

HEALTHY RECIPE

“One Nutty Date Cookie”

INGREDIENTS: (makes 3 dozen cookies)

1 cup packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup smooth natural peanut butter
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 ounces pitted dates, chopped
1/3 cup walnuts, chopped
Drizzle: 8 ounces white chocolate chips (see Tip)
and 1 tablespoon canola oil



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Beat brown sugar, butter, peanut butter and cinnamon in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until well mixed. Add egg and vanilla; continue beating until well mixed. Reduce speed to low. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; beat until well mixed, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Stir in dates and walnuts. Refrigerate the dough for at least 1 hour before baking.
3. Use a small scoop (1 3/8- to 1 1/2-inch) and drop balls of dough 2 inches apart onto an ungreased baking sheet. (If you do not have a scoop, shape the dough by hand into 1- to 1 1/4-inch balls.) Gently press each ball to flatten slightly.
4. Bake the cookies until the edges are lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
5. To decorate: Place white chocolate and oil in a small microwave-safe bowl and microwave on Medium, stirring every 30 seconds, until the chocolate is melted and smooth. To drizzle, dip a fork in the chocolate then wave it over a cookie to create a lacy finish (see Variations). Let the chocolate set for at least 1 hour.

Variations: Instead of drizzling, dip the top side of the cooled cookies in melted white or dark chocolate and sprinkle with chopped walnuts.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

Per cookie: 114 calories; 5 g fat (2 g sat, 0 g mono); 9 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrate; 2 g protein; 1 g fiber; 55 mg sodium; 56 mg potassium.

***TIP:** Tip: Most brands of white chocolate chips are actually not white chocolate at all; they're called "white morsels" and contain no chocolate. We like Sunspire (made without partially hydrogenated oil), found in natural-foods stores or online at sunspire.com, and the Albertsons/ Shaw's store brand, Essensia. Eight ounces chopped pure white chocolate can be used in place of the chips.

***MAKE AHEAD TIP:** Prepare the dough (Step 2), cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

HEALTHY RECIPE

“Boot Tracks Cookie”

INGREDIENTS: (makes 3 dozen cookies)

1/2 cup salted butter
2/3 cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
6 tablespoons cocoa powder
2 tablespoons canola oil
1/2 teaspoon espresso powder (optional)
Confectioners' sugar for dusting



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat a nonstick (not Belgian) waffle iron.
2. Cream butter and sugar in a medium bowl. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Add flour, cocoa powder, oil and espresso powder (if using). Beat until thoroughly combined.
3. Drop the batter by rounded teaspoonfuls about 1 inch apart onto the preheated un-greased waffle iron. (To avoid burnt fingers, use two spoons, one to scoop and one to scrape dough onto the waffle iron.) Close and cook until the cookies are puffed and cooked through, 1 to 1 1/2 minutes. Waffle irons vary, so watch closely and don't let the cookies get too dark. Transfer to a wire rack to cool until just warm. Dust the cookies with confectioners' sugar while still slightly warm (see Variations).

Variations: Instead of confectioners' sugar, drizzle cooled cookies with melted bittersweet and/or white chocolate. Or make a peppermint drizzle: Mix 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 4 teaspoons water and 1/4 teaspoon peppermint extract; add natural green food coloring, if desired.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

Per cookie: 63 calories; 4 g fat (2 g sat, 1 g mono); 18 mg cholesterol; 7 g carbohydrate; 1 g protein; 1 g fiber; 22 mg sodium; 18 mg potassium.

***MAKE AHEAD TIP:** Store in an airtight container for up to 1 day. Dust with additional confectioners' sugar just before serving.

Recipe found at www.eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/healthy_holiday_cookies_recipes.html

HEALTHY RECIPE

“Cranberry—Orange—Nut Cookie”

INGREDIENTS: (Makes 2 1/2 dozen cookies)

1 1/2 cups whole-wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup chopped dried cranberries
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
1/2 cup smooth, unsweetened applesauce
1/4 cup canola oil
1 tablespoon freshly grated orange zest
3 tablespoons orange juice



DIRECTIONS:

1. Whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. Stir in walnuts and dried cranberries.
2. Whisk 1 cup sugar, applesauce, oil, orange zest and juice in a medium bowl until smooth. Make a well in the dry ingredients and pour in the wet ingredients. Mix until well blended. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a nonstick baking mat.
4. Put the remaining 3 tablespoons sugar into a small flat-bottomed dish or pan. Roll the dough with floured hands (it will be very moist) into 1 1/2-inch balls, then roll in sugar to coat. Place 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheet.
5. Bake the cookies until barely golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool on the pan for 1 minute; transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

Per cookie: 102 calories; 5 g fat (0 g sat, 1 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrate; 1 g protein; 1 g fiber; 94 mg sodium; 24 mg potassium.

***MAKE AHEAD TIP:** Prepare the dough through Step 2, cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

Recipe found at www.eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/healthy_holiday_cookies_recipes.html