



Stay Cozy

With Recipes
from
Benchmark
Performance

Tom's Ginger Biscuits



Ingredients:



- 4 oz self-raising flour
- 1 rounded tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 ½ oz sugar
- 2 oz butter
- 2 tbsp molasses

Recipe:



1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Mix flour, ginger, and baking soda.
3. Add sugar then lightly rub in butter until crumbly.
4. Add molasses and mix to form a stiff paste.
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
6. By a teaspoonful, roll into balls, place on baking sheet and flatten.
7. Bake just above centre of oven for 10-12 min. at 325°F.



Yvonne, "After years at sea, my uncle Tom returned to Scotland and discovered a knack for baking. His ginger biscuit (aka cookie) recipe — passed from him to my mum and then to me — remains a family favourite. Some of us like them chewy, others prefer them crisp — either way, they disappear before the day's out!"



Belgian Chocolate Mousse

Ingredients:

- 1 bar Belgian dark chocolate (about 60g)
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp of powdered sugar

Recipe:

- 1.Melt the chocolate.
- 2.Separate the eggs.
- 3.Whisk the yolks with sugar until smooth and pale.
- 4.Stir in the melted chocolate.
- 5.Whip the egg whites until fluffy and stiff.
- 6.Gently fold egg whites into the chocolate mix.
- 7.Spoon mixture into small cups or bowls.
- 8.Let chill for about 1 hour.
- 9.**Enjoy every bite!**

La meilleure mousse au chocolat Belge!

Tazlin, "Because every Belgian family knows: life is better with chocolate mousse."

Swedish Coffee Bread

Ingredients:

- ¼ pound butter (½ cup)
- 1 package dry yeast
- ¼ cup warm water
- ¾ cup warm milk
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp ground cardamom
- 4 ½ cups flour
- Almonds (or other nuts), coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp coarsely crushed sugar lumps

Nic, "Always make around the holidays.
Super delicious!"

Recipe:

1. Melt the butter and set aside to cool.
2. Dissolve the yeast in warm water in a large mixing bowl.
3. Blend in the milk, sugar, salt, 2 eggs, cardamom, and 2 cups of flour. Be sure the mixture is smooth.
4. Add the butter and then 2 1/4 more cups of the flour.
5. Beat until all flour is absorbed.
6. Use the last ¼ cup of flour on the pastry board.
7. Put the dough in the centre of the board and knead it for about 10 minutes or until the dough is smooth and elastic.
8. Put the dough in a greased bowl, turning once, then cover it.
9. Allow it to rise for about 2 hours or until doubled in size.

BRAIDING

1. Divide dough into 6 portions. Roll each into a 12-inch strand between your hands.
2. Place 3 strands on the centre of a greased baking sheet.
3. Braid from the centre to each end and seal the edges.
4. Repeat for the second loaf.
5. Cover them lightly and set aside to rise slightly (about 30 minutes).
6. Beat the remaining egg and brush the loaves with it.
7. Sprinkle the loaves with almonds (or other nuts) and coarsely crushed sugar lumps.

BAKING

1. Bake the loaves at 350°F for 25 minutes.
2. Cool them on wire racks.

Traditional Scottish Shortbread

Ingredients:

- 350g of all-purpose flour (ok, it's a small amount under the 3:2:1 rule, trust me)
- 250g salted butter – room temperature. Not too soft, but malleable enough to work with
- 125g of caster sugar
- 30g of cornstarch (or if you prefer a bit more crumbly a cookie, cut this out and use 375g of flour)

Darren, "3:2:1 ratio of ingredients by weight!
(this is key, weight, not volume)"

Recipe:

1. Cream together the sugar and butter in a stand mixer with the paddle attachment or a hand mixer.
2. Mix until light and creamy.
3. Sift in the flour/cornstarch and mix until incorporated into the creamy mixture.
4. Line a 9" square pan with parchment paper. Butter or spray the pan, then add the paper. Sound weird, right? The coating on the pan helps hold the paper in place.
5. Press your mixture evenly into the pan. Make it as even as possible. Use a fork to put some marks in the top (Just looks nice, but not needed)
6. Bake at 300°F for 50-55 minutes, until lightly golden.
7. Allow to cool fully before removing from the pan. Then slice into small shortbread cookie bars.

Nanaimo Bars

Ingredients:

BOTTOM LAYER

- ½ cup butter
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup cocoa
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 egg (beaten)
- 1 cup desiccated coconut
- 1 ¾ cups graham wafer crumbs
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

FILLING

- ¼ cup butter
- 2 tbsp custard powder
- 2 tbs milk
- 2 cups sifted icing sugar

TOP LAYER

- 2 squares semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 tbsp butter

Recipe:

BOTTOM LAYER

1. Cook butter, sugar, cocoa, vanilla, and beaten egg in a saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture begins to thicken.
2. Remove from heat and stir in coconut, graham crumbs and walnuts.
3. Pat firmly into a greased 9" square cake pan. Chill for at least one hour.

FILLING

1. Cream butter, custard powder and milk.
2. Gradually beat in icing sugar, adding another 1 tsp of milk if necessary to make a smooth spreading consistency.
3. Spread over first layer in pan. Chill until firm.

BAKING

1. Heat chocolate and butter, stirring until smoothly melted. Drizzle chocolate overfilling. Let chill for 1 hour.

Makes about 30 small bars.

Ainsley. "A holiday-only treat and honestly a bit of a pain to make... but the kids love them, and thankfully my mum likes to make them."

Wine Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 2 eggs



Recipe:

1. Beat the butter and sugar to a cream.
2. Separate the eggs.
3. Beat the yolks, and then add the beaten egg yolks to the mixture.
4. Add the flour.
5. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites.
6. Drop onto a well buttered pan ½ teaspoons at a time.
7. Bake at 325 degree F until browning at the edges (~10-12 min).
8. Remove from pan while still hot.

Makes 5 dozen.

Note: If the amount dropped is greater and ½ tsp they will not spread! They will be soft and not crisp.

Natasha, "The Burrow "Wine" Biscuit. I come from a VERY ENGLISH family and these are my dad's favourite cookie. As you will notice, there is no wine in the biscuit, so why is it in the name? I've asked several family members and no one knows why."

The no-wine, wine biscuits!

Fresh Mango Salsa

Ingredients:

- 3 ripe mangos diced
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- ½ red onion, finely diced
- ¼ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 1 large lime, juiced (about ¼ cup lime juice)
- ⅛ to ¼ tsp salt, to taste

Recipe:

1. In a serving bowl, combine the prepared mango, bell pepper, onion, cilantro and jalapeño. Drizzle with the juice of one lime.
2. Using a large spoon, stir the ingredients together. Season to taste with salt, and stir again. For best flavour, let the salsa rest for 10 min or longer.

Classic Guacamole

Ingredients:

- 3 avocados - peeled, pitted and mashed
- 1 lime juiced
- ½ cup diced onion
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 roma (plum) tomatoes, diced
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 1 pinch ground cayenne pepper (optional)

Recipe:

1. In a medium bowl, mash together avocados, lime juice, and salt.
2. Mix in onion, cilantro, tomatoes, and garlic. Stir in cayenne pepper.
3. Refrigerate 1 hour (for best flavour) or serve immediately.

Farah, "I've been bringing these two dips to parties for over 2 decades — they never fail me, and they never last long.."

Instant Pot Pesto Zuppa Toscana

Ingredients:

- 4 slice thick cut bacon, chopped
- ¼ lb ground spicy Italian chicken sausage
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 4 clove garlic, minced or grated
- 2 ribs celery, chopped
- 4 small yukon gold or russet potatoes peeled and chopped
- 6 cup low sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup basil pesto, homemade or store-bought
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1 pinch and crushed red pepper flakes
- kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 bunch Tuscan or curly kale, roughly chopped
- ¾ cup heavy cream or whole milk
- ½ cup grated parmesan or asiago cheese
- fresh thyme, for serving (optional)

Recipe:

In Your Instant Pot:

- 1.Set Instant Pot to sauté. Add the bacon and cook until crisp, about 5 minutes. Remove the bacon. If there's excess bacon grease, drain off all but 1 tablespoon. Add the chicken sausage and onions, and brown all over, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic, celery, and potatoes, and cook 2 minutes. Turn the Instant Pot off.
- 2.To the instant pot, add the broth, pesto, lemon juice, red pepper flakes, and season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook on high pressure for 8 minutes.
- 3.Once done cooking, use the natural or quick release function. Set the Instant Pot to sauté. Stir in the kale, cream, and parmesan. Cook until the kale is wilted, about 10 minutes. Turn the Instant Pot off. Stir in the reserved bacon.
- 4.Serve the soup topped with additional parmesan and fresh thyme, if desired.

Cindy, "Here's an Instant pot recipe I follow from Halfbaked Harvest!"

For those of you who are brave enough...or who have hung on to their instant pot!

Traditional Potato Latkes

Ingredients:

- 4 med. baking potatoes, peeled
- 1 sweet onion, finely chopped
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 t salt
- ¼ t fresh ground pepper
- ¼ c flour
- ½ tsp baking powder

Other Requirements:

- Cheesecloth
- Grapeseed, Canola, or Olive oil
- Lots of paper towels

Recipe:

1. Soak potatoes in cold water for 1 hour then pat dry and grate.
2. Rinse the grated potato in a strainer to rinse out the starch.
3. Squeeze out as much of the water as possible, using cheesecloth (or a sturdy strainer).
4. Mix onion, eggs, and potato gratings in a large bowl.
5. Fold in the remaining ingredients.
6. Drop batter by the spoonful into about ¼ to ½ inch of hot oil, in the frying pan.
7. Cook on both sides until golden or darker, and cooked through.
8. Place on paper towels on a tray, to absorb oil.

Makes 8-10 small pancakes.

Serve hot. Top with sour cream, pure applesauce, or a generous sprinkle of sugar/cinnamon.

Esther, "This recipe (or some form of it) is centuries old; The importance of lighting the menorah dates back to biblical times in the Jerusalem temple; the custom of using oil on Hanukah to light a similar candelabra is recorded in the Jewish Talmud. At Hannukah 2,200+ years after the original Hanukah story, many Jews cook with oil to celebrate perseverance and continuity."

Wild Rice Chasseur

The Best of Mme. Jehane Benoit

A collection of some of the most famous recipes and ideas from Canada's best known cook and most competent authority on Canadian foods.



Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup wild rice
- 2 tbsp. brandy
- 1 tbsp. curry
- 3 to 5 tbsp. chutney
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- Salt and pepper to taste

Recipe:

1. Wash the rice several times in cold water. Bring to a boil 4 cups water. Add 1 teaspoon salt and 1 cup rice. Cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes. Simmered wild rice does not lose its nutty flavor.
2. Mix together the brandy and curry in a cup. Add the chutney.
3. Add to the rice, salt and pepper to taste, the butter, and stir with a fork until melted and serve.

Doug, "This was given to me 50 years ago - in February, 1975. I have been making Wild Rice Chasseur ever since.

This recipe for Wild Rice Chasseur is great with grilled or poached salmon, and grilled or roasted chicken, or anything else."

Drinks!

Adonis

- 1 ½ ounces fino sherry
- 1 ½ ounces sweet vermouth
- Two shakes of orange bitters
- **Garnish:** orange peel (I like to use blood oranges through the winter season, but any orange will do)
- If you want a slightly larger version, use 2 ounces of each...

INSTRUCTIONS

- Chill a glass, rub the rim with an orange peel, and toss the peel into the glass.
- Add the fino sherry, the sweet vermouth and bitters to a mixing glass filled with ice, and stir until well-chilled.
- Strain into a chilled coupe glass.

Tip: If I don't want to be bothered with the fuss and muss, I put a couple of cubes of ice into a whiskey/old fashioned (i.e., short) glass, rub the rim with the orange and then add the rest of the ingredients and give it a quick stir (keeping the ice in the glass).

Greg, "Sit by the fire, look out the window and enjoy a moment of wintertime peace and quiet while you sip on your Adonis.

Enjoy!"

Good Bottle of Wine

- 1 good bottle of wine
- (Optional) 1-2 favourite people
- (Optional) A quiet moment to yourself

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Locate bottle.
2. Admire label for dramatic effect.
3. Open confidently (a flourish is encouraged).
4. Pour generously — for yourself or for others.
5. Sip, smile, and serve with absolutely anything.

Kelly, "A timeless classic passed down through generations of people who were done cooking for the day."

Happy Holidays!



*These dishes come from our families, our memories, and our kitchens. Some have been passed down for generations, and while the original sources are unknown, we share them with you for inspiration and personal enjoyment.