



Recipes for December 2021

Amanda

My favourite recipe is a Jamie Oliver mince pie. A sheet of Puff pastry with lots of things added (inc a splattering of amaretto) and then rolled and sliced into wheels. Then in a baking tin, place nests of filo pastry, then put the wheel inside. A double whammy of loveliness. Add what you'd like to the event and finish off with a dusting of icing sugar...serve with anything warming. Voila!

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/fruit-recipes/perfect-mince-pies/>

Perfect Mince Pies

Ingredients:

- 100 g. good quality mincemeat
- 25 g. dried cranberries or blueberries, chopped
- 2 clementine's, zest of
- flour to dust
- 1 pack filo pastry
- 1 egg beaten
- icing sugar, to dust
- 1 splash of sherry or brandy
- 250 g. puff pastry
- 50 g. butter, melted
- 50 g. flaked almonds

Preheat oven to 200C/400F. Scoop mincemeat in a mixing bowl and mix in dried cherries, the clementine zest and the sherry or brandy.

Dust a clean work surface with flour and roll out the puff pastry in a big rectangle about 20cm x 40cm and the thickness of a pound coin. Thinly spread the mincemeat over the pastry, leaving a 1cm gap around the edges. Tightly roll up the pastry, lengthways, like a Swiss roll, place it on the floured tray and pop in the fridge to firm up.

Take 2 cupcake trays (for 12 cupcakes each) and butter each one lightly with the melted butter. Place one layer of filo pastry over the tray (you may need more than one sheet to cover each tray depending on the size of the sheets) and ease the pastry into each hole. Brush with the melted butter, then cover with a second layer of filo pastry. Brush with butter again.

Take the puff pastry roll out of the fridge and, with a sharp knife, cut into 24 slices. Place each slice, flat-side down, into a filo-lined hole. Brush with the egg and sprinkle a few flaked almonds on top of each little pie, then pop both trays in the oven for about 25 minutes, until cooked and golden brown.

Leave to cool, then crack the individual pies out of the trays. Dust with a little icing sugar before serving.

You can freeze the cooked, cooled mince pies in their trays (just wrap the lot in cling film) or in a plastic container. Just reheat them in a hot oven straight from the freezer.



Recipes for December 2021

Sunita

One of my favorite cookie recipes turns out to be not one passed down through the generations. I love these lace cookies because they have a caramel taste and are crispy and elegant. Turns out they are Scandinavian. I grew up in Minnesota, so that makes sense to me! Can't believe that my favorites came from a magazine.

Havreflam: Swedish Oatmeal Wafers

1/2 cup butter
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg beaten
1 cup quick-cooking rolled oats
1 tablespoon flour
1 teaspoon baking powder

Cream butter and sugar.

Add egg and oats.

Mix flour and baking powder and add to other ingredients. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto a greased cookie sheet 2" apart.

Spread each to a thin round wafer not over 2" in diameter.

Bake in 375 degree oven about 10 minutes. While still hot, remove from pan and quickly shape over rolling pin until they cool and keep their shape. Takes less than a minute. If some of the cookies harden, then heat them up for a few seconds back in the oven.

Makes 2 1/2 dozen

I made mine vegan with vegan butter substitute and flax eggs. It worked but are best in the original recipe. I have experimented dipping the edges in melted chocolate, adding lemon oil and or cinnamon. They are crispy and elegant and it is easy to eat a dozen by yourself!



Recipes for December 2021

Megan

Arizona born harpist Megan Metheney now resides in France and shares her favorite holiday recipe-a French twist on what we here on state side call the yule log!

Bûche à l'orange (Simple Orange Christmas Log)

Serves 6-8

150g (5 1/2 oz.) dark chocolate

2 oranges

4 egg whites, 4 egg yolks

50cl (2 cups and 2T) liquid crème fraîche (or substitute: 2 cups of heavy cream and 2 table-spoons of buttermilk)

75g x 2 (1/3 cup x 2) sugar

Chocolate flakes or shredded chocolate, powdered sugar (for decoration)

Preheat the oven 180° C (350° F)

Beat the egg yolks with 75g (1/3 cup) of sugar until creamy.

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Turn off the heat, let it cool slightly, then stir in the egg yolks.

Beat the egg whites until they become "firm snow," then stir in 75g (1/3 cup) of sugar. Delicately combine this mixture to the chocolate.

Pour the batter onto a large baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 25 min.

Prepare the whipped cream: whip the crème fraîche until it reaches stiff peaks.

Prepare the oranges: peel and cut them into small pieces.

After the "biscuit" has baked and cooled, turn it over onto wax paper. Spread the whipped cream on top and decorate it with the orange pieces.

Roll up the log starting from one of the shorter sides of the rectangular "biscuit." Decorate the rolled log with chocolate flakes and powdered sugar as inspiration comes... Joyeux Noël!



Recipes for December 2021

Robbin

"My Mom always makes these and they are a favorite!!"

Date Nut Pinwheels

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 30 min. + chilling Bake: 10 min./batch YIELD: about 9 dozen.

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Filling:

2 8 oz packages pitted dates
1 cup water
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs. In another bowl, whisk flour and baking soda; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Divide dough into 3 portions. Shape each into a disk. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or until firm enough to roll.
2. For filling, place dates, water and sugar in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until dates are tender and liquid is almost evaporated. Stir in walnuts; cool completely.
3. Roll each dough portion between 2 sheets of waxed paper into a 12x10-in. rectangle. Refrigerate 30 minutes. Remove waxed paper. Spread a third of the filling over each rectangle. Roll up tightly jelly-roll style, starting with a long side. Wrap securely. Refrigerate until firm.
4. Preheat oven to 350°. Unwrap and cut dough crosswise into 1/3-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake 10-12 minutes or until set. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.



Recipes for December 2021

MJ

My Mom was an organist/choir director/harpist (and that was in addition to her day job as an English Professor!) so, needless to say, leisurely afternoons baking Christmas cookies in December were not part of our holiday traditions! Over the years I've collected a few basic, fun and time saving cookie recipes to share with my kids. This is one of my favorites!

Chocolate Chipzels

1 lb. semisweet chocolate, broken into pieces

1 ½ cups crushed ridged potato chips*

1 ½ cups tiny pretzel twists (Rold Gold)

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons shredded coconut flakes (optional)

*place chips in a zip lock gallon bag and stomp! This was the kids favorite part!

1. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper and coat with nonstick spray

Place pretzel twists on the cookie sheet

2. Melt chocolate in microwave or atop a double boiler

3. Fold in the chips and coconut until combined

4. Using small spoons, scoop a small amount of the mixture on one spoon and use the other to scrape it on top of the tiny pretzel. Decorate w/ colorful sprinkles!

5. Refrigerate until completely firm: @ 1 hr.