loosely tented with aluminum foil, for at least 30 minutes before serving on a bed of cranberries and bay leaves.

Can't-*'beet'* side dish for Thanksgiving



**Slow
Cooker
Recipe!**

Thanksgiving is a food-centric holiday. Certain dishes are expected to be on the table come Thanksgiving, including roasted turkey, potatoes and pies. However, holiday hosts have a little leeway with side dishes.

Beets are a versatile fall food, and these plants thrive in cool temperatures. Beets are nutrient-rich and can be flavorful on their own or when paired with the right ingredients. Their deep, reddish-purple hue also can look festive on a holiday table. This recipe for "Lemon-Rosemary Beets" makes a refreshing addition to a Thanksgiving meal. Enjoy this recipe, courtesy of "Cooking Light Dinner's Ready!" (Oxmoor House) by the editors of Cooking Light.

Lemon-Rosemary Beets

Makes 7 servings

2 pounds beets (about 6), peeled and cut into wedges

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons honey

1 tablespoon cider vinegar

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 rosemary sprigs

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon grated lemon rind

Place the first 8 ingredients in a 4-quart electric slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours or until beets are tender. Remove and discard rosemary sprigs; stir in lemon rind.



Enjoy a tart accompaniment to holiday meals

Cranberry sauce is a common accompaniment to turkey and other foods during the holiday season. It adds a refreshingly tart, yet sweet flavor to foods, and there's no shortage of ways to utilize cranberry sauce.

Individuals may be quick to grab a can of prepared cranberry sauce for their meals, but it's easy to whip up a batch of this beloved side with very little effort. The result is a cranberry sauce that is fresh and flavorful and does not feature the gelatinous consistency of some canned varieties. Ocean Spray, one of the leading providers of cranberry products, offers its "Fresh Cranberry Sauce" recipe.

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

Makes 2¼ cups

1 cup sugar

1 cup water

1 12-ounce package
Ocean Spray® Fresh or
Frozen Cranberries

Combine sugar and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to boil; add cranberries, return to boil. Reduce heat and boil gently for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cover and cool completely at room temperature. Refrigerate until serving time.

Note: If you like a more tart cranberry sauce, reduce the amount of sugar to taste. For a citrus twist, add the rind of half an orange when you add the cranberries. Then remove rind before serving. This will add a subtle citrus flavor to the sauce.





The nutritional benefits of sweet potatoes

A reference to sweet potatoes may immediately conjure images of Thanksgiving dinner tables, where the popular tuber often is featured during dinner and dessert. Though it's likely sweet potatoes, also known as yams, are most popular in fall, they're both available and enjoyable year-round. That's good news for people aspiring to eat healthy, as sweet potatoes pack quite a nutritional punch.

• Sweet potatoes and vitamin A:

The food and nutrition database from the United States Department of Agriculture indicates one cup of baked sweet potatoes provides 213 percent of the recommended daily minimum value of vitamin A. That's nothing to take for granted, as the National Institutes of Health notes that

vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin that promotes normal vision and a healthy immune system. The NIH also reports that vitamin A is vital for reproduction, growth and development.

• Sweet potatoes and vitamin C:

Sweet potatoes are high in the antioxidant vitamin C. That's a notable benefit, as the Mayo Clinic indicates a diet rich in antioxidants has been linked to stronger immune systems and lower risk for diseases such as heart disease and cancer. In addition, the health care experts at Mount Sinai note that vitamin C is vital for healing wounds and repairing and maintaining bones and teeth. Data from the USDA indicates one cup of sweet potatoes contains roughly 44 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C.

• Sweet potatoes and gut health:

The NIH notes sweet potatoes contain both soluble and insoluble fiber. The body does not digest soluble or insoluble fiber, which is actually beneficial, as the fiber remains in the digestive tract and promotes a healthy gut. The NIH also notes that some soluble and insoluble fibers can be fermented by bacteria in the colon, a process that ultimately keeps cells along the intestinal lining healthy and strong.

• Sweet potatoes and vision:

The Discovery Eye Foundation notes that sweet potatoes are loaded in vitamins that can help to prevent or delay the development of cataracts and macular degeneration. Vitamin C features prominently in that regard, but so, too, does vitamin E, which the

USDA notes is more abundant in sweet potatoes than yellow potatoes. Cataracts and macular degeneration can compromise vision, particularly among the aging population. The next time homemade mashed potatoes are on the menu, consider making mashed sweet potatoes, which pack a flavorful punch and offer some notable nutritional advantages compared to other types of tubers.

Sweet potatoes can be enjoyed year-round. Individuals who do so can reap the nutritional rewards of consuming sweet potatoes all year long.

A sweet side to pass around the holiday dinner table

Despite their name, side dishes have a tendency to take center stage come the holiday season. That's particularly true when hosting a potluck-style dinner for family and friends. Such an arrangement, which typically sees hosts prepare the main course and guests bring side dishes and desserts, can remove a lot of responsibility from hosts' shoulders and afford them more time to mingle with their loved ones.

Those tasked with crafting a delicious side this holiday season can build their offering around a popular and seasonal main ingredient like sweet potatoes. This recipe for "Sweet Potato Mash" from Lines+Angles fits that bill and is sure to please everyone around the holiday dinner table this year.



Sweet Potato Mash

Makes 4 servings

4 large sweet potatoes, peeled

Salt

4 tablespoons butter

1 sprig coriander, or parsley

Freshly ground pepper and salt

1. Cut the potatoes into large chunks and cook in boiling salted water until tender, about 14 to 18 minutes.

2. Drain thoroughly, then set the pan over a low heat and shake the pan to drive off any excess moisture.

3. Mash thoroughly with the butter until smooth, then season generously with salt and pepper and serve with a garnish of coriander.

A recipe to make sweet potatoes *even sweeter*



39%
of celebrants intended to
eat sweet potatoes
on Thanksgiving

Sweet potatoes are available at grocery stores year-round, but they tend to garner more attention come Thanksgiving. Indeed, a 2024 Economist/YouGov poll found that 39 percent of Thanksgiving celebrants intended to eat sweet potatoes on Turkey Day.

Sweet potatoes pack a powerful and nutritious punch and they're also able to be prepared in myriad ways. Those who want to make their sweet potatoes a little more sweet this holiday season can try this recipe for "Sweet Potato Marshmallow Gratin" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Sweet Potato Marshmallow Gratin

Makes 4 servings

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup orange juice

5 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick slices

2 Russet potatoes, peeled and cut into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick slices

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups mini marshmallows, divided

1 tablespoon brown sugar

Cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Mix cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla extract, and orange juice in a small bowl. In a large bowl, combine potatoes. Pour orange juice mixture over the potatoes; toss to coat well.

2. Spritz an 8" x 8" baking dish with cooking spray. Place potatoes, a handful at a time, in the dish and spread them so that the orange and white slices are evenly distributed. Sprinkle 10 to 12 mini-marshmallows on top of this layer. Repeat process, creating five layers, until you almost reach the top of the baking dish.

3. Cover dish with aluminum foil and seal tightly to hold in moisture; bake for 1 hour.

4. Top with remaining marshmallows and brown sugar.

5. Re-cover with foil and bake 30 more minutes. Let stand at least 15 minutes before serving.

A sweet potato pie *fit for a holiday feast*



Dessert makes the perfect caper to a delicious holiday meal. Though everything from appetizers to entrées to side dishes merits attention and appreciation, dessert might garner extra recognition because it's the final thing holiday celebrants eat when sitting around the dinner table with the people they love.

Hosts have a range of options to consider when planning a holiday dessert menu, and pie will undoubtedly come onto their radar. As hosts ponder which pie to serve this holiday season, they can consider the following recipe for "Sweet Potato Meringue Pie With Ginger Snap Crust" from Lines+Angles.

For Ginger Snap Crust:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F.
2. In a bowl, combine the ginger snap crumbs, butter and brown sugar and mix well. Transfer to a 9-inch pie pan, and press into the bottom and up the sides with your fingers. Place another pie pan on top of the crust and press firmly to smooth and pack the crust.
3. Bake until golden, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool. Brush the crust with the egg white. Refrigerate, tightly covered, for one hour before using; or freeze for up to 6 weeks.

For sweet potato filling:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. Place sweet potatoes on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake until very soft, about 1 hour.
3. When potatoes are cool enough to handle, halve and scoop out enough flesh to measure 2 cups, discarding skin. While potatoes are still hot, add butter and mash until almost smooth; small lumps of potato should remain.
4. Whisk together eggs, sugar, allspice, ginger, and salt. Stir in

evaporated milk, lemon juice and vanilla. Gradually add egg mixture to sweet potatoes, whisking gently to combine. Pour the filling into the cooled pie crust.

5. Bake for 20 minutes at 400 F. Reduce the heat to 325 F and bake until the filling is set around edges, but still jiggles slightly when shaken, about 20 more minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool slightly, about 30 minutes.

For meringue:

1. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites until soft peaks start to form. Slowly add the sugar while beating constantly. Beat until glossy and stiff peaks form, being careful not to over beat the meringue.
2. Preheat the broiler. While the pie is still warm, spread the meringue evenly over the filling, smoothing out to the pastry edges to seal. Place under the broiler and cook until the meringue is golden brown, about 1 minute.
3. Remove from the oven and let cool completely on a rack, about 1 hour. Serve.

Sweet Potato Meringue Pie *with Ginger Snap Crust*

Makes 8 servings

For Ginger Snap Crust:

- 1¾ cups crushed ginger snap crumbs
- ¼ cup melted unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg white

For sweet potato filling:

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 large eggs
- ¾ cup dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons allspice
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup evaporated milk
- 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla

For meringue:

- 4 large egg whites
- ¾ cup granulated sugar



Pumpkin Pie

**is the classic
holiday dessert**



Pumpkin Pie

Serves 8 for one 9-inch pie

For the crust:

- 1 cup butter, cold and cubed
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra as needed
- 1½ tablespoons maple sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 medium egg, lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons white vinegar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons iced water

For the filling:

- 1 small pumpkin, halved, seeded and cored
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup maple sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- 1 pinch ground cloves
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 cup heavy cream

Tip:

If preparing in advance before serving, let the pie cool completely before wrapping in plastic wrap and chilling.

Turkey might garner the bulk of the Thanksgiving feast fanfare, but a notable and wildly popular dessert also provides something to look forward to during a holiday when food is a focal point. After a couple of helpings of turkey and various side dishes, Thanksgiving celebrants know it's time for pumpkin pie. It's a testament to the flavor and popularity of pumpkin pie that overstuffed Thanksgiving celebrants still find a way to squeeze in this beloved dessert.

Hosts who want to truly impress can prepare a homemade pie that's sure to please loved ones. This recipe for "Pumpkin Pie" from Lines+Angles can be just what guests are looking for as they seek to tie a bow on their Thanksgiving feast.

1. For the crust: Combine the butter, flour, maple sugar, and salt in a food processor. Pulse until the mixture resembles rough breadcrumbs.

2. Add the egg, vinegar and 1 tablespoon iced water. Pulse until the dough starts to form around the blades; add more water as needed if too dry, or a little more flour if too wet.

3. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and shape into a disc. Wrap in parchment paper and chill for at least 1 hour.

4. For the filling: Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place the pumpkin halves flesh-side down on a large baking sheet.

5. Roast for 30 to 40 minutes until the flesh is tender to the tip of a knife. Remove from the oven and let cool to one side.

6. Once the pumpkin is cool enough to handle, scoop out the flesh into a bowl and mash well until smooth.

7. Beat the eggs with the flour, maple sugar and ground spices in a large mixing bowl until pale and thick, about 3 minutes.

8. Gradually beat in 1½ cups of the pumpkin mash followed by the maple syrup and cream until fully incorporated.

9. Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface into a large round approximately ⅓-inch thick.

10. Drape into a 9-inch pie dish, pressing well into the base and sides. Cut away any excess pastry before crimping the edges with your fingers.

11. Gently prick the base all over with a fork before slowly pouring the filling into the lined pastry.

12. Bake for 20 minutes before reducing the oven to 350 F. Bake for a further 40 to 50 minutes until the filling is set and starting to come away from the edges of the pastry; a knife should come out clean from the center.

13. When ready, remove from the oven to a cooling rack. Let cool completely before serving.

Tips for *first-time* holiday hosts

Simplify
the process
and enjoy the
holidays a
little more



The holiday season is a busy time of year. From holiday shopping to readying the home for guests, there's no shortage of things to accomplish in a relatively brief amount of time. Seasoned holiday enthusiasts may be ready to put their game faces on and tackle tasks with ease. But for first-time holiday hosts, the prospect of crossing items off to-do lists may require a little extra assistance.

According to Dr. Vanessa Kennedy, a clinical psychologist at Driftwood Recovery, holiday hosting can "lead to the pressure to curate picture-perfect moments, creating stress and anxiety." The following are pointers

those new to holiday hosting can employ to simplify the process and enjoy the holidays a little more.

- **Do as much prep work in advance as possible.** Giving yourself extra time to get things done can help immensely. Grocery shop one day, prepare food the next, clean the house one day, and set the table or arrange decor on another. Minor task can be left for the morning of the day guests arrive.

- **Cook and freeze items.** Utilize recipes that enable you to cook in bulk and then store foods until you need them. Casseroles, baked pasta dishes, freezable soups, and ready-

to-bake cookie doughs made in advance will save a lot of time closer to the holidays.

- **Stock the pantry.** If holiday hosting involves overnight guests, be sure to keep easy items on hand so guests can help themselves. Dry goods or pre-packaged muffins for breakfast, chips or pretzels for late-night snacks, granola bars, or store made croissants can fit the bill. Put everything in a dedicated basket so guests can grab items as needed. Stock the refrigerator with water, seltzer, iced teas, and sodas, and make a full pot of coffee in the morning so guests can pour their own.

- **Avoid complicated cocktails.** You don't want to be stuck mixing drinks all evening. Instead, make it simple for guests to help themselves. Wine, beer, premade punches, or even one specialty drink are ideal.

- **Consider hiring a caterer.** If the idea of a homecooked meal feels like climbing Mount Everest, swap out some items for store-bought alternatives, or work with a favorite restaurant or caterer to secure foods that only need to be reheated and served.

- **Free up closet and room space.** Guests will be coming with a lot of stuff, particularly if you live in a cold climate. Make room in the entry closet for guests' coats and boots. Be sure you can accommodate suitcases or overnight bags. Set aside an area where guests can deposit their wrapped gifts.

Holiday hosting can be a whirlwind of activity, but novice hosts can quickly get into the swing of things.

Holiday decorating

Homes are often described as sanctuaries for their residents.

Homes also provide a great way for homeowners to express themselves, an opportunity that is amplified during the holiday season.

Holiday decor takes center stage come December, and there are a number of ways for homeowners to utilize their homes to showcase their holiday spirit during this special time of year.



• **Go for the garland.** Garland can add a touch of the holiday season to any room of the house. Wrap garland around a staircase, alternating between the banister and spindles so residents and guests can still safely navigate their way up and down. Garland streamed along foyer tables sets a decorative tone for all guests, and living room television stands and dining room banquets also can be made a touch more festive with some garland.

• **Hang stockings throughout the house.** Stockings have long been hung by chimneys (with care), but they also can be incorporated into holiday decor throughout a home. Spread holiday cheer in each room with brightly colored holiday stockings, which can be hung along a staircase wall as well.

• **Don't forget the kitchen.** Realtors and contractors often note the popularity of the kitchen, a room where families tend to congregate each day before work and school and then again upon returning home. Some festive kitchen accessories, like a holiday-themed cutting board, jar sets and table settings can bring the spirit of the holiday season into the busiest room in the house.

• **Create some pinecone Christmas trees.** Involve the whole family in holiday decorating by spending a weekend afternoon creating pinecone Christmas trees. Gather pinecones from your own backyard, if possible, or take a trip to some nearby woods for some supplies. There's no shortage of websites offering instructions on crafting pinecone trees. Once completed, the trees can be placed in various rooms to spread holiday cheer throughout the house.

Decorations are a big part of the holiday season. Families can make their homes holiday central by ensuring each room is decorated for this special time of year.



• **Wrap the front door.** Gift-wrapped front doors have been popular for some time, and they remain a great way to utilize a home's entryway to spread a little holiday cheer. Shiny, single-color door wraps may never go out of style, but homeowners can choose patterned wraps as well. A bow door cover lets all visitors know a home and its residents are full of holiday cheer.



Baked brie

*is a cheese—
centric
crowd
pleaser*

Cheese is beloved all over the world. While cheese features more prominently in some cultures than others, its popularity still knows no bounds.

That popularity is something hosts can keep in mind as they plan to welcome loved ones into their homes during the holiday season. Couple the popularity of cheese with a little spice, as this recipe for “Baked Brie With Blackberry Compote and Spicy Candied Pecans” from Lines+Angles does, and hosts are sure to have a crowd pleaser on their hands.

Baked Brie *with* Blackberry Compote and Spicy Candied Pecans

Makes 4 to 6 servings

For the compote:

3 cups blackberries

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

2 tablespoons water

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract

For the pecans:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger

1 pinch chilli powder

1 small egg white

1 tablespoon water

2 cups pecans

For the cheese:

2 Brie wheels

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 pomegranate, seeded

Fresh thyme sprigs

Multigrain crackers

1 ounce unsweetened baking chocolate, chopped

1 tablespoon cider vinegar.

1. For the compote: Combine blackberries, sugar, water, and vanilla extract in a heavy-based saucepan.

2. Cover and cook over a medium heat, stirring from time to time, until the blackberries are soft and jammy, about 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to one side.

3. For the spicy candied pecans: Preheat the oven to 250 F. Stir together sugar and spices in a large mixing bowl.

4. Whisk egg white with water in a separate bowl until frothy. Toss pecans in egg white mixture before removing and tossing in the spiced sugar to coat.

5. Spread out on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 1 hour, turning over every 15 minutes, until dry and crisp.

6. Remove from the oven and let cool to one side. Increase oven to 350 F.

7. For the cheese: Remove the tops of the rinds from the Brie wheels. Place the Brie on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

8. Drizzle with olive oil before baking for 25 to 30 minutes until melted and bubbling.

9. Remove from the oven and let cool briefly before topping with the blackberry compote, spiced pecans, pomegranate seeds, and thyme sprigs.

10. Serve with the multigrain crackers and any remaining compote and pecans on the side.





Wrap up this app *at your holiday cocktail party*

Cocktail parties feature prominently on social schedules each holiday season. Such get-togethers are convenient because the foods and beverages served are designed to be small and portable. That can save any holiday host time in the kitchen.

There may be plenty of prepared foods in the grocer's freezer that can be served for gatherings, but the taste of easy, homemade offerings can mingle with the time-savers when guests arrive. "Bacon-Wrapped Goat Cheese Stuffed Dates" are an easily prepared appetizer that pairs sweet with savory. Even better, these morsels are delicious served warm out of the oven or can be eaten at room temperature when late-arriving guests stroll in.

Wrap up cocktail party spreads with this recipe, courtesy of "Spectacular Spreads: 50 Amazing Food Spreads for Any Occasion" (Rock Point) by Meagan Brown.

Bacon-Wrapped Goat Cheese Stuffed Dates

Makes 16

16 pitted dates

8 thin slices bacon, halved

4 ounces creamy goat cheese

Toothpicks

Hot honey, for garnishing

Chopped fresh parsley, for garnishing

Kosher salt

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a rimmed baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.

If your dates are not already pitted, slice the dates lengthwise on one side, but not all the way through, to create an opening. Remove the pit.

Using a teaspoon measure, fill the cavity of each date with a heaping teaspoon of the goat cheese and then gently press the sides together to close a bit.

Wrap each date with a half slice of bacon and secure with a toothpick. Arrange the bacon-wrapped dates on the prepared baking sheet.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, turning the dates halfway through so the bacon is evenly cooked. Transfer the bacon-wrapped dates to a serving platter and drizzle with the hot honey. Garnish with the parsley. Serve warm or at room temperature.

An appetizer *ideal* *for NYE festivities*

New Year's Eve marks a time when people reflect on what they accomplished over the past year and make plans for the future. In addition to being a time for reflection, New Year's Eve provides is one last opportunity to party during the holiday season. Whether one is standing in New York City's Times Square to watch the crystal ball drop, dancing to upbeat tunes at a club, or hosting a cocktail party for a dozen or so close friends, there are plenty of ways to celebrate.

Finger foods are right at home at these festive events. To ensure that even people with digestive issues can get in on the fun, serve this recipe "Ground Chicken Meatballs" from "The Complete IBS Diet Plan: Step-by-Step Meal Plans and Low-FODMAP Recipes for Relief and Healing" (Rockridge Press), by Amanda Foote, R.D.



Ground Chicken Meatballs

Makes 4 servings

Nonstick cooking spray

½ cup shredded zucchini

1 pound ground chicken

1 egg

½ cup gluten-free bread crumbs

1 teaspoon dried oregano

Pinch sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Fresh herbs, chopped, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray it with cooking spray. Set aside.

2. Spread the shredded zucchini across a paper towel and cover it with a second paper towel. Press down to squeeze out the extra liquid.

3. In a large bowl, combine the zucchini, ground chicken, egg, bread crumbs, oregano, salt, and pepper. Use clean hands to mix everything together until well combined.

4. Using your hands, roll the meat mixture into 2-inch-wide balls. Place the meatballs on the prepared baking sheet, 2 inches apart.

5. Bake for 20 minutes, or until cooked through. Garnish with fresh herbs.

Tip: If preparing in advance, roll the meatballs and then freeze them. They can be kept frozen for up to 3 to 4 months in a zip-top bag. Thaw completely before baking.

A less traditional take on a **family dinner staple**

Fried foods are often characterized as guilty pleasures. Though frying might not be the healthiest way to make a meal, it's hard to argue against the flavor profile of fried foods.

Air frying can produce meals that call to mind the familiar flavors of fried foods and do so in a far healthier way. This holiday season, hosts can look to air frying as a means to crafting flavorful meals without a lot of the negatives of traditional frying. That's even possible with traditional family staples like roast beef. With that in mind, hosts can try their hands at this recipe for air-fried "Roast Beef" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

**Use
Your Air
Fryer!**



Roast Beef

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 2-pound beef roast, trimmed
2 tablespoons olive oil
Flaked sea salt
Freshly ground mixed
peppercorns

1. Preheat air fryer to 360 F. Rub beef roast with olive oil and liberally season with salt and mixed peppercorns.

2. Tie at intervals with kitchen twine to secure.

3. Spritz air fryer basket with cooking spray. Place beef roast in basket and cook for 45 minutes for medium-rare; cook for additional 5-minute intervals for more well-done meat.

4. Remove beef roast from air fryer and cover loosely with aluminum foil, letting it rest for at least 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

Seafood *makes for a flavorful and unique holiday offering*

Seafood may not be synonymous with holiday dinners, which tend to feature traditional fare like turkey, roasts and pasta. But seafood makes a perfect offering come the holiday season, particularly for those living in coastal regions where access to fresh food taken directly from nearby waters adds much to dinnertime.

Holiday hosts who want to offer family a dish they might not find anywhere else on the holiday social circuit can whip up the following recipe for “Pan-Seared Scallops with Lemon Butter and Basil” courtesy of Lines+Angles. When paired with potatoes or pasta, this dish is sure to delight and make for a memorable holiday meal.

Pan-Seared Scallops *with Lemon Butter and Basil*

Serves 4

3 cups large sea scallops, about 20

Salt, to taste

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 pinch granulated sugar

Olive oil, enough to coat pan

For Lemon Butter:

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced

1 medium sweet onion, minced

½ cup dry white wine

½ cup chicken stock

¼ cup unsalted butter, cubed

1 fresh lemon

¼ cup fresh basil, finely chopped

For Pan-Seared Scallops:

1. Rinse scallops and gently pat until completely dry. Season scallops with salt and pepper and dust lightly with sugar.

2. Preheat oven to 425 F. Coat a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray or line it with cooking parchment.

3. In a large non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat until very hot but not smoking. Working in batches if necessary, add seasoned scallops to pan and cook until just seared. Place seared scallops on the prepared baking sheet. Bake until finished off, or about 6 to 8 minutes.



For Lemon Butter:

1. Heat oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic and onion until translucent and tender. Add white wine and reduce volume by half. Add chicken stock and reduce volume by half.

2. Remove pan from heat and whisk sauce while slowly adding the cubed butter. Do not return to heat, as this will cause the sauce to separate. Once the butter has melted, whisk in the juice of one lemon and half of the chopped basil. Adjust seasoning if necessary.

3. Divide scallops between plates. Spoon lemon butter glaze over scallops and garnish with remaining chopped basil. Serve.



Stuffed Partridges Wrapped In Bacon

Go beyond tradition *with a* gourmet holiday entrée offering

Tradition features prominently in the holiday season. Seasonal decor like menorahs, Christmas trees and string lights are everywhere come December, and each helps to make this such a special time of year.

Food is another notable holiday season tradition. While traditional fare like turkey, ham and, of course, holiday cookies are sure to be sought-after each December, cooks also can experiment with new and unique dishes to impress guests. Holiday hosts looking to do just that can try this Lines+Angles recipe for “Stuffed Partridges Wrapped in Bacon.”

Stuffed Partridges Wrapped In Bacon

Makes 6 Servings

6 whole partridges, ready to roast

Freshly ground black pepper

2 bunches large thyme

6 bay leaves

3 clementines, split in half

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

6 strips bacon

1. Heat the oven to 400 F. Wash the partridges and thoroughly pat dry with paper towels. Season the cavities with salt and pepper before stuffing with thyme, bay leaves and clementine halves.

2. Arrange the partridges in a roasting pan and securely tie their legs with kitchen twine. Rub softened butter all over the outsides and then wrap each with a strip of bacon. Season with pepper.

3. Roast until the thickest part of the thighs register at least 165 F on a meat thermometer, about 30 to 35 minutes. If you don't have a thermometer, check to see if the juices run clear when the thighs are pierced with a skewer. If they do, the partridges are ready.

4. Remove from the oven and transfer to a serving platter. Cover with aluminum foil and let rest for at least 10 minutes before serving.





Porchetta

affords hosts ample time to spend with guests

Convenience can go a long way when hosting during the holiday season. Large gatherings of family and friends are a big part of what makes the holiday season such a special time of year, and hosts can enjoy get-togethers a lot more when they aren't forced to spend so much time in the kitchen away from their guests.

This recipe for "Porchetta" from Lines+Angles is tailor-made for hosts who want to welcome loved ones and have time to mingle when guests arrive. With this recipe, the bulk of the work is done a day early, giving hosts ample time to enjoy the festivities while still ensuring they can serve up a delicious, homemade meal.

Porchetta

Makes 12 servings

- 1 10-pound whole boneless pork belly
- 2 tablespoons black peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons fennel seeds
- 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 small bunch parsley, finely chopped
- 10 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Kosher salt

**Get the
work done
ahead of
time!**

1. Score the flesh side of the pork belly in a criss-cross diamond pattern with the tip of a knife.
2. Toast the peppercorns and fennel seeds in a dry frying pan set over a medium heat until aromatic.
3. Tip into a spice grinder or mortar and pestle, and grind with the red pepper flakes and 1 tablespoon salt.
4. Use your hands to rub the spice mixture into the meat. Mash together the parsley, garlic and olive oil in a small bowl. Spoon in a line across the middle of the pork.
5. Tightly roll the pork into a log with its seam-side facing down. Cut 12 pieces of kitchen twine long enough to tie around the pork and lay them down in regular intervals along your board, about 1 inch apart each.
6. Lay rolled pork seam-side down on top of twine and tie around the pork to tightly secure.
7. Combine 2 tablespoons salt with the baking powder. Rub mixture over entire surface of the pork. Wrap the pork with plastic wrap and chill overnight.
8. The next day, preheat the oven to 350 F. Place pork on a trivet set inside a large roasting pan.
9. Roast the pork for about 4 hours until it registers 160 F on a meat thermometer, basting occasionally.
10. Increase the oven to its highest temperature and roast for 15 to 20 minutes long until the skin is golden-brown and crisp.
11. Remove from the oven and let rest, covered loosely with aluminum foil, for at least 15 minutes before slicing and serving.

Versatile risotto

is an ideal option for busy holiday hosts

Risotto is a versatile dish that can be prepared with a wide range of ingredients. That versatility makes risotto a particularly useful option to consider when hosting loved ones during the often hectic holiday season. Because risotto can be made with just about any add-ins, hosts won't have to worry about coming home empty-handed during a last-minute trip to the grocery store. With that in mind, hosts can look to this recipe for "Risotto With Sweet Potatoes, Peas and Green Beans" from Lines+Angles when the need to whip up something flavorful in a flash arises.

Risotto *with* Sweet Potatoes, Peas and Green Beans

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
½ onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1⅔ cups arborio rice
4 cups low sodium vegetable broth
1 tablespoon white wine
1 large sweet potato, peeled, chopped and par boiled
1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
Kosher salt, to taste
1 cup blanched green peas
1 cup blanched green beans
3 cups low-sodium chicken broth



1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until slightly translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook another minute, stirring.

2. Add the rice to the pan and stir well to coat with the oil. Cook until slightly toasted, about 3 minutes.

3. Stir in ¾ of the broth and the wine. Bring to a boil and then cover. Reduce heat to low and cook for about 5 minutes.

4. Add the sweet potato, brown sugar and salt and simmer for about 15 minutes, until the rice is tender. Stir about every five minutes, adding more broth, if necessary.

5. Add the peas and green beans and the remaining broth and stir gently. Serve hot.



Roasted lamb *is a classic entrée*

Certain dishes call to mind family meals on Sunday evenings. Though families have their own unique traditions, particularly during the holiday season, some dishes have transcended family lines and become go-to entrées for holiday hosts. Roast lamb certainly falls into that category. Holiday hosts looking to offer guests a familiar dish that calls to mind family gatherings of years past can try this recipe for “Rolled Roast Lamb With Garlic” courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Rolled Roast Lamb

with Garlic

Makes 6 servings

Boneless leg of lamb, trimmed, rolled and tied

5 cloves garlic, peeled and cut into slivers

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

Salt, to taste

Freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

2 sprigs fresh rosemary, leaves chopped,
plus extra for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 450 F.
2. With a small knife, make slits on the outside of the lamb and insert three quarters of the garlic slivers into the slits. Rub the roast with 2 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Drizzle the remaining olive oil into a large Dutch oven, set over medium heat, add the remaining garlic slivers and chopped rosemary and sauté until fragrant. Place prepared lamb in Dutch oven and brown on all sides (approximately 6 to 8 minutes).

4. Remove from heat and place in preheated oven and cook for 20 minutes. Lower the oven temperature to 325 F and continue roasting for another 60 to 80 minutes, depending on the size of the leg and personal preference. Test internal temperature with an instant-read meat thermometer. Rare to medium-rare should register 120 to 135 F, medium to medium-well done 140 to 155 F, and well done 160 F and above. Keep in mind the meat continues to cook for a few minutes while resting outside the oven.

5. Remove kitchen string and any netting from lamb. Carve the meat crosswise into thin slices. Arrange on a warm platter and garnish with rosemary and pan juices if desired.

Carve the meat crosswise into thin slices.



Simple stuffed shells

to please a hungry holiday crowd

Holiday hosting is a fun way to welcome loved ones. Opportunities to host abound between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, and savvy hosts know how useful an expansive culinary repertoire can be during a time of year when it's common to enjoy home cooked meals with loved ones.

Simple but flavorful meals are a holiday host's best friend. Such meals, which include the following recipe for "Stuffed Shells With Spinach and Ricotta" from Lines+Angles, give hosts more time to mingle but still ensure a delicious dish makes its way to the table come dinnertime.

Stuffed Shells *with* Spinach and Ricotta

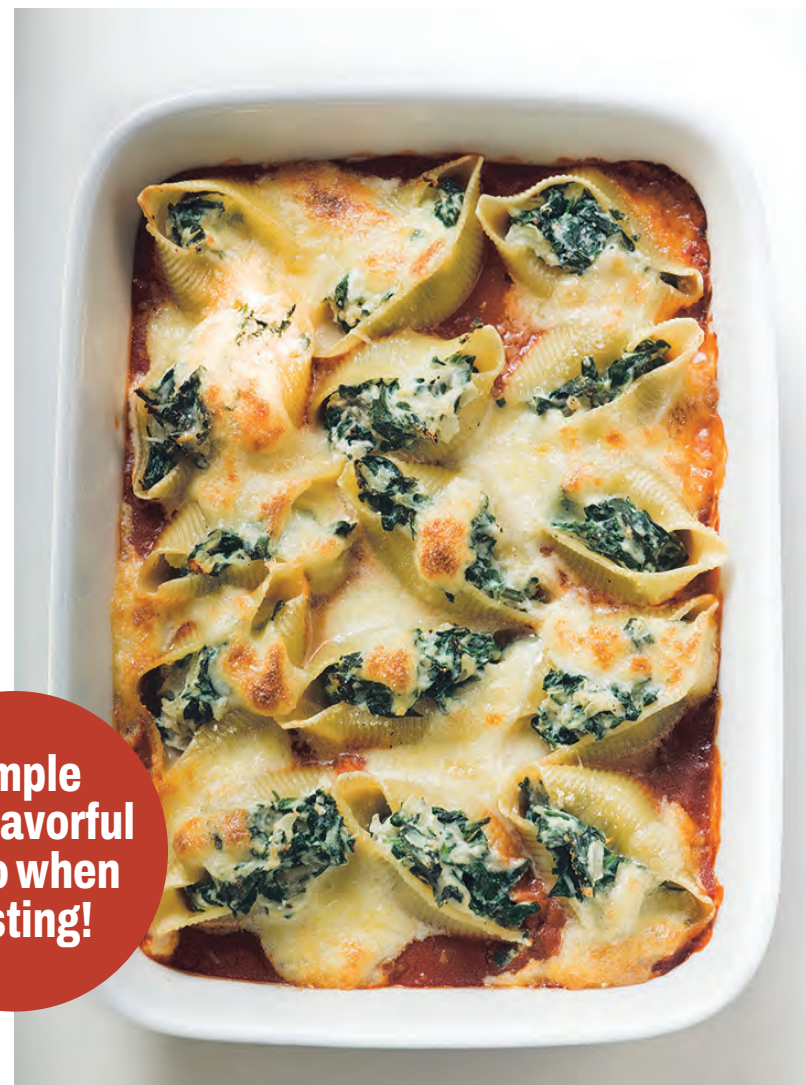
Makes 6 to 8 servings

Salt, to taste
32 jumbo pasta shells
10 cups frozen chopped spinach, thawed
2 cups ricotta, softened
1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated (divided), plus extra to serve
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced
2 eggs, lightly beaten
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3¾ cups marinara or spaghetti sauce

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook per package directions until al dente. Rinse pasta in cold water to stop cooking process and drain well.
2. Squeeze spinach dry. Transfer spinach to large bowl. Add ricotta, ½ cup Parmesan, garlic, and beaten eggs to bowl. Season mixture with salt and pepper, and mix to blend.
3. Preheat oven to 350 F.

4. Spoon ½ cup marinara sauce evenly over bottom of 9- x 13- x 2-inch baking dish. Fill each pasta shell with spinach mixture. Place shells, filling side up, in prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup Parmesan. Cover loosely with foil and bake until heated through and bubbly, about 30 minutes. Spoon remaining sauce over shells. Garnish with Parmesan cheese, if desired, and serve.

**Simple
and flavorful
go-to when
hosting!**



Scones *make a great addition to the holiday brunch table*

Brunch can be a go-to meal when hosting loved ones for the holiday season. When holiday parties run late into the night, both hosts and their guests may not want to jump out of bed first thing in the morning. A late-morning brunch from the comforts of home can be ideal in such situations. As everyone starts to emerge from a good night's sleep, holiday hosts can whip up a batch of these "Raisin Scones" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Raisin Scones

Makes 10 to 12 scones

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

¼ cup butter

¼ cup superfine sugar

⅓ cup raisins

⅔ cup milk

1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Grease and lightly flour a baking tray.

2. Sift the flour, baking soda and cream of tartar into a large mixing bowl. Lightly cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs.

3. Stir in the sugar and raisins. Make a well in the center and pour in the milk and lemon juice. Mix to a soft dough and turn out onto a lightly floured work surface.

4. Knead lightly until smooth and roll out to a ½-inch thickness. Cut out rounds using a 2-inch cookie cutter. Re-roll the scraps and cut out more rounds.

5. Place the scones on the baking tray and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, or until cooked through and golden. Cool on a wire rack. Dust lightly with icing sugar.





A post-meal treat tailor-made for holiday parties

The festive nature of the holiday season is on display in many places throughout the month of December, and that includes private homes. Gatherings with family and friends fill celebrants' social schedules throughout the holiday season and present various opportunities to catch up with loved ones in a fun, warm and welcoming setting.

Gatherings undoubtedly make the holiday season more special, and food plays an important role during this festive time of year. Dessert might not be on the menu year-round, but a tasty post-meal treat certainly makes for a fitting ending to a holiday meal with loved ones. With that in mind, hosts can whip up this recipe for "Chocolate Pudding and Mixed Berry Trifle" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Chocolate Pudding and Mixed Berry Trifle

Makes 8 servings

1½ cups sugar
1½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
¾ cups strong brewed coffee
¾ cups buttermilk
6 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
⅛ teaspoon salt
1½ cups whole milk
½ cup heavy cream
¾ cup good-quality milk chocolate, chopped
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 cups fresh raspberries
6 cups fresh blueberries
Milk chocolate, shavings for garnish

1. For the cake: In a large bowl, sift together the first 6 ingredients. Add the coffee, buttermilk, eggs, oil, and vanilla and mix until just combined. Transfer the batter to a parchment-lined baking pan. Bake at 325 F for 25 to 30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the cake comes out clean. Cool and then cut the cake into 2-inch pieces.

2. For the chocolate pudding: Whisk together the sugar, cornstarch, cocoa powder, and salt in a large saucepan. Gradually whisk in milk and cream. Bring to a boil over moderate heat, whisking constantly. Boil until mixture thickens, about 2 minutes — it will get thick very quickly. Remove from heat and whisk in chocolate and vanilla quickly. Continue whisking until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and chill, placing a piece of plastic wrap directly on the pudding to prevent a skin from forming. Chill until cold, at least 2 hours.

3. To assemble the trifle: Get out eight small serving cups (approximately 8 ounces). Place cake pieces, a bit of raspberries and blueberries at the bottom of each serving cup. Spoon chocolate pudding on top, spreading it into any spaces in the cake layer and smoothing the top so it is as flat as possible. Continue with the second layer of cake pieces, berries and pudding. For the third top layer, sprinkle only pieces of cake and berries and then garnish with shaved milk chocolate.



What to know about serving alcohol at holiday events

The holidays are a festive time to enjoy with family and friends. Parties abound this time of year, and millions of people will open their homes or businesses to others in celebration of the season.

Music, food and conversation may be part of the holiday equation, but often alcoholic beverages also are in the mix. Although drinking in moderation can be a component of holiday festivities, it's important that hosts recognize the responsibility that comes with serving alcohol.

Host laws vary depending on where one lives. According to the Society for Human Resources Management, a leader on issues affecting the workplace, in some states employers and private individuals can be sued for problems like guests driving drunk after holiday parties. How do party hosts show guests a good time without opening themselves up to undue risk? Here are some considerations.



- Limit alcohol to “softer” beverages such as beer and wine. Although it’s still possible to get intoxicated, it may take longer for these lower ABV beverages to cause the same level of intoxication as hard liquor.
- Serve food first as a way to prevent guests from drinking on empty stomachs. Eating can slow down the absorption of alcohol.
- Avoid an open bar at company events, as guests may be less likely to overdo it if they have to pay for their own drinks.
- Utilize professional bartenders who are accustomed to gauging when people have had too much.
- Host the function earlier in the day when people are likely to drink less.
- Host the party during the week so guests will drink less knowing they have to be at work the next day. Also, making it a family party where

children are present may reduce the likelihood that guests will drink too much.

- Review insurance policies to check to see if you will be covered from liability arising from the party. If not, consider additional insurance.
- Make the focus of the party something that is not geared around drinking. Plan plenty of activities that can take attention away from the bar.
- Put contingency plans in place if guests are not able to safely drive home, such as ride share, taxis or sober individuals who can take people home.

Holiday hosts must recognize that it is their responsibility to keep guests safe, particularly if alcohol will be served. For those who do not want the risks associated with intoxicated guests, it’s well within hosts’ rights to eschew alcohol altogether.

A non-alcoholic cocktail

for guests who want to stay dry

The holiday season is a festive time of year, and alcohol tends to feature prominently in the festivities. While it's perfectly alright for adults to enjoy a drink come the holiday season, some might want to abstain from alcohol, particularly if they're getting behind the wheel after a party.

Hosts can keep in mind that some guests may not want to drink alcohol during a party. But that doesn't mean they won't appreciate a unique and flavorful drink. In such instances, hosts can mix up this non-alcoholic "Redcurrant Cocktail" from Lines+Angles.

Redcurrant Cocktail

Makes 2 servings

8 sprigs red currant
3 tablespoons ginger syrup
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 gold leaves

Reserve two sprigs of red currants for the garnish and put the rest in a sieve. Press down firmly with the back of a spoon to collect the juice then pour it into a cocktail shaker.

Add the ginger syrup and lemon juice to the shaker and add a handful of ice. Shake for 2 minutes until chilled and diluted.

Strain the cocktail into two small martini glasses and garnish each one with a sprig of red currants and a piece of gold leaf



All about Eggnog

Eggnog is a rich and delicious beverage that has become synonymous with the most festive time of year. This milk- and egg-based concoction is tasty on its own, or it can be dressed up with other flavors and spiked with a favorite spirit when celebrating the holiday season with other adult partygoers.

December is National Eggnog Month, and December 24 is National Eggnog Day. There is no more perfect time of year to learn everything you can about eggnog — all the while sipping a cup of this creamy concoction. Indulge in these festive facts about the beverage, courtesy of Mental Floss, The Fact Site and Tastemade.



Indulge in these festive facts

courtesy of Mental Floss, The Fact Site and Tastemade

- Eggnog likely originated in the medieval period and was known as “posset,” a hot, milk-based drink made of spices and wine. Even though posset could be a cocktail, it also was used as a remedy for colds and flu for its soothing properties.
- Milk, eggs and sherry used in the early recipes were difficult to come by, so when eggnog first appeared it was a drink only the wealthy could enjoy. That changed when eggnog was popularized in the American colonies, where dairy products and liquor were more readily available.
- Entymologists believe “eggnog” stems from the word “noggin,” which refers to small wooden mugs often used to serve strong ale, known by the slang word “nog.”
- In the Medieval period, it was risky to drink milk straight because it wasn’t pasteurized. Eggnog contained alcohol so that it would kill off any harmful bacteria in the milk.
- A typical homemade version of eggnog has roughly one egg per serving. However, commercial eggnog is

December 24th is
**National
Eggnog
Day**

regulated by the FDA and can only contain 1 percent of the product's final weight in egg yolk solids. That stems from fear of raw egg and salmonella.

- President George Washington apparently enjoyed serving eggnog at Christmas, and even had his own special recipe (see below), according to the Old Farmer's Almanac.
- There is no right or wrong alcohol to use when preparing eggnog. Distilled spirits like rum, sherry, cognac, and whiskey all have produced suitable eggnogs.
- Puerto Rican coquito is a traditional drink that is very similar to eggnog.
- Individuals concerned about eggs or milk in eggnog can enjoy a vegan recipe made from nut milk instead. Commercially produced vegan eggnog offerings are now more widely available.
- One of the more notable flavors in eggnog comes from the use of nutmeg. Nutmeg is a fragrant spice made from grinding the seed of the nutmeg tree.

Eggnog

is a go-to holiday beverage

One of the more notable aspects of the holiday season is the reemergence of foods and beverages that might not be enjoyed at any other point during the year. Eggnog certainly falls into the category. Though it might not be broken out after December, the following recipe for "Eggnog" from Lines+Angles makes a go-to holiday season beverage.

Eggnog

Makes 4 servings

6 egg yolks
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup confectioners' sugar
 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup light cream
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whiskey or rum
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg



1. In a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks until light in color. Add confectioners' sugar and whisk together until fluffy. Set aside.
2. In a medium saucepan over low heat, combine milk, cream and vanilla. Stir occasionally and gently heat for 5 minutes. Increase heat to medium and slowly bring mixture to a boil. Remove from heat.
3. Slowly incorporate milk mixture into eggs by adding a little at a time, whisking together constantly to avoid cooking the eggs. Continue to add the hot milk into the eggs and whisking until thoroughly combined.
4. Pour the combined mixture back into the saucepan and heat over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thick, without bringing to a boil, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. Allow mixture to cool for about an hour, then add to a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Add whiskey or rum. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.
6. When ready to serve, shake jar, add eggnog to serving glasses and top with cinnamon and nutmeg.

A seasonal spirit

to delight a holiday crowd



The holiday season is a time to gather with friends and family, and such gatherings often involve food and drinks. The foods hosts serve include traditional dishes like turkey, roasts, pasta, and other crowd pleasers. And when it comes to beverages, hosts have a lot of room to be creative. In fact, guests might appreciate a departure from traditional holiday season beverages like eggnog, beer or wine. Hosts looking to offer a flavorful surprise this holiday season can try this recipe for “Winter Orange Drink With Star Anise and Brown Sugar” from Lines+Angles.

Winter Orange Drink *with* Star Anise and Brown Sugar

Makes 4 servings

10 ounces freshly squeezed orange juice

1 teaspoon vanilla rooibos tea

2 tablespoons brown sugar

1.5 ounces rum, to taste

4 cinnamon sticks

4 star anise

Place the orange juice in a pan with $1\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and bring to a boil. Add the tea, remove from the heat and leave to infuse for about 5 minutes. Strain through a sieve. Sweeten with brown sugar and mix in the rum to taste.

Divide into 4 glasses, garnish each with 1 cinnamon stick and a star anise and serve.

A cocktail with seasonal staples *as the star ingredients*

Holiday season parties are particularly festive affairs. The jovial spirit of the season lends itself to fun gatherings with family and friends. When welcoming loved ones at home this holiday season, hosts can consider some seasonal staples and craft a unique cocktail guests won't soon forget. Pumpkin might be more synonymous with fall than winter, but cinnamon certainly has a place on holiday season dinner tables. This recipe for a "Pumpkin Martini Cocktail With Cinnamon" from Lines+Angles combines staple flavors of fall and winter into a delicious drink holiday celebrants will love.

Pumpkin Martini Cocktail *with Cinnamon*

Serves 2

2 tablespoons maple syrup
¼ cup graham cracker crumbs
5 ounces pumpkin spice liqueur
2 ounces Baileys Irish Cream
2 ounces vodka
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cinnamon sticks

1. Pour the maple syrup in a saucer and put the graham cracker crumbs in a separate saucer. Dip the rims of 2 chilled martini glasses first into the simple syrup, then into the graham cracker crumbs.

2. Fill a shaker with ice and add the pumpkin spice liqueur, Baileys, vodka, and vanilla extract. Shake for 15 seconds and strain between the prepared glasses. Garnish each with a cinnamon stick.



**A fall
and winter
signature
cocktail!**

Champagne

takes center stage again

Sparkling wines are made by sealing the beverages before the fermentation process is complete, causing the effervescent bubbles that is their hallmark. Sparkling wines are produced in various regions of the world, but “champagne” is unique to the Champagne region of northeast France, where vines were introduced by the Romans many centuries ago.

One of the most legendary and heralded brands of champagne was created by a French monk named Pérignon. Historians say Pérignon lived from 1638 to 1715 and was admitted in his lifetime to the abbey of Saint-Vanne. He acquired the honorary title of Dom while there, and also served as cellar master, creating what later would be known as the “vins de Pérignon.”

Dom Pérignon champagne is still a prestigious brand today, joined by other leaders of the industry like Moët & Chandon, Veuve Clicquot, Nicolas Feuillatte, and Pol Roger. French champagnes are part of elegant toasts, A-list events and five-star dining experiences. They also may be poured on New Year’s Eve. All champagne is sparkling wine, but not all sparkling wine is champagne.

Enjoying champagne on its own in the requisite stemmed glass is tradition, but champagne also can be mixed into any number of cocktails — from bellinis to mimosas. This “Blood-Orange Champagne Cocktail” is a variation on the classic mimosa, and doesn’t necessarily need to be enjoyed at brunch. Serve it on New Year’s Eve, or for any special occasion, courtesy of Martha Stewart.



Blood-Orange Champagne Cocktail

2¼ cups freshly squeezed or frozen blood-orange juice
2 750-ml bottles champagne, chilled
2 gold leaves

Pour 3 tablespoons juice in each champagne flute.
Fill flutes with champagne, and serve.





10

New Year's Eve party pointers

Many people consider New Year's Day the unofficial end of the holiday season. That often means that New Year's Eve is an opportunity to socialize, gather and party one final time before returning to the routines of daily life.

The first known instance of New Year's celebrations can be traced to around 2,000 B.C. in the region of Mesopotamia. Celebrants were gathering in March, rather than January, as this was the time of the vernal equinox, when the darkness of winter subsided and agricultural life could begin anew.

As individuals count down the days until New Year's Eve festivities, these planning tips can make the celebrations occasions to remember.

1. Consider a theme. Everyone who is anyone is having or attending a NYE party. Let your event stand out from the throngs of others with a

theme. Guests can come dressed as dynamic duos (like Mario and Luigi) or the party can evoke a bygone era, such as the roaring 1920s. Let guests know what they can do to play the part.

2. Start late. You do not want guests wiped out by the time midnight arrives. Therefore, start the party at around 9 or 10 p.m. and anticipate it lasting into the wee hours of the morning.

3. Tailor drinks to the season. Utilize seasonal ingredients when crafting drinks, or serve drinks that are expected this time of year, such as a boozy eggnog or cranberry Moscow mules.

4. Provide various activities. Plan fun activities during the party. Offer card games or board games to give guests something to do. Karaoke or group activities like trivia also can spread out the fun.

5. Beverages should be accessible. Unless you are hiring a bartender who will be on call to pour drinks, having drinks ready to go is a smart idea. In addition to cans/bottles of beer or malt beverages, have ready-to-go mixed drinks available by selecting a signature drink and preparing a bulk batch.

6. Curate a winning playlist. Ask guests to submit a list of their favorite tunes so you can create a collection of songs that will ebb and flow with the evening's events. Be sure to include some sing-a-long favorites like "Don't Stop Believin'" or "Tiny Dancer."

7. Offer self-serve foods. Much like having drinks ready to go, make foods accessible as well. Finger foods and bite-sized morsels will not require guests to carry plates, reducing the chances for spillage. Sliders, miniature quiches and dessert shooters should suffice.

8. Tie decorations into the theme. Classic New Year's Eve decorations include balloons, streamers and confetti. Think about a very festive balloon arch or backdrop that also can serve as a place to pose for photo opportunities.

9. Offer takeaway gifts for designated drivers. Encourage guests to stay sober and volunteer for designated driving duties by offering prizes. Ideas include gift cards to coffee shops or restaurants.

10. Be ready for midnight. Have a large television at the ready to show the midnight countdown and start pouring champagne roughly 20 minutes before midnight to ensure all glasses are full when the clock strikes 12.

New Year's Eve celebrations get an extra boost from a well-planned party.

Classic, family-friendly holiday traditions



Advent calendars

Advent calendars are another holiday season tradition with a history that dates back centuries. Historians believe the first Advent calendars were produced in Germany around 1850. Faithful celebrants can now find Advent calendars in many forms, and some retailers even sell craft kits that enable families to create their own calendars at home. Homemade Advent calendars can be a unique way for families to put a relatively new spin on a centuries-old holiday tradition.

Tradition figures prominently in many households throughout the holiday season. Whether it's decorations like a Chanukah menorah or a Christmas tree, or a family gathering on Christmas Eve, there's no shortage of traditions to make this unique time of year even more special.

Young families or first-time hosts may want to incorporate as many popular traditions into their seasonal celebrations as possible. Doing so can lay a foundation for years of celebrations to come. As families prepare to spend this holiday season at home, they can incorporate some of these classic traditions into their celebrations.

Family baking sessions

What would the holiday season be without baked goods? While it's easy to purchase premade goodies at grocery stores and other retailers, homemade concoctions made in the comforts of one's own kitchen alongside loved ones is a classic and cherished tradition in many households.

Letters to Santa

Santa Claus makes his presence known one night a year, and writing letters to the jolly old elf is a custom with a lengthier history than some may realize. Though it might not be possible to pinpoint precisely when the first letter to Santa was written, historians believe the tradition began in the early nineteenth century. Roughly two centuries later, children's letters to Santa remain a popular tradition in many households and communities, and there's no stopping adults from writing letters to the man who calls the North Pole home.

Christmas cards

Christmas cards may seem like a relatively recent phenomenon, but that's not the case at all. Prior to 1843, many Christmas celebrants shared handwritten letters with friends during the holiday season. Come 1843, Sir Henry Cole commissioned designer John Colcott Horsley to design a Christmas card that Cole could then send to various friends. Christmas cards remain a popular means to spreading holiday cheer, and families can design cards together and work as a team to get them ready to send.

These are just a handful of the many holiday season traditions families can embrace this December.



The holiday season and cookies *go hand-in-hand*

The holidays are synonymous with many things, including various foods and beverages. Foodies know the holiday season is a time when baked goods, and cookies in particular, take center stage. Celebrants can keep that in mind and prepare a batch of these “Iced Cinnamon Star Cookies” from Lines +Angles this holiday season.

Iced Cinnamon Star Cookies

Makes 24 Servings

For the cookies:

2½ cups almond flour
1¼ cups powdered sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
2 large egg whites
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the icing:

1 cup powdered sugar
3 tablespoons milk,
more if needed
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

For the cookies:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together almond flour, powdered sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Add the egg whites and vanilla and mix until a soft dough forms.
2. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 300 F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
4. On a surface dusted with powdered sugar, roll the dough to ⅓-inch thickness. Cut out stars using a 3-inch star cookie cutter and transfer to the prepared cookie sheet.
5. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes until edges are lightly golden. Let cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes, then transfer to wire racks.

For the icing:

1. Using a fork, combine the powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla. Use a whisk to continue to stir the icing, adding more milk, in teaspoon increments if needed, to reach desired consistency.
2. Once cookies are completely cooled, spoon the icing on top of each star and spread with the back of the spoon or a toothpick. You also can use a squeeze bottle or piping bag. Enjoy cookies immediately or let icing set at room temperature 6 to 8 hours.



Ginger cookies

fit right in during holiday baking sessions

Holiday baking sessions are a beloved tradition in many households. A family baking day during the holiday season is a great activity that appeals to loved ones of all ages, making a day spent in the kitchen an ideal way to bring multiple generations together under one roof.

There's no shortage of options when baking together as a family, but no treat embodies this season of baking more than cookies. Whether you're baking cookies for Santa Claus, bringing them along to a holiday party or simply whipping them up for some extra energy when decorating the tree, these "Ginger Cookies" from Lines+Angles are sure to please this December.

Ginger Cookies

Makes 48 cookies

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shortening
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup molasses
- 1 large egg
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- Granulated sugar, for rollin

For Chocolate Cupcakes:

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Lightly grease baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer on medium speed, beat brown sugar, shortening, molasses, and egg together until light and fluffy. Stir in all remaining ingredients, except granulated sugar.

3. Shape dough by rounded teaspoonfuls into balls. Dip tops into granulated sugar and place balls, sugar side up, on prepared baking sheet, about 3 inches apart.
4. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until just set. Remove from cookie sheet immediately to wire rack to cool. Serve.

Tip: Before measuring molasses, spray the measuring cup with cooking spray; the molasses won't stick to the sides of the cup.



Reindeer cookies

add to the festive feel of the holiday

Food helps to set the festive atmosphere that has become synonymous with the holiday season. Celebrants asked to recall their fondest memories of the holiday season undoubtedly would point to nights spent surrounded by loved ones at the family dinner table, which serves as a testament to the unifying power of food during a special time of year.

Holiday hosts looking to food to set a festive tone can consider these “Peanut Butter Reindeer Cookies” from Lines+Angles. These cookies are flavorful and the finished product is adorable, which can help celebrants feel even more festive during seasonal celebrations.

Peanut Butter Reindeer Cookies

Makes 48 cookies

½ cup unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup peanut butter
⅓ cup granulated sugar
⅓ cup packed light brown sugar
1 large egg
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
48 large red M&M candies
96 mini semisweet chocolate chips
Pretzels, broken into 96 1-inch pieces

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, beat together butter, peanut butter, sugar, and brown sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add egg and vanilla extract and mix until combined.

3. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and stir until just combined. Roll the dough into 1-inch balls, and place at least 1 inch apart on cookie sheet. Bake only 10 to 12 cookies at a time. Refrigerate the bowl of dough in between batches. Bake for 7 to 9 minutes, until the cookies are just set.

4. Immediately place one M&M in the center of each cookie for a nose (press down a bit if your cookies aren’t flat enough), 2 mini chocolate chips for the eyes, and 2 pretzel pieces at the top for antlers. Carefully transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.

Decorative cookies

Santa can't resist

Kids know that cookies are a vital component of the holiday season. Come bedtime on Christmas Eve, youngsters want to make sure Santa Claus gets all the nourishment he needs to continue delivering presents to kids all over the globe. That sustenance is often provided in cookie form. With that in mind, families who want to be certain Santa won't leave their homes hungry this Christmas can whip up a batch of these "Chocolate Star Christmas Decorations," courtesy of Lines+Angles.



Chocolate Star Christmas Decorations

Makes 4 dozen

2 cups flour
½ cup Dutch processed cocoa powder,
unsweetened
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup sugar
1 large egg yolk
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 large egg white
1 pinch cream of tartar
2 cups confectioners' sugar
Sprinkles, for decorating

1. Whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, and salt in a bowl.

2. Beat butter and sugar in a separate bowl with an electric mixer until pale and fluffy, about 2 minutes, then beat in yolk and vanilla. On low speed, beat in flour mixture just until a dough forms.

3. Divide the dough in half, flatten each piece into a disc and then chill them, wrapped in plastic wrap, until firm, for 2 to 3 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 350 F with racks in top and bottom thirds. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Roll out 1 piece of dough between sheets of parchment paper into a 14-by-10-inch rectangle (⅛-inch thick). Cut out as many stars as possible, reserving and chilling scraps, then quickly transfer cookies to the baking sheet, arranging them ½-inch apart. (If dough becomes too soft, return it to the freezer until it is firm.)

5. Bake until firm and slightly puffed, about 10 minutes. Cool cookies on baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to a rack to cool completely. (Cookies will crisp as they cool.) Make more cookies with remaining dough and scraps, re-rolling scraps only once.

6. To make the icing, in an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg white and cream of tartar until foamy. Sift in half the sugar and beat until smooth, about 1 to 2 minutes. With mixer running, gradually add remaining sugar and beat on high speed until icing is smooth and thick. Icing should be thick, but not too thick to be pressed through a pastry bag. Adjust consistency with more confectioners' sugar or water.

7. Transfer icing to a pastry bag with a small round tip. Pipe icing onto cookies and add decorations of your choice before icing hardens.



Cake pops

to light up kids' eyes this holiday season

There's no denying Christmas Eve is a little more special in homes where kids are excited about an overnight visit from Santa Claus. Indeed, kids' joy and enthusiasm helps to make the holiday season such a special time of year.

Since kids add so much to the holidays, it makes sense to prepare something special for youngsters. Of course, treats such as these "Christmas Tree Cake Pops" from Lines+Angles also may appeal to festive adults.



Christmas Tree Cake Pops

Makes 24 cake pops

1 box vanilla cake mix
¾ cup canola oil
½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon milk
3½ cups green candy melts
24 cake pop sticks
Icing dots
Icing stars

1. Prepare cake according to package instructions, adding ¾ cup canola oil to the cake mix before baking.
2. Once cake is cool to the touch, transfer to a large mixing bowl and break up into crumbs. Allow to cool completely.
3. In a medium bowl, add the butter, sugar, vanilla, and milk. Use an electric mixer and beat on medium speed for about 4 minutes until light and fluffy.
4. Add ¾ of the frosting to the cake crumbs and mix until mixture can hold together well. Refrigerate for at least an hour.

5. Using your hands, shape the cake pop mixture into 24 conical shapes.
6. Melt the green candy melts. Dip one end of each of the cake pop sticks into the melted chocolate before inserting into the bottom of the cake pops. Dip each cake pop into the melted chocolate, making sure to cover completely, allowing excess to drip back into bowl.
7. Use a toothpick to create the textured look of the tree and decorate with the icing dots and stars before standing upright to dry completely.

Bake a tasty batch of gingerbread cookies

this holiday season

The holiday season wouldn't be the same without the various traditions that make this special time of year so unique. Baking is arguably among the most cherished holiday traditions, as many cannot imagine what the month of December might be like without cookies. That's a reality those who love to bake need not confront, and this recipe for "Gingerbread Holiday Cookies" from Lines+Angles ensures holiday celebrants can meet their need for cookies this season.

Gingerbread Holiday Cookies

Makes 36 to 48 cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
 1½ cups packed dark brown sugar
 4 large eggs
 ½ cup molasses
 7¼ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for work surface
 4 teaspoons ground ginger
 1teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1teaspoon ground cloves
 1teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
 1tablespoon baking soda
 1teaspoon salt

For Royal Icing:

4 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted (plus extra if needed)
 3 tablespoons meringue powder
 ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 ½ cup warm water with ¼ cup more, if necessary

In Addition Food coloring, gel paste preferred

1. Using an electric mixer set on low speed, cream together the butter and sugar until thoroughly combined. Add the eggs and molasses and mix until incorporated. Sift together the flour, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, baking soda, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture and mix well.
2. Divide dough in half and wrap each portion in plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour, or until firm.
3. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line two cookie sheets with cooking parchment paper.
4. Allow dough to sit at room temperature until pliable, about 15 minutes. Take about ½ cup of dough at a time and roll out onto a floured surface to a thickness of ⅛-inch. Cut out desired holiday shapes with cookie cutters. You can re-roll the scrap pieces. Transfer the cookies to the prepared cookie sheets, using a spatula.
5. Bake for 10 minutes, or until just brown around the edges. Transfer to wire rack to cool.



For Royal Icing:

1. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the confectioners' sugar and meringue powder until combined. Add the vanilla and ½ cup water and beat on medium to high speed for 5 to 7 minutes or until glossy and stiff peaks form. Test the consistency by spreading a small amount of icing on a cookie using a knife; if the icing runs off the edge of the cookie, add more confectioners' sugar until the desired consistency is achieved; if too thick, add more water.
2. Working quickly, divide icing between bowls and add food coloring. Decorate as desired. Icing hardens quickly when exposed to air. Store remaining icing in an airtight container.

Note: Yield will vary depending on the size of the cutters.

Tasty chocolate squares *make a perfect party offering*

Holiday parties help make the month of December a festive time of year. Office parties, family gatherings and school functions dot many people's social schedules during the holiday season, and that means hosts are forever on the lookout for tasty fare to serve their guests.

Many holiday gatherings are informal affairs where foods might be passed around a room or presented buffet-style. In such instances, it's not uncommon to see a bevy of small bites on a kitchen countertop or dining room table. Hosts planning such events can offer guests a touch of everything, including something decadent like these "Chocolate Squares" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Chocolate Squares

Makes 3 to 4 dozen

1 cup honey
 ⅓ cup granulated sugar
 7 tablespoons butter
 3 cups all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
 3 tablespoons cocoa
 3 teaspoons baking powder
 2 eggs
 2 tablespoons rum
 2 pounds marzipan
 ⅓ cup icing sugar
 1 teaspoon almond extract
 1 cup apricot jelly
 2 cups chocolate, dark or milk
 1 cup icing sugar
 4 to 5 tablespoons milk or water
 1 tablespoon butter
 ¼ cup white chocolate, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Oil a rimmed cookie sheet.
2. Heat honey, sugar and butter in a saucepan until sugar and butter are melted, stirring constantly. Let cool.
3. Mix flour, pumpkin pie spice, cocoa, and baking powder together and set aside.
4. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the eggs with the rum. Add the cooled honey mixture and mix. Slowly add in flour mixture and mix until smooth.
5. Spread dough onto cookie sheet, approximately ½-inch thick. Smooth top and bake for 20 to 30 minutes, or until wooden toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. Let cool.
6. To assemble, knead marzipan with ⅓ cup icing sugar and almond extract. If too soft, add a bit more icing sugar.
7. Roll out marzipan mixture between two layers of plastic wrap until it is the size of a cake.

Perfect to share or give as host gift



8. Cut the cake horizontally to make two layers. Brush bottom layer with jelly or marmalade and then cover with marzipan.

9. Next, brush jelly or marmalade over marzipan layer. Cover with top cake layer. Cut into approximately 1-inch squares.

10. In a double-boiler, melt chocolate and mix with 1 cup icing sugar, the water or milk, and butter.

Dip "dominosteine" in chocolate and let set on cookie rack until chocolate has hardened. Place melted white chocolate in a small piping bag and decorate the chocolate squares with dots of melted white chocolate for a domino decoration

Cookies

make a perfect homemade holiday gift

Whatever it is that inspires individuals to break out the measuring cups, flour and whisk, cookie fans undoubtedly appreciate that spark of confectionary creativity. This holiday season, those with an urge to bake some cookies can try this recipe for “Christmas Linz Shortbread Cookies with Red Jam” from Lines+Angles.

Oatmeal Cranberry Cookies

Makes approximately 16 to 18 cookies

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsalted butter
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown sugar
2 small eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
4 cups rolled oats
1 cup dried cranberries



- 1.** Preheat the oven to 350 F. Grease and line a large cookie sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** Melt the butter in a small saucepan set over medium heat. Once the butter has melted, pour into a large bowl and add the brown sugar.
- 3.** Mix until well combined. Add the eggs and vanilla, and continue to mix until incorporated.

- 4.** In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, baking soda, spices, and oats. Add the dry ingredients to the wet and mix well. Add the cranberries and stir until thoroughly incorporated.
- 5.** Drop scant tablespoons of the batter onto the cookie sheet, spaced apart. Press down slightly in the centers.
- 6.** Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until golden and set. Remove from the oven and let them cool on the cookie sheet for a few minutes before moving to a cooling rack to finish cooling.

4 Ideas for *homemade food gifts*

Personalized holiday gifts can be especially heartwarming, particularly when they incorporate activities recipients enjoy. That is perhaps one reason why experiential gifts have become so popular in recent years.

Food gifts never go out of fashion. Homemade offerings of edible items may be particularly coveted because they are delicious and don't take up space. Food gifts require time to prepare and reassure recipients that they are worth the work that goes into this special offering. Those who have the time and talent to prepare homemade food gifts may want to explore these four options that can be especially meaningful to their recipients.



1. Granola

Granola is essentially a baked oats treat. Many varieties sold in stores offer the nutritional benefits of oats overshadowed by high sugar content. With homemade granola, cooks can customize the ingredients so certain flavors or health profiles may be prominent. Oats, nuts, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, and dried fruit can go into granola. A small amount of maple syrup or honey can be used to sweeten the granola before it is baked in the oven for around 15 to 20 minutes. Granola should be allowed to cool before packaging to enable the formation of clusters of oats and other goodies.

2. Frozen cookie dough

If people are always commenting on your delicious cookies, you certainly can gift them ready-made cookies in a tin. But homemade frozen or refrigerated cookie dough also makes a great gift. Follow the lead of commercial cookie dough companies and prepare your ingredients before rolling them tightly in freezer paper to store until you're ready for gifting. When it comes time for gifting, wrap the cookie dough log in patterned wax paper and secure the ends. Those on the receiving end can slice and bake according to the directions cooks provide on the tag.

3. Chocolate bark

Chocolate bark is simple to make and looks impressive when wrapped in tissue paper and packaged in a decorative box. Melt a favorite chocolate in a heatproof bowl in the microwave and then mix in various ingredients like chopped nuts, raisins, chocolate candies, dried cranberries — whatever you desire. Spread into a parchment-lined pan and refrigerate until firm. Break the bark into pieces and package into a gift.

4. Flavored salts

Use fresh herbs or fruit rinds to flavor salt for gift-giving. Process fresh herbs and kosher salt in a food processor for about 30 seconds, or until the herbs are well chopped. Spread the salt mixture on a baking sheet and bake at 200 F or 250 F for around 15 minutes. Let the salt cool and then scoop into small jars or other containers.

Edible gifts are perfect for showing the people you care about they are loved and appreciated.