

By popular demand I am posting my cookie recipes. These are from my collected recipes and I am putting them up in response to the requests that followed the cookie plates this year. A word of warning. I've been making these for so many years that I tend to measure by eyeball as much as by measuring cup. I also play with the amount of spices, vanilla, and other ingredients a little every year. What follows are the recipes that I follow to make the cookies. Also, some of the cookies are close variations on a theme, so you will find the recipe under the variations of other cookies. The recipes are in no particular order as this is a cut and paste job from three different files where I keep these things.

Enjoy.

Greg Dixon

Black and White Cheesecake Brownies

This is a great recipe for any time of the year, but I make it usually only for my Christmas cookie assortment. A word of warning is that these brownies are VERY rich. You will add pounds just looking at them, but they taste great. I recommend using the Chocolate mini-chips if you can find them. They work better in the cheesecake topping.

Preheat oven to 350°

Brownie Base:

12 oz pkg. Chocolate Chips (2 cups) or 12 oz of Sweetened Chocolate	1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup butter, softened	2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla extract	1/2 tsp. salt
2/3 cups all purpose flour	

Melt 1 1/4 cups of the chocolate chips and stir until smooth. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, vanilla extract, and salt; mix well. Add melted chocolate chips and flour; mix well. Spread onto the bottom of a foil lined 9" square baking pan.

Cheesecake topping:

8 oz pkg. Cream Cheese	1/2 cup sugar
2 tbs. butter, softened	2 eggs
2 tbs. milk	1 tbs. flour
1/2 tsp. almond extract	the remaining 3/4 cup chocolate chips

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, sugar, and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, milk, flour, and almond extract; beat well. Stir in the remaining 3/4 cup of chocolate chips. Pour cheesecake topping over brownie base.

Bake for 40-45 minutes at 350°

Lemon Cheesecake Brownies

The Black and White Cheesecake Brownies are so popular every year that I've tried variations on the theme. These work out, but they have a very different flavor from the rich chocolate of the Black and White Brownies. The Lemon Brownie is more cake than brownie.

Preheat oven to 350°

Brownie Base:

The juice and pith from two lemons	1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup butter, softened	2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla extract	1/2 tsp. salt
2/3 cups all purpose flour	

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, lemon, and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, vanilla extract, and salt; mix well. Add flour; mix well. Spread onto the bottom of a foil lined 9" square baking pan.

Cheesecake topping:

8 oz pkg. Cream Cheese	1/2 cup sugar
2 tbs. butter, softened	2 eggs
2 tbs. milk	1 tbs. flour

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, sugar, and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, milk, flour, and almond extract; beat well. Pour cheesecake topping over brownie base.

Bake for 40-45 minutes at 350°

Raspberry Cheesecake Brownies

As with the Lemon Brownie, these were variations on the main brownie with cheesecake theme. The big thing here is that the raspberries change the liquid content of the cheesecake and you may need to tweak the proportions depending on whether you use frozen or fresh raspberries. The frozen raspberries lose much of their flavor in the juice that is packaged with them. This also adds more water to the mix. The nutshell is that if you use frozen raspberries you may need to use a smaller volume of raspberries to avoid changing the consistency of the cheesecake.

Preheat oven to 350°

Brownie Base:

2/3 cups all purpose flour	1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup butter, softened	2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla extract	1/2 tsp. salt

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, vanilla extract, and salt; mix well. Add flour; mix well. Spread onto the bottom of a foil lined 9" square baking pan.

Cheesecake topping:

8 oz pkg. Cream Cheese	1/2 cup sugar
2 tbs. butter, softened	2 eggs
2 tbs. milk	1 tbs. Flour
2 cups raspberries	

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, sugar, and butter; beat until creamy. Add eggs, milk, flour; beat well. Stir in raspberries. Pour cheesecake topping over brownie base.

Bake for 40-45 minutes at 350°

Variations:

Chocolate Raspberry Cheesecake Brownies. Make the brownie base from the Black and White Cheesecake Brownies above with the Raspberry Cheesecake.

Other berries and/or fruits. You can make the yellow brownie (yes, that does sound funny) base and the cheesecake topping with almost any combination of fruits that you like. I've used apple, peach, strawberry, and banana (less keen on the banana myself, but some people really liked it) and had good results. You can also play with the spices such as using cinnamon and nutmeg with the apple and banana.

Holiday Sugar Cookies

This is the classic base for all Dixon family holiday cookie trays. These are probably the best sugar cookies you will ever have. If you keep them in the freezer, you can be eating fresh sugar cookie well into the new year.

Preheat Oven to 375°

The Cookies:

1 cup butter (use margarine and I will personally fly out and slap you upside the head)	1 1/2 cups sugar
3 eggs	1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 1/2 cups all purpose flour	2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. baking soda	1/2 tsp. salt

In a large mixing bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Stir in vanilla. Stir together dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture. Chill dough thoroughly, 3 to 4 hours.

On a well floured work surface, roll the dough to a desired thickness. 1/8 inch or so for crisp cookies, 1/4 inch for a very thick cookie. Cut with cookie cutters to the appropriate shape. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet for 6-8 minutes at 375°. After they have cooled, frost with powdered sugar frosting.

Powdered Sugar Frosting:

4 cups sifted powdered sugar	light whipping cream
1 tsp. vanilla extract	food coloring in holiday colors

Add enough of the cream (probably will be 4-5 tablespoons) to the powdered sugar to make a frosting of spreadable consistency. Add the vanilla and a dash of salt until well mixed. Separate into

smaller bowls and add the food coloring to each small bowl to make colored frosting for the cookies.

Butterscotch Lemon Drop Cookies

I can't remember for the life of me where I got this recipe, but they are very good cookies. They look a lot like chocolate chip cookies, but they taste very different.

Preheat oven to 375°

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt	3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter, softened	1 egg
2 tbs. milk	1 tbs. lemon juice
1 tsp. grated lemon rind	1 12 oz pkg. of butterscotch chips

In a small bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, combine the sugar and butter; beat well. Add the egg, milk, lemon rind, and lemon juice and beat well. Slowly beat in flour mixture. Stir in the butterscotch chips.

Drop cookies onto a greased cookie sheet.

Bake for 8-10 min. at 375°. Remove and cool on wire racks.

Original Nestle® Toll House® Cookies

This is the original Nestle® Toll House® cookie recipe that you will find on the back of any bag of Nestle® Toll House® Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels. People always ask me for my chocolate chip cookie recipe, and this is the only one that I have ever used. This recipe is probably somehow proprietary, but since you can get it for free a million places I figure its safe to put here.

Preheat Oven to 375°

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour	1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt	1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar	3/4 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract	2 eggs
12 oz Nestle® Toll House Semi-sweet Chocolate Morsels (also known as chocolate chips)	1 cup chopped nuts.

In a small bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, combine butter, sugar, brown sugar, and vanilla extract; beat until creamy. Beat in eggs. Gradually add flour mixture. Stir in the Nestle® Toll House Semi-sweet Chocolate Morsels.

Drop cookies onto a greased cookie sheet.

Bake for 9-11 min. at 375°. Remove and cool on wire racks.

Variants:

Pan Cookie: Spread dough into greased cookie pan. Bake at 375° for 20-25 min. Cool completely. Cut into squares.

Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cookies: Add 2 oz of unsweetened chocolate to the butter and sugar blend

before adding eggs or flour. You can go up to 4 oz if you really want to go for strong chocolate flavor, but if you go to 4oz, you're better off with semi-sweet chocolate. Using white chocolate chips or the new swirled light and dark chocolate chips works great. If you want to go with a mintier cookie, smash up a few candy canes and add them to the dough for a holiday theme mint chocolate cookie. If you haven't had enough sugar yet, there is a chocolate mint cookie with chocolate frosting version as well. Use the sugar cookie frosting, but include melted chocolate chips in the mix.

Using other kinds of chocolate: You can substitute 12 oz of any kind of chocolate for the chocolate chips. I have used milk chocolate for a different flavor quite well. When using blocks of chocolate you can chop it up and put it into the mix. Block chocolate does not hold its shape as well as chocolate chips for some reason, but it tastes just fine.

Troph's Holiday Stollen

This is a traditional northern European holiday bread. I was tempted to put it in the bread section, but it is really more of a dessert than a bread despite the fact that it is essentially a sweet-bread with fruit and spices. It is a good holiday special and is pretty impressive when you bring it to a party or office meeting during the holidays. It would work for any time of year, but it does take some effort, so I usually only make it during the holidays. There is a lot of yeast in this one, so if you have a vigorous yeast strain, it may rise faster than usual.

7 1/2 cups white bread flour	1 tbs. kosher salt or flaked sea salt
7 envelopes dry yeast (about 18 teaspoons)	1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
2/3 cup milk	2 tsp. fresh crushed nutmeg
2 tsp. ground cinnamon	3/4 tsp. ground cardamom
1 3/4 cups unsalted butter, melted	6 large eggs, beaten
2 lemons	2 oranges
4 cups raisins	

Prime the yeast and make a sponge as described in the "Breads" section. Cut the oranges and lemons into slices about 1/4 inch thick. Cut these slices into quarters. Place all of these quarters into a blender and puree them into a pulpy mix. Be sure to leave the peel on when cutting. Pour this puree into the sponge and mix well, adding the spices and sugar until all is well blended. Stir in the eggs, milk, and melted butter until you have a soupy mixture.

Add the remaining flour until you have a slightly sticky and firm dough. On a well floured work surface flatten out the dough and sprinkle the raisins over the dough. Fold the dough in half and then in half again. Knead the dough between your fingers gently for 10 minutes, making sure that the raisins are evenly distributed in the dough.

Place the dough in a large, greased bowl, cover with a damp kitchen towel and allow the dough to rise until doubled in size, about 2 hours.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Punch down the dough and knead for about a minute. Split the dough into halves. Pat out the dough to form a rectangle about 1 1/2 inches thick. Fold the dough inward by about a third to form a three layer sandwich. Press the corners of the dough into a rounded shape. Repeat this process with the other stollen.

Move the stollens to a greased baking sheet, cover with a kitchen towel and allow to rise until doubled in size, about 2 hours.

During the last period of rising, preheat the oven to 325°.

Note: When making stollens, you should always use an insulated baking sheet, one with two layers of

metal separated by a layer of air. If you don't have one, or are not sure if the one you have qualifies, place a second baking sheet under the first one to achieve the same effect.

Cover the stollens with a sheet of aluminum foil to prevent overcooking the outside.

Place the stollens in the center of the oven and make sure that your oven racks are set into the middle tier of the oven. Bake the stollens for 45 min. at 325°.

rotate the baking sheet 180° and bake for a further 30 minutes or until the stollens are golden brown in color and a wooden skewer stuck through the center comes out clean.

Following up:

3 cups butter

powdered sugar

When the stollens come out of the oven, melt 1 cup of butter and brush the butter over the stollens.

The stollens will absorb the butter. Move the stollens to wire racks to cool completely.

Each day for the next two days: Heat the stollens for 10 minutes at 350°, and then brush butter over the stollens as above. After the stollens have cooled on the last day, sprinkle the powdered sugar over the top of the stollens to coat them.

Store the stollens in a cool place, but do not refrigerate them, for the next 2-3 weeks. Eat before 6 weeks.

Dutch Sugar Cookies

These are light and fluffy sugar cookies. These are different from the cookies in the Dixon Family Holiday Sugar Cookies. These are much lighter and simpler to make. These are very quick to make and are good sugar cookies for any occasion. They are very tasty, being more of the traditional sugar cookie one would expect when you hear the term. They have a strong butter flavor, and are damn tasty. The dough is very tasty even before you cook it. This one has no eggs, so you can even taste it without worry.

1 cup softened butter

1/2 tsp. vinegar (yes, vinegar)

1 1/2 cups flour

3/4 cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 tsp. baking soda

Beat butter and sugar until creamy. Beat in vinegar and vanilla. Stir in flour and baking soda until well blended.

Drop by rounded teaspoons onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in a preheated oven at 300° for 12-15 min.

Cool on wire racks and enjoy.

Lemon Shortbread

Shortbread is a traditional favorite. This lemon version is great if you like the flavor of lemon without a ton of sugar. This version is the way that I like, lower on sugar, but heavy on the butter. You can sweeten this more to take away some of the sour flavor of the lemons. It is about as basic as you come, being made from a few ingredients only. You can use lemon juice out of the bottle if you like, but using a real lemon (including the peel) is the best way to go.

1 cup butter

2 whole lemons

3/4 cup sugar

2 cups flour

Beat the butter and 1/2 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Take the lemons and puree in a blender. I recommend cutting the lemons into small slices first and adding a little water to make the blender work more smoothly. This has the additional advantage of allowing you to remove all of the seeds from the lemons.

Blend half of the pureed lemons into the butter/sugar mixture. Slowly add the flour until it is well mixed. This will be a thick dough, more like cookie dough than bread dough

Pour the dough into an 8" cake pan.

Mix the remaining lemon with the remaining sugar. Spread this topping over the dough in the cake pan. Bake at 350° for about 20-25 min.

Remove from the oven and cool on wire racks. Serve warm. It goes well with lemon herb tea.

Old Highlands Oatmeal Cookies

These are very tasty oatmeal cookies that provide a solid spice element to any good cookie assortment. They are a bit on the moist side. They are not the doughier cookies that you may be familiar with. The large amount of butter makes them flatter and richer.

1 cup butter	1 1/3 cups sugar
2 large eggs	1/2 cup brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla	1/4 cup unsulfured molasses
1/2 tsp nutmeg	1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp baking soda	1/4 tsp. salt
2 cups flour	2 cups rough cut oats (or flaked oats)
1 1/2 cups raisins	

In a small bowl, combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, oats, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, combine butter, sugar, brown sugar, molasses, and vanilla extract; beat until creamy. Beat in eggs.

Gradually add flour/oat mixture until well combined. Stir in raisins.

Drop cookies onto an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake for 8-10 min. at 375°. Remove and cool on wire racks.

Orange Ginger Snaps

The experimental cookie from 2007, these turned out to be very popular. They are a nice combination of orange and ginger flavors.

1/2 cup butter	1 cup sugar
1 large egg	Juice of 1/2 an orange
2 tsp vanilla	1/4 cup unsulfured molasses
1/4 tsp baking soda	1/4 tsp ground cloves
2 tsp baking powder	1/4 tsp. salt
2 cups flour	2 tsp grated orange zest
1 tsp grated lemon zest	1 tbsp fresh grated ginger root (can use 1/2 – 1 tsp ground ginger)

In a small bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, ginger, cloves, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, combine the following and beat until smooth: sugar, orange zest, lemon zest, butter. Beat in egg, molasses, and vanilla and mix until creamy and slightly fluffy. Mix in flour mixture and beat until well combined.

Bake as drop cookies for 8-10 minutes at 375°.

Note: There are a bunch of variations on this type of cookie. Some sprinkle sugar, some use a glaze, other use frosting. I like these as they are and I make them as above. If you want more even circle shapes, either use a circular cookie cutter or use a glass to cut $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick rolled dough. If you are going to go with a topping, I'd go with the glaze. It looks good and it doesn't take as much away from the taste of the cookie. You can make a glaze by mixing 1 cup powdered sugar with 2 tsp orange juice, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp golden or corn syrup (light or dark, but light glistens better) and $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla. Dip the warm cookies in the glaze as you take them out of the oven and cool like a normal cookie.

Sourdough Stollen

The other experiment in 2007 was to make a different kind of stollen using sourdough. I based it on a different recipe and it came out very nice. I thought that the fruit and spices trumped the sourdough, though so that it kind of defeated the purpose of using the sourdough. You can easily make with with conventional yeast, though so here it is.

8 cups white bread flour	1 tbs. kosher salt or flaked sea salt
1 unit (I use 1pt. Mason jars) sourdough starter, at room temperature and active	1 cup granulated sugar
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar	2 tsp. fresh crushed nutmeg
3 tsp ground cinnamon	1 tsp. ground cardamom
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp allspice	6 large eggs, beaten
1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups unsalted butter, melted	1 large apple (use your favorite kind)
2 lemons	1 orange
4 cups raisins	1 cup cottage cheese

Prime the starter in a large bowl by adding $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the sugar to the starter mix in a large bowl. Let stand until the starter shows activity. The time it will take varies widely depending on how active the starter is, temperature, humidity, and how happy the kitchen gods are with you that day.

While the starter is starting, wash the lemons, orange, and apple thoroughly. Squeeze the juice from the lemons and the orange into a small mixing bowl. Peel or cut the inner flesh of the orange and lemons from the inside of the peel. Using a fine grater, grate the inner (white) side of the lemons and orange to get about 1 tbsp of the pith (the inner white tissue of the fruit) from both the lemons and the orange. Add the pith to the juice. Finely dice the apple and add it to the juice and pith mixture. Set this aside for the moment.

Once the starter has gotten rolling, you can get the bread rolling. Stir into the starter mixture the following: the melted butter, the sugars, cottage cheese, salt, and the spices. Mix well. Once these ingredients have combined, mix in the eggs and the fruit you had set aside. Into this gooey mix, add the raisins. Mix this well. It will be sticky and gooey.

Add the remaining flour gradually to the mix to form a conventionally formed bread dough. You may need to add additional flour during the kneading process to keep the dough from getting too sticky. It should be noted here that I don't really measure the flour while I make bread, I eyeball the consistency and feel of the dough, so the flour amounts are approximate. Knead the dough well until it forms a good bread ball (15-25 minutes).

Let the bread rise in a warm, dry place until it doubles in size. The time for this will vary widely depending on your starter.

Punch down the dough and form several 6-8 inch loaves. Place these loaves on baking sheets or in bread pans. Cover with a damp towel and let the bread rise until it is about double in size.

Bake for 30 – 40 minutes at 350° or until the bottom of the loaves sound hollow when tapped. I recommend placing a small cake tin about half filled with water in the oven with the loaves to keep them from overly drying out if you are in a very dry climate. Allow to cool on wire racks once out of the oven.

In an ideal world you would also coat these with butter about two thirds of the way through the baking process. You can also spread melted butter over them repeatedly after warming them over a few days in order to give them that cake-like consistency and flavor. I generally don't do that as I like to use this bread to make french toast as well as for the holidays.