



Recipes & Tips

FROM THE PROS

Bake through your holiday gift list.



The best gifts don't need a receipt, just a napkin. To bake your way through your gift list, start with our holiday cookbook. From chef favorites to holiday classics, you're sure to find a recipe for everyone.



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English Toffee

This classic combination of buttery toffee, sweet chocolate and crunchy pecans is a no-bake crowd pleaser. Wrap in small bags and tie with ribbon for easy gifts that everyone is sure to love.



YIELD: 1¼ pounds

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (227 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- 3 Tbsp. (42 g) water
- 1 Tbsp. (19 g) light corn syrup
- 4 oz. (113 g) chopped semisweet chocolate or chocolate chips
- ½ cup (56 g) coarsely chopped toasted pecans

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a 9 x 9-inch pan with aluminum foil and spray with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Heat butter, sugar, water and corn syrup in a medium heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved.
3. Cook without stirring until candy thermometer registers 260°F or hard-ball stage. Continue cooking, stirring continuously until the temperature registers 300°F.
4. Pour into prepared pan and allow to cool for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with chocolate pieces and let stand for 5 minutes or until the chocolate has melted. Spread the chocolate to evenly coat the toffee and top with pecan pieces. Gently press the nuts into the tops to make sure they adhere. Let cool completely and break into pieces.

Fudgy Brownies

Every baker should have a decadent brownie recipe up their sleeve. Take yours to the next level by adding a drizzle of caramel or holiday-themed sprinkles.



YIELD: 25 1½-inch brownies

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOKING TIME: 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 3 large eggs (150 g)
- ¾ cup (150 g) sugar
- ½ cup (98 g) brown sugar
- 1 cup (227 g) Plugra Unsalted Butter, melted
- 1 cup (80 g) cocoa, sifted
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ cup (63 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a 9 x 9-inch pan with aluminum foil and spray with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl and stir until well blended.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Check for doneness using a toothpick inserted into the center of the pan comes out clean. Cool in the pan before serving.

PRO TIP

Visit plugra.com for Chef Linnea Shumway's brown butter salted caramel recipe.

Gingerbread Men

These wonderful spice cookies are as much fun to eat as they are to decorate. Bake up a pan and decorate away to finish off your gift list, or invite friends over for a cookie decorating party.



YIELD: 6 dozen cookies (3-inch gingerbread men)

PREP TIME: 30 minutes (plus chilling)

COOKING TIME: 10 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 40 minutes (plus chilling)

INGREDIENTS

- 3½ cup (438 g) flour
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1½ tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. allspice
- 1 tsp. cloves
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¾ cup (170 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 g) tightly packed brown sugar
- ⅔ cup (225 g) molasses
- 2 large eggs (100 g)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine flour, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, cloves, baking soda and salt; set aside.
2. Cream the butter and sugar in bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add the molasses and eggs, beat until well mixed and scrape down the bowl.
3. Reduce speed to low and add the flour in three additions, scraping the bowl between additions. Remove the dough from the bowl and form into 2 discs, cover with plastic wrap and chill for 1 hour or until firm and easy to handle.

Gingerbread Men

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

4. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Roll the dough out to ¼-inch thickness on a lightly floured surface. Use a gingerbread man cookie cutter to cut out cookies. Lay cut cookies on the prepared baking sheet, 1 to 2 inches apart. Re-roll the dough as necessary to cut out cookies until dough is gone.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes.
7. Let cool on pan for 2 minutes before removing and cooling on a wire rack. Cool completely (about 30 minutes) before decorating with Cookie Frosting.

PRO TIP

For quicker decoration, sprinkle the cookies with colored sugar or sparkling sugar before baking. The sprinkles will adhere to the cookies while baking and make them festive and fun, with no frosting needed.

COOKIE FROSTING

See page 8 for cookie frosting recipe.

Rolled Sugar Cookies

These perfectly soft cookies are made even better with fresh icing. Use sprinkles and small candies to add details and bring your cookie decorating to the next level.



Rolled Sugar Cookies

YIELD: 7 dozen 3-inch cookies

PREP TIME: 40 minutes (plus chilling)

COOKING TIME: 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 60 minutes (plus chilling and cooling)

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cups (625 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 8 oz. (227 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, softened
- ¾ cups (150 g) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 g)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 Tbsp. (42 g) milk

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; set aside.
2. Cream the butter and sugar in bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla and continue beating until well blended. Scrape down the bowl.
3. Add the flour mixture to the batter in three parts alternating with the milk, starting and ending with the flour. Remove the dough from the mixer and knead a few times until the dough comes together. Form

Rolled Sugar Cookies

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

into 3 discs, cover with plastic wrap and chill 15-30 minutes or until firm and easy to handle.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.
5. On a floured surface, roll out dough to ⅛-in. thick. Cut into desired shapes using a 3-in. cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on prepared cookie sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar before baking or leave plain and decorate with Cookie Frosting after cooling.
6. Bake 10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Decorate with Cookie Frosting, if desired.

COOKIE FROSTING

See page 8 for cookie frosting recipe.

Cookie Frosting

These perfectly soft cookies are made even better with fresh icing. Use sprinkles and small candies to add details and bring your cookie decorating to the next level.



YIELD: Frosting for 3½ dozen cookies

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups (480 g) confectioner's sugar
- ¼ cup (56 g) milk
- ¼ cup (75 g) corn syrup
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- Food coloring, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the sugar, milk, corn syrup and vanilla together in a medium bowl until well blended.
2. Divide the frosting into smaller bowls and tint with liquid or paste food coloring. Transfer the frosting to pastry bags and pipe onto the cookies to decorate as desired.

VARIATIONS

Hot Peppermint Cocoa (full batch): Whisk in ¼ cup cocoa powder, 1 tsp. vanilla extract and 2 tsp. peppermint extract.

Egg Nog (full batch): Whisk in 1 tbsp. brandy or 1 tbsp. rum extract and ½ tsp. ground nutmeg.

PRO TIP

Whisk in a few drops of milk occasionally, if needed, to keep the frosting loose enough to fill in when piped.

Italian Holiday Cookies

JASPER MIRABILE | JASPER'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT | KANSAS CITY, MO

This recipe has been in Chef Jasper Mirabile's family for generations – and it's no wonder why. After just one bite, your friends and family will fall in love with these creamy and tender cookies.



YIELD: 8 dozen cookies

PREP TIME: 15 minutes (plus chilling)

COOKING TIME: 10 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups (340 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, at room temperature
- ¾ cup (90 g) confectioners' sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¾ cup (85 g) finely chopped pecans
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 g) sifted all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup (40 g) confectioner's sugar for rolling (or more)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Cream butter in the bowl of an electric mixer on medium speed. Reduce speed to low and gradually add confectioner's sugar and salt. Increase speed to medium and beat until light and fluffy. Add nuts and vanilla. Blend in flour gradually on low speed and mix well.
3. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 1½ hours.
4. Shape into balls using about 1 teaspoon for each cookie. Place on ungreased cookie sheets and bake for 10 minutes. Do not brown.
5. Cool slightly. Roll in the extra confectioner's sugar.

Pistachio Cake

MINETTE RUSHING | MINETTE RUSHING CAKES | SAVANNAH, GA

Bring this to your next friendsgiving or holiday party and they'll be sure to leave room for dessert. This rich cake is made even better by decadent layers of smooth butter cream frosting.



YIELD: 9 servings

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 25 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 40 minutes (plus cooling)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (250 g) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (40 g) ground unsalted pistachio nuts
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- 5 large eggs (250 g), separated
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (170 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, at room temperature
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cup (350 g) granulated sugar, divided
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (56 g) vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp. (14 g) pistachio paste
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup (245 g) whole buttermilk

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour 3 8-inch pans.
2. In a large bowl, combine the flour, ground pistachio nuts, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. Whisk together to incorporate.
3. Separate eggs. Place the yolks into a small bowl. Place the whites into the bowl of an electric mixer.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat butter on medium speed for 2 minutes using the paddle attachment. Add $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups sugar and continue beating on medium for 3 to 4 minutes or until light and creamy.

Pistachio Cake

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

5. Add oil until just incorporated. Scrape down the bowl. Add egg yolks, one at a time. Beat until fully incorporated. Add pistachio paste and vanilla. Beat until fluffy.
6. Add the flour mixture to the batter in three parts alternating with the buttermilk, starting and ending with the flour. Take care to not overbeat.
7. In a separate bowl beat the egg whites on high speed using the whisk attachment until medium peaks form. Add the remaining ½ cup sugar and continue beating until stiff peaks form.
8. Stir ⅓ of the beaten egg white into the cake batter. Fold the remaining egg whites into the cake batter in 2 batches, until incorporated.
9. Pour into prepared pans and bake for 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.
10. Let cakes rest for 15 minutes and turn out onto cooling racks. When they are still a little warm, wrap them in plastic wrap and let them finish cooling.
11. Frost with Cream Cheese Frosting. Store in refrigerator. Let stand at room temperature for 1 hour before serving. Return any leftovers to the refrigerator for storage.

Pistachio Cake

PRO TIP

To make 4 Tbsp. pistachio paste, purée ½ cup of unsalted pistachio nuts with 1½ tsp. vegetable oil in a small food processor or electric coffee grinder.

Cream Cheese Frosting

YIELD: Frosting for 1 Pistachio Cake

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups (340 g) cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup (170 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, softened
- 3 Tbsp. (42 g) pistachio paste
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 6 cups (720 g) powdered confectioner's sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Beat cream cheese and butter in an electric stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment on medium speed until smooth.
2. Add pistachio paste and vanilla extract, beat until blended.
3. Gradually add powdered sugar. Beat on medium-high speed until smooth, scraping bowl occasionally.

Raspberry Almond Stars

These sandwich cookies feature delicate nut and fruit flavors that are sure to please. Choose seasonal shapes, like snowflakes and stars, to make them even more festive.



YIELD: 2 dozen 3-inch sandwich cookies

PREP TIME: 30 minutes (plus chilling)

COOKING TIME: 12 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 42 minutes (plus chilling and cooling)

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour, plus additional flour for rolling the cookies
- ½ cup (50 g) ground blanched almonds or almond flour
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 8 oz. (227 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon rind
- 1 large egg (50 g)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ cup (160 g) seedless raspberry jam
- Powdered sugar (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk together the flour, almonds and baking powder in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. Beat the butter in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, until smooth. Add the sugar and lemon zest and continue mixing until the mixture becomes light and fluffy. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add the egg and vanilla, beating until they are combined. Reduce the speed to low and add the flour mixture a little at a time until well blended, taking care not to over mix.
3. Remove the dough from the mixer and knead a few

Raspberry Almond Stars

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

times until the dough comes together. Divide into 2 pieces and form into discs. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes to an hour or until the dough is firm and easy to roll.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.
5. Roll the first disc to about a ⅛-inch in thickness. Cut the dough with a 3-inch star cookie cutter and transfer the stars to a prepared cookie sheet. Repeat with the other disc. When all the cookies have been rolled, use either a ½-inch star or circular cookie cutter and cut a hole into the center of half of the cookies.
6. Bake the cookies until they are lightly brown, 12 to 15 minutes, rotating the trays halfway through baking. Remove the trays from the oven and allow them to cool slightly for a few minutes before gently transferring them to a cooling rack to cool completely.
7. Put the raspberry jam in a bowl and whisk until the jam is smooth. Spread about ½ tsp. raspberry jam on each bottom and place a “top” star with the center cut out on the top. Dust with powdered sugar, if desired.

Rugelach

Buttery, flaky, and just the right amount of sweet: these little pastries are downright irresistible. The hardest part will be trying not to eat them all yourself.



Rugelach

YIELD: 4 dozen pieces

PREP TIME: 30 minutes (plus chilling)

COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 60 minutes (plus chilling)

INGREDIENTS

Dough

- 7 oz. (198 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter, softened
- 7 oz. (198 g) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 g) confectioner's sugar
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cup (283 g) all-purpose flour

Nut Mixture

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (56 g) finely chopped pecans
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (53 g) zante currants
- 3 Tbsp. (38 g) granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (160 g) raspberry or apricot preserves, divided

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cream the butter, cream cheese and sugar in bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium speed until light and fluffy. Scrape down the bowl, reduce speed to low and gradually add the flour, blending until just mixed.
2. Divide the dough half, form into 2 discs, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Rugelach

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

3. Meanwhile, combine the filling ingredients and set aside.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.
5. Roll the dough into a 12-inch circle. Spread with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup preserves. Using a sharp, wet knife, cut the dough into 24 triangles, cutting from the outside of the circle towards the center. For easiest cutting, cut the dough in half, then into quarters. Cut each quarter in half then cut each of those wedges into 3 equal triangles.
6. Sprinkle the cut dough evenly with one half of the nut mixture then roll each triangle from the outer edge towards the center. Place each cookie on a prepared pan with the smallest part of the dough on the bottom. This will help keep the rugelach from unrolling during baking
7. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely and store in an air-tight container.

PRO TIP

Rugelach can be frozen after forming and then baked as indicated in step 7, for fresh rugelach when you need it.

Caramel Corn

An addictive treat that happens to make great padding for shipping your baked gifts. Or for eating while you stand in your kitchen.



YIELD: 13 cups

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 60 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 75 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp. (28 g) vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup un-popped popcorn kernels
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 g) Plugrà Unsalted Butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (245 g) light brown sugar, loosely packed
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (25 g) corn syrup or Lyle's Golden Syrup
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. cream of tartar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 200°F. Cover 1 or 2 rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and non-stick spray.
2. Heat the oil and a few kernels of popcorn in a large pot over medium heat. When the kernels pop, add the remaining kernels and cover. Shake the pan throughout the popping to prevent burning. When popping slows (even after shaking), remove from heat. Place popcorn in a separate bowl and set aside.
3. Prepare the caramel in a large enough pot that it can be used to stir in the popped kernels. If you don't have a large enough pot, see the tip at the end of the recipe.
4. Place the butter, sugar, corn syrup, cream of tartar, and salt in the heavy bottom pan. Heat over medium-high heat, stirring constantly while the mixture boils

Caramel Corn

INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

for 5 minutes.

5. Remove from heat and add the baking soda and mix until fully combined. It will bubble up a little so be careful. Add the popcorn to the pan and stir until every piece of popcorn is covered in the caramel mixture.
6. Spread the caramel corn onto baking sheets in a single layer.
7. Bake for 30 minutes then take out the caramel corn and stir it. Bake for an additional 30 minutes to allow the caramel to form a crisper coating.
8. Remove from oven and let cool. Store in an airtight container for up to a week.

PRO TIP

If you don't have a pot large enough to mix the popcorn with the caramel, take a large oven-safe bowl and place it in the preheated oven while you prepare the caramel. Transfer the caramel and popcorn to the heated bowl to mix. Heating the bowl will help keep the caramel from setting while you mix it.

For a lighter coating of caramel, increase the amount of unpopped popcorn kernels to ½ cup.