

North by Northwest Sweet Recipe Exchange

As heard on CBC Radio November 21 to December 13, 2015

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Introduction

As the holiday season starts to warm up, we thought we would share with you some of our favourite guests' sweet holiday recipes and stories. In turn, we hope you will share your favourite sweet holiday recipe and story with us!

Each week we will compile the recipes we receive and create another "chapter" of the North by Northwest Sweet Recipe Exchange and offer each chapter to our audience.

This is NOT a real cookbook, but a basic recipe exchange, so please double check your recipe for any typos and make sure the ingredients and instructions are as accurate as possible, so listeners can recreate your recipe perfectly and enjoy it as much as you do. We understand, and hope you do too, that many of these recipes are old family favourites, and they have original instructions that are not as detailed as cookbooks are today – but that's half the fun, immersing yourself in a recipe that has been made for generations, with lots of love, patience, ingenuity and possibly a bit of adlibbing!

Also, if you know the origin of your recipe – a newspaper article, magazine or cookbook – please let us know about that too.

Please email your recipe and story to nxnw@cbc.ca before midnight December 13th, to be included in our Sweet Recipe Exchange.

If you have a photo of the finished recipe that you would like to share that we can put on social media like our CBC website, Facebook and Twitter, we would appreciate that too!

For everyone who sends us a recipe, we will be putting all the names into a big hat to win new cookbooks. We have a wonderful selection of books to giveaway, just in time for the holidays!

North by Northwest Sweet Recipe Exchange Chapter Two

From Sharon Reynolds - Comox Valley, B.C.

Here is a Christmas cookie recipe that has become a Reynolds' family favourite over the years. I first started making these cookies in the 1990's from a clipping I cut out of the Montreal Star paper. They had a contributor to their cooking section called Frances Beaulieu. She also illustrated all of her recipes with fanciful drawings.

Chocolate Shortbread Hearts

2 cups unbleached flour
1/2 c. cocoa powder
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1 cup butter, softened
1 cup icing sugar, sifted
1 1/4 tsp. vanilla

Sift flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt together. In large bowl, cream butter, add icing sugar bit by bit, and beat 2 min. Beat in vanilla. Add flour mixture in 2 batches. Beat on low speed till just combined.

Roll out dough 1/4" thick between sheets of wax paper. Chill till firm (2 hrs.). Cut out hearts and bake in preheated 325° F. oven 16-18 min. Cool.

Makes about 50 cookies.

(My notes: Watch closely as these can burn easily.)

From Shelley Brown - Victoria, B.C.

The recipe I'm going to share with you is one my mom used to make. Now that she is gone her recipes are even more special. In her obituary, I wrote that all her friends would have at least one of her recipes in their collection. Someone got in

touch and said they didn't have one of her recipes so I gave out copies of her recipes at her funeral as a remembrance.

I loved these cookies as a child - my tastes were always simple and to me these cookies symbolized the Christmas season. Now my son has developed a taste for them and because I make the dough ahead and put it in the fridge he feels like quite the chef when he cooks them up for his friends.

You know how every recipe card has where the recipe came from in the top right hand corner? Well this recipe has the name of our very good friend and neighbour's mom (from years ago) in the corner. That name is Mrs. Binns. Who is Mrs. Binns? It's our friend and author Lois Simmie's mother. If you haven't read her "Mister Got to Go" books about the cat living at the Sylvia Hotel then you need to right now - they are awesome!

Ice Box Cookies

1/2 lb butter
1/2 cup white sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 egg
1 cup walnut crumbs
2 to 2 1/2 cups flour
1/2 tsp soda
1 tsp vanilla
1/4 tsp salt

Cream together the top four ingredients and then add the remaining ingredients. Form batter into logs the diameter of a small cookie (1.5" or so) and about the length of 10" or so. Wrap in plastic wrap and store in the fridge until you are ready to make the cookies. Cut them into widths of a nice small cookie and put on a cookie sheet. Bake at 10-12 mins. at 350 degrees.

(Since this recipe has been handed down from years and years ago - maybe 50+ years, I'm estimating the dimensions because there weren't any in the original recipe. You just knew how to do it because your mom showed you!)

From Wendy Taylor - West Vancouver, B.C.

Here's a recipe from my German ex-mother-in-law who baked this cake in November each year so that she could douse it in dark rum each week til Christmas. The weekly ritual of taking the cheesecloth wrapped parcels out of the cupboard created an air of anticipation as their aroma became more rich and, well, alcoholic and rummy. I'm not sure if it's in style anymore but I love a bite or two of an old fashioned dark Christmas cake with a bit of rum or

sherry in front of the fire. This recipe is the best I've tasted. Of course you can add a thick layer of icing to add sweetness but this is wonderful without, too. This came from the *Vancouver Sun* in November 1977. I made it every year for years and it's not too late for this year.

Sheraton Christmas Holiday Cake

Makes 2 cakes, takes two short days

1 pound seedless raisins
½ pound currants
½ pound pitted dates, in pieces
1 pound mixed candied fruit
½ pound pecans, chopped
½ pound candied red cherries, halved
Grated rind and juice of 2 lemons
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon mace
½ teaspoon cloves
½ cup water
½ cup molasses
½ cup brandy
1 cup unsalted butter
2 cups brown sugar
6 medium eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda

Allow two days for preparation. On first day, stir all fruits and pecans with spices, molasses, water and brandy. Soak overnight in covered container at room temperature.

Next day, cream butter and sugar well. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift dry ingredients, add to creamed mixture. Blend in prepared fruit.

Divide batter evenly between two greased and floured 9x5x3 inch loaf pans. Bake in slow oven, 300° F, 1 ½ to two hours. While baking, keep a shallow pan filled with water on bottom of the oven. After 1 ½ to two hours, cover cake pans with aluminum foil and bake for another hour. Check for doneness by sticking a toothpick in centre of cakes – picks should come out dry. Or press down lightly with palm of hand, if cake is done it should spring back into shape leaving no imprint or depression. Cool on wire racks. Wrap in cheesecloth, then plastic wrap and then foil for storage in a cool, dry place, not the fridge. Makes under six pounds. Each week, unwrap and spoon a couple of tablespoons of rum over the cakes. Do this for four or five weeks.

From Mary Wheat - Fort St. John, B.C.

I love this recipe simply because I love Skor Bars, but I don't allow myself to buy them except at Christmas to make these!
Also it's a super simple recipe that is different and seems an exotic offering!!

Skor Bars sometimes called Toffee or Crunch bars.

Preheat oven to 350

35 plain soda crackers
1 cup butter
1 cup dark brown sugar
1 or more cups chocolate chips
1 pkg Skor chips

Line large rimmed cookie sheet with foil. Line up crackers on it.
Melt butter. Add sugar, stir and boil for 3 mins.
Spread over crackers.
Bake for 5 mins or so, until bubbling. Remove from oven.
Sprinkle chocolate chips over caramel. When softened spread to smooth with knife.

Sprinkle Skor chips over chocolate. Leave until cool.
Cut into triangles, or just break randomly into large chunks.
Package to your liking.
Yum, yum!

From Heather MacRae-Kamlah - Kimberley B.C.

These cookies have been around at Christmas time for as long as I can remember. I have continued making them for my kids and my grandchildren. It goes unquestioned; they're a must! The first time I made them was after my Mum's passing in 2003. I remember calling her in to give me a little guidance, because believe it or not I had not helped her make them ever! All I had was her hand written recipe. To my astonishment her presence arrived that first time and she continues to 'come in' when I'm baking. I love having her there with me. My Mum loved to bake for her family, it was her way of saying I love you! Merry Christmas to

one and all and happy baking!

Mum's Walnut Crescents

Dough:

1 lb unsalted butter
8 oz plain cream cheese
4 egg yolks
4 1/2 cups flour

Filling:

1 lb crushed walnuts (I use my vitamix)
1 cup sugar
Enough warm milk to make a paste (1/2 cupish)

Mix ingredients and gradually add flour, mixing with hands until all of the flour folds into a smooth dough. Separate dough into 6 portions. Wrap each portion in waxed paper and place in fridge overnight.

Next Day:

Remove dough from fridge and let stand at room temperature for approximately 1/2 hour. Roll out dough thinly on a slightly floured surface. Cut into strips about 3 inches wide and then into triangles.

Fill each triangle with walnut mixture and roll, starting at wide end of triangle. Place on slightly greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350F until lightly browned, about 12- 15 minutes.

P.S. be prepared to spend some time making these. This recipe yields about 250 cookies.

From Helen Kelsey - Surrey, B.C.

We are clearing out our house and I came across the 5th annual prize winner's cookbook by Edith Adams of the Vancouver Sun. I think that this book was published in 1940. It has my grandmother's name on the front of the book.

Here is a recipe from it --there is a big X by the recipe so I presume my grandmother used this one at Christmas:

Fruit Cake

3/4 pound butter
1 pound sugar

6 eggs
1 cup jam
3 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon each cloves, ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg
1 teaspoon salt
2 pounds raisins
1 pound currants
1/2 pound walnuts or almonds
1/2 pound sliced mixed peel
1 pound glace cherries
2 pounds pitted dates
1 teaspoon soda

Cream butter and sugar before adding the well beaten eggs and jam. Sift together the dry ingredients, including spices, before adding the creamed mixture. Have fruit prepared and well mixed together in a bowl ready to add last. Dissolve the soda in a little lukewarm water before adding to the batter. Add fruits and nuts and mix well. Spread in greased and paper-lined pans. Bake 20 minutes at 325 degrees, then reduce the heat to 275 degrees F. and continue baking for 2 hours or until done.

From Anne Wheeler - Victoria, B.C.

Here are 2 old favourites: Rum Balls and Caribbean Shortbread. I hardly bake anymore because I am almost always the only consumer in the house. But I cannot resist having Christmas cookies around for visitors, always a good excuse. They have been a tradition at my house for at least 15 years. Visitors and cookies.

One recipe is from the Victoria Times-Colonist, the other from Canadian Living magazine.

Rum Balls From *Canadian Living* quite a while ago.

Whisk together

- 1 cup sifted icing sugar
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 3 oz. grated bittersweet baking chocolate

Stir in

- ¼ cup dark rum
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Press ingredients together into a ball and chill for 15 minutes.

Roll rounded teaspoons of batter into balls.

Then roll the balls in

- 2 tbsp. rum
- Dark chocolate sprinkles (or ground almonds/cocoa/coconut)

Dry the rum balls for an hour at room temperature. Refrigerate until firm.

Store between wax paper sheets and store in an airtight container in the fridge or freezer for up to one month.

Caribbean Shortbread Originally from the *Victoria Times-Colonist*, 1999

Cream together

- 1 cup soft butter
- ½ cup cane sugar
- ½ tsp. rum extract

Blend into the butter mixture, then form into a ball

- 2 cups all purpose flour with
- ½ tsp. ground ginger

I also blend in some finely diced candied ginger.

Do not handle the dough too much as it gets tough.

Form dough into 1" logs. Roll the logs in cane sugar to coat them.

Refrigerate for a couple of hours.

Cut logs into ½" slices. Coat the top of each slice with more cane sugar.

Arrange on cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.

Bake in a 300 degree oven for approx. 45 minutes, until quite brown.

Makes about 3 dozen cookies.

From Nancy Reynolds - Vancouver, B.C.

I've been making these cookies every Christmas for 31 years, the year my first child was born, as they are family favourites. Some years I make them with friends and some with my children (now 31 and 26). The latest challenge is making some gluten free ones that are still as delicious, as my son developed gluten intolerance 3 years ago.

Almond Shortbread

1 lb butter

1/3 cup berry sugar

1/3 cup icing sugar

Cream butter, then cream together with sugars. Gradually add:

4 cups flour

¾ finely chopped almonds

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 teaspoon almond extract

Shape cookie dough into crescent shapes onto cookie sheet. Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes. Dip top of cookie in regular sugar while warm.

From Lillian - Gibsons, B.C.

It was 1965 and we were living in Cupar Saskatchewan. My Mom was just 35 years old with 5 young children, aged 3 months to 12 years. That autumn, my dad fell at work and broke his neck and he became a quadriplegic. He lived at home with us, which I know was physically hard for my Mom, but she cared for him with the same love that she gave to each of us kids. I know we were poor as we shopped at the thrift stores and I remember getting a comic book with a dollar bill taped inside for my Christmas gift. I remember too asking for a Kerplunk game (still only a \$12.00 item) and being thrilled when I got it. This was the 60's and 70's, not the 20's and 30's. A small bit of WCB and some welfare somehow kept us going financially, but my Mom's hard work and her heart full of love kept us going in all other ways.

Mom made this fudge for us kids every Christmas. The ingredients are basic but we always looked forward to it. We could not afford store bought candy during those years - and I don't recall ever missing it. Mom's fudge and love always made up for it :)

FLOUR IN FUDGE

4 cups white sugar
1 cup margarine
1/4 cup cocoa
1 cup milk

Mix above ingredients in a pot and boil for 10 minutes, stirring to evenly dissolve and not burn.
Remove from heat

Stir into same pot:
1 tsp. vanilla
2 cups flour
Stir well, but do not beat
May add raisins, nuts or coconut at this stage

Butter 2 - 8" or 9" pans depending on how thick you like it.
Pour into pans and set

From Linda Manzon - Grand Forks, B.C.

My Christmas Stollen recipe started with a friend. Over the years I have gradually replaced some of the ingredients. For example 2 cups of dark raisins has become 1 cup of dark raisins and 1 cup of dried cranberries. Sometimes I replace some of the white flour with whole wheat. Real bakers are cringing as they read this, I'm sure.

The original called for ¼ C of brandy, but the more dried fruit I use, the more brandy I use... sometimes up to ½ a cup. If you search for the origins of stolen, it goes back to the 1500s. Some of the early stolen recipes called for soaking the fruit in brandy for several days, before making it.

Every September my mother made a fabulous dark Christmas fruit cake, loaded with fruit and rum. When baked it was wrapped in cheesecloth - stored in the cool basement - and rum regularly added to the cheesecloth, until Christmas rolled around. We knew it was coming to the table when we got a whiff of the lovely rum and fruit fragrance.

Unfortunately it seems that people these days don't like fruitcake ... so for me the stolen is a wonderful compromise and it suits my partner's Germanic roots.

It takes almost a day to make stolen with all of the different rising steps ... but I love the process and it lets me anticipate the holiday season.

Our tradition is to have it for breakfast on Christmas morning and New Year's Day, along with sparkling bubbly wine and orange juice.

Christmas Stolen (makes 3)

Mix together:

- 1 C. flour - 4 Tbsp Yeast - 1 tsp Salt,
- then add 1 C. warm milk and whisk until smooth.
- Cover and let rise 45 minutes

In One Bowl - Combine:

- 1 C Dark Raisins
- 1 C Dried Cranberries
- 1 C Light Raisins
- ¼ tsp each of Mace and ground Nutmeg
- 2 tsp. Lemon rind
- ½ C Chopped Dried Apricots
- ½ C Candied Mixed Fruit
- ½ C each of Chopped Pecans & Almonds

Pour ¼ to 1/3 C Brandy over all to soak

In Another Bowl - Beat Together:

- ¾ lb (or 12 oz) Butter
- 2/3 C sugar
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk

Then Blend in 3 C of Flour

Put Ingredients soaking in Brandy together with the combined butter, sugar, eggs & flour - then

- With a wooden spoon beat in the Yeast, Flour, Salt mix to the above mixture
- Add 2 more Cups of Flour

Knead x 12 minutes -- place in a buttered bowl & cover -- Let rise x 2 hours.

Punch down - cut in thirds - knead a few times - Rest x 10 minutes.

While dough is resting - take **250 gm almond paste**, divide in thirds and roll into a 14" 'rope'.

Roll each third of dough into a 16" x 8" oval. Place an almond paste rope in the centre of the oval (lengthwise), then fold oval in half lengthwise.

Place on buttered cooking sheets - cover - let rise x 45 min.

Bake stolen at 350 degrees x 45 min.

When completely cool, brush with **melted butter** & sprinkle with **icing sugar** put through a sieve.

Wrap in aluminium foil, then plastic wrap - freeze until ready to eat. Half a loaf makes a lovely gift.



From Patrick Norman

My contribution is Ginger Molasses cookies. It has been my wife's favourite cookie ever since she was a child. The recipe originally came from her childhood neighbour and I have adapted it to be the "perfect" cookie.

Ginger Molasses Cookies

450g all purpose flour
2 tsp baking soda
2 tbsp cinnamon
1 1/2 tsp ginger powder
1 1/2 tsp clove powder
1/2 tsp salt
230g unsalted butter
125g brown sugar
175g molasses

Cream butter with sugar and molasses. Sift dry ingredients together and slowly add to creamed butter/sugar/molasses.

Ball in the palms of your hands to just under a ping pong ball size (15g).

Top with 'sparkling' sugar if desired. Bake 10-12 minutes at 350 degree until cooked through and starting to 'crack' on top.

From Judy Evans - Nelson, B.C.

This recipe is one made by myself and my daughter. She is a nurse and has made many coffee breaks mouth-watering for her co-workers. I got this recipe from my good friend Marg. She has shared it with many.

We try to avoid eating the entire pan by putting them in the freezer. However, they taste just as good frozen - so much for that strategy.

Best Brownies

MELT :

1 cup butter

1 cup white sugar

1 cup brown sugar

3/4 cup cocoa

Blend all well.

Beat in 3 eggs, one at a time

Mix in 1 cup flour, 1.5 tsp baking powder, 1 tsp vanilla

Pour into 8X8" pan and bake at 350 for 30 min. DO NOT OVERBAKE

Cool then ice with

Icing:

Melt 1/2 cup butter

Add 1 cup icing sugar

And 2/3 cup cocoa

Beat well.

Then add 1 TBSP milk and 1TBSP coffee.

From Michelle Li - Richmond, B.C.

This recipe is an homage of sorts.

To whom? A grandmother that I only knew for a short time.

I have only a few precious, yet fleeting, childhood memories- big family dinners with everyone gathered around her table (always cascading with delectable food), tea time with grandma in her kitchen and sitting on the back steps in the sun with her.

I am also lucky to have her recipes.

I'm pretty sure that this recipe is beloved by everyone in the family. It is a long-standing Christmas-baking tradition. I always wonder why I wait that long to make something so good and so full of memories.

Yes, I had to alter the recipe, as I always do, but this time just a little. I refuse to use her fat of choice- shortening- but butter is a fine substitute. I strain to hear her voice in this recipe so I can't change it too much.

Other than that, this is my grandma's recipe. There may be other versions floating out there in our family (or your family) but this one reminds me of being with her, dunking cookies into my afternoon tea, and watching the chiming Black Forest cuckoo clock intently. I must get one of those...

Grandma's Cracked Gingersnaps

If you like a thicker, more chewy cookie, you don't have to press it down with the bottom of a cup- leave it in a small ball.

2 1/2 cups unbleached flour
2 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt
1 tbsp cinnamon
1 tsp ginger
3/4 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses (I like blackstrap)
1/4-1/2 cup more sugar for coating

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Whisk together flour, soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger.
3. Cream butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, add egg and molasses.
4. Scoop out a heaping tablespoonful, roll into a ball, roll in coating sugar and press down lightly with the bottom of a cup.
5. Place on prepared cookie sheets and bake for 10-15 minutes depending on how crisp you like them.

From Angie Silvestre - Kitimat, B.C.

I would like to offer one of my childhood favourites for the sweet recipe exchange.

These cookies are rather unusual in looks. Not your traditional kind in any stretch of the imagination. I, by nature, am not adventurous when it comes to food.

The first batch of hopscotch cookies my mother ever made was the butterscotch variety. And while butterscotch is quite a pleasant aroma wafting out of the kitchen, the cookie itself is not the prettiest of colour, shape or design. My mother was a working mom, in a family-run business and time was always short, so home baking was something I looked forward to.

But when my Mom presented me with this irregularly-shaped, spikey, light brown (thinking baby poop) cookie, I turned my nose up at it. Who ever heard of using Chinese noodles in a cookie (when she made them, you bought these in a tin can!)? Where was the flour? The warm oven? The stacks of dishes? So I did not dive into those cookies as I would have her "neither cake nor candy" brownie recipe. I waited until there was only a couple of cookies left (my dad being the other 'cookie monster' in my family). I found a crumb of noodle covered in the butterscotch/peanut butter mixture and... needless to say, I begged my mother to make another batch. Since then, I have made them for both my kids and this recipe has become a favourite in both our immediate and extended family with Aunts and cousins always appreciating a fresh plate of hopscotch after our dinners.

My cousins have also made this recipe with the colourful miniature marshmallows for a confetti surprise.

Hopscotch Cookies

1/2 cup peanut butter
1 cup chocolate or butterscotch chips
2 cups miniature marshmallows
2 cup (ish) chow mein noodles (the thicker ones)

Melt the peanut butter and chips in a double boiler. Pour the melted mixture over the marshmallows and noodles and stir until everything is coated. Drop by tablespoon onto a wax paper lined cookie sheet and refrigerate until firm. Store in a cool place...but don't worry too much, as they will not last long.

I have been meaning to experiment with other types of flavoured chips, such as mint...just a thought. Enjoy :)

From Pam Taylor - Parksville, B.C.

My mother used to make Swedish Wafers and set the finished cookies on a sheet on top of the refrigerator until the icing hardened. Everyone else in the family would sneak a few from the back row so she was often surprised to find there was only half a sheet by the time she went to pack them into tins.

I like the Butter Tart Squares because they are quick to make and have more filling and less pastry than using tart shells.

SWEDISH WAFERS (use real butter and fresh cream)

WAFERS:

1 cup soft butter
1/3 cup cream
2 cups flour

Mix into a dough and wrap in plastic wrap. Chill several hours.

Roll out between 2 sheets of well-floured waxed paper to 1/8" thick.

Cut into small rounds (1 inch in diameter) or other shapes if you have tiny cutters.

Transfer to a dish of granulated sugar and coat both sides.

Transfer to cookie sheet and prick several times with a fork.

Bake at 375 degrees for 7 to 9 minutes (until just browned on bottom but not top)

Cool and put 2 wafers together with icing.

ICING

1/4 cup soft butter
1 egg yolk
3/4 cup icing sugar
add milk or cream to make spreading consistency
Optional: tint part red and part green

BUTTER TART SQUARES

Makes one 9 x 13 inch pan

Base:

1½ cup flour

¾ cup butter (don't substitute margarine)

3 tablespoons sugar

Mix flour and sugar. Cut in butter. Pat into a 9x13 inch pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and pour on top layer.

Increase oven to 350 degrees

Top Layer:

3 eggs, beaten

2¼ cups brown sugar

1½ teaspoons vanilla

4½ Tablespoons flour

¾ Teaspoons baking powder

1½ cups currants

½ cup melted butter (don't substitute margarine)

Mix all together and pour over base.

Bake 30 minutes and cut in squares when cool.

From Therese Savoie

Matrimonial Squares. I've always wondered where that name comes from and picture a judgemental potential mother-in-law, disdainfully tasting the offerings of a lineup of hopeful daughters-in-law. The recipe for mine comes from my high-school boyfriend's mother, with orange zest, a slight twist on the traditional date-filled squares I grew up with.

Mrs. L's Matrimonial Square

Filling:

1 lb. chopped dates

1 cup cold water

4 tbsp. brown sugar

Juice & grated rind of 1 orange.

Cook together until soft. Then cool filling.

Mix together:

1½ cups flour

1 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. baking soda

¼ tsp. salt

Cut in 1 cup butter

Add:

1 cup brown sugar

1½ cups rolled oats

Divide oat mixture roughly in half, firmly pat first portion into 13" X 9" baking pan, spread date mixture over, then sprinkle with second portion of oat mixture and gently pat to even layer.

Bake at 325 F. for 30-35 minutes, or till set and lightly golden.

From J.M.Clifford - Victoria, B.C.

Here is a recipe that has been around for a very long time. When I was young we called them "Frying pan Cookies" from an Edith Adams cook book. I have also heard them called "angel bites" (my favourite name). Some recipes say to roll them into balls, others into small logs. This is from 'Company's Coming'.

DATE COCONUT BALLS

With these in the freezer you will always have a party-type cookie on hand. Made in a saucepan.

4 dozen

1-1/2 cups chopped dates
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 tbsp butter OR hard margarine
2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla
2 cups crisp rice cereal
1/2 cup finely chopped nuts
1/4 cup finely chopped cherries
Shredded coconut

In saucepan, combine dates, sugar, butter or margarine, eggs & vanilla. Heat. Cook, stirring constantly, about 5 mins.

Stir in cereal, nuts & cherries. Cool until mixture is warm. Shape into 1" balls.

Roll balls in coconut. Butter hands to prevent dough from sticking.

From Barbara Mack - Slocan, B.C.

My mother was from England and always made caramels for Christmas. She taught me the recipe and I have always made them for my own family. When she got too old to make them anymore I would send her a tin for Christmas.

Vanilla Cream Caramels

Dissolve over low heat in heavy saucepan:
2 cups sugar

2 cups dark corn syrup

1 cup butter

1 cup cream

Cook over moderate heat, stirring constantly to 115 degrees C.

Remove from heat and add very gradually 1 cup cream.

Return to heat and cook to Firm Ball (120 C)

Pour the mixture at once without stirring into a buttered pan. When firm, cut into squares with a sawing motion. Wrap individually in waxed paper.

From Chef Caren McSherry, The Gourmet Warehouse
gourmetwarehouse.ca

It would be easy for me to provide an over the top, esoteric, labour intensive recipe, but I won't.

I am always looking for a giant flavour and texture profile to replace time and effort. Good luck with that you say.....

Well here it is. My annual Christmas Appetizer cooking class went crazy for this last week so I thought I would share with you.

Chocolate Almond Crunch

1 cup of really good chocolate, at least 60%
2 cups of Kellogg's corn flakes (yes, cornflakes)
1 cup slivered almonds, toasted
½ cup caramel sauce, it is OK to use a good jarred one
Edible gold flakes for garnish (optional)

mini size silicone mold

Place a large stainless bowl over a pot of simmering water. Melt the chocolate in the bowl, once it is melted add the corn flakes and almonds. Stir well to coat the entire mixture in chocolate. Fill the silicone mold half full, add a drizzle of caramel sauce and top with more cornflakes. Press down to compact the mixture.

Chill for 10 minutes, then pop the chocolate treats out and continue until all the mixture is used. Garnish with a sprinkle of gold flake.

Alternatively, if you do not have a silicone mold, use a small cookie scoop to evenly portion out the mixture onto a parchment lined cookie sheet. It may not look as good, but will certainly taste the same.

Makes 36 small treats.

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