



Chocolate Cherry Nuggets

Makes about 8 dozen

- 2 cups (4 sticks) butter or margarine, room temperature
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)
- 4½ cups flour
- 1 package (12 ounces) miniature semisweet chocolate chips (see note)
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup maraschino cherries, drained and quartered (see note)

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

In a large bowl, cream butter. Beat in powdered sugar vanilla and, if using, salt. Gradually add flour, mixing until well blended. Using your hands, mix in chocolate chips, pecans and cherries. Dough will be stiff.

Drop by teaspoonful (or just grab little chunks) onto ungreased baking sheets. Slightly flatten with your fingertip. Bake 13 to 15 minutes or until bottoms are light brown.

Notes: Bags of mini chocolate chips are now 10 ounces. You'll need an extra ⅓ cup from another bag to make 12 ounces. Use clean kitchen shears to cut the cherries; it's easier than chopping. Cookie yield is based on using a 1 3/8-inch scooper to form cookies.