**Peppermint Cookies**

Makes 3 dozen

Ingredients:

¾ cup Crisco Butter Flavor Shortening or ¾ stick of butter

½ cup firmly packed brown sugar

½ cup sugar

2 tbsp. milk

1 tbsp. vanilla extract

1 large egg

2 cup Pillsbury BEST all-purpose flour

1 tsp. salt

¾ tsp. baking soda

¾ cup crushed peppermint candy canes or hard peppermint candies, divided

Heat oven to 350°. Beat shortening, brown sugar, sugar, milk, and vanilla in large electric mixer bowl on medium speed until well blended. Beat in egg. Combine flour, salt, and baking soda. Minx into shortening mixture at a low speed until blended. Stir in ½ cup crushed candy. Shape into 1 inch balls. Place 2 inched apart on ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly brown. Immediately sprinkle each cookie with about ¼ tsp. crushed candy. Cool for 2 minutes. Remove to rack to cool completely.

**Cherry Chocolate Shortbread Cookies**

Makes 36 cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, soft, no substitution

½ cup sugar

¾ tsp. almond extract

2 cup flour

¼ corn starch

½ cup finely chopped cherries or cranberries

1 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped

1 tbsp. sugar

Preheat oven 300°. Mix butter, sugar, and extract thoroughly with electric mixer. Gradually blend in flour and corn starch. Add cherries and chocolate. Form 1 inch balls, put onto ungreased sheet. Dip glass in 1 tbsp. sugar and flatten each. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes. Drizzle 2 oz. of chocolate and 1 tsp. of shortening in small plastic bag. Cut off corners, and drizzle over the cookies

**Italian Nut Cookies**

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened

1 tsp. salt

1 cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 tsp. almond extract

3 egg yolks, reserved whites

Mix butter, sugar, and salt until creamed. Add extracts and egg yolks. Mix thoroughly. Add 3 cups of flour add and blend. Chill dough for 1 hour. Grind 1 ½ cups of nuts, finely. Mix egg whites with 1 tbsp. of water. Form dough nuts in 1 inch balls. Dip in egg whites, and then dip in fine ground nuts. Place on cookie sheet 2 inches apart. Press ¼ Maraschino cherries into center of each depression. Cook at 350° and cook for 15 minutes.

**Nutella Sandwich Cookies**

Make 18

Ingredients:

13 oz. jar Nutella

2 tbsp. unsalted butter, room temperature

1 extra large egg

1 ¼ cup self-rising cake flour

Preheat the oven to 375°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment. Beat together ¾ cup of Nutella, butter, and egg. Slowly add the flour until a wet dough forms. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead gently, adding more four if necessary; the dough will be sticky. Divide the dough into 18 pieces and roll each into a perfect ball, flouring your hands as you go. Place several inches apart on the baking sheet. Bake 12 minutes, until firm. Cool for 10 minutes on the sheet. Using a serrated knife, split each cookie in half horizontally. Spread each bottom half with 1 tsp. of Nutella. Replace the tops, pressing lightly.

**Double Chocolate Cookies with a Peppermint Patty Surprise**

2 dozen

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups flour

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

½ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup light brown sugar

1 tsp. salt

½ tsp. baking soda

1 ½ sticks unsalted butter, slightly softened

1 egg

24 miniature, about 1 ½ inches, pepper mint patties, unwrapped and chilled

6 oz. white chocolate, not chips, chopped

Pepper mint candies, crushed or finely chopped

Using an electric mixer, beat the flour, cocoa powder, both sugars, salt, and baking soda on low speed. Beat in the butter, then the egg. Turn out the dough onto a large piece of plastic wrap and flatten into a disk; seal. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour. Preheat the oven to 350°. Line 2 large cookie sheets with parchment. Working with 1 tbsp. of dough at a time, use your fingers to evenly encase each peppermint patty with dough. Place on the prepared pans and smooth the dough with your fingers. Bake, switching the pans halfway through, until firm to the touch, about 15 minutes. Remove the pans from the oven and let cool slightly. Transfer the cookies on the parchment to a rack to cool completely. Meanwhile, in a double boiler or small heatproof owl set over a small saucepan of simmering water, melt half of the white chocolate, stirring until melted. Remove from the heat and stir in the remaining white chocolate until smooth. Using a large spoon, drizzle white chocolate over the cookies. Sprinkle immediately with crushed candies. Let set completely before serving or storing.

**Ande’s Chocolate Mint Cookies**

Makes 112 cookies

Ingredients:

¾ cups butter

1 ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

2 tbsp. water

2 cups semisweet chocolate pieces

2 eggs

2 ½ cups flour

1 ¼ tsp. baking soda

2 boxes Andes mints break each mint in half

In a large saucepan over low heat, cook butter, sugar, and water until melted. Add chocolate pieces and stir until completely melted. Remove from heat and pour into a large mixer bowl, and let stand for 10 minutes to cool slightly. Beat in eggs one at a time. Add flour and baking soda and beat until blended. Chill dough for 1 hour for easier handling. Using a small scoop, roll into balls; place on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350° for 12 minutes. Remove from oven and immediately place a half of a mint on each cookie. Allow to soften, then swirl mint over each cookie.

**Swedish Nut Balls**

Ingredients:

½ lb. cold butter into chunks

¾ cup confectioners’ sugar

2 cup flour

Pinch of salt

1 tsp. vanilla

1 cup finely ground pecans

7 oz. Hershey’s chocolate, melted

Heat oven to 325°. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Beat together the butter and sugar. Add the flour, salt, vanilla, and ground pecans. Stir to combine. Shape dough into balls and place 2 inches apart on baking sheets. Bake until edges turn gold, about 20 minutes. Cool. Drizzle with chocolate. Can be frozen.

**Deluxe Chocolate Marshmallow Bars**

Ingredients:

¾ cup butter

1 ½ cup sugar

3 eggs

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 1/3 cup all-purpose flour

½ tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt

3 tbsp. baking cocoa

½ cup chopped nuts, optional

4 cups miniature marshmallows

Ingredients for topping:

1 1/3 cups chocolate chips

3 tbsp. butter

1 cup peanut butter

2 cup crisp rice cereal

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla; beat until blended. Combine flour, baking powder, salt, and cocoa; add to creamed mixture. Stir in nuts if desired. Spread in a greased jelly roll pan. Bake at 350° for 15 to 18 minutes. Sprinkle marshmallows evenly over cake. Return to oven for 2 to 3 minutes. Use a knife dipped in water to spread the marshmallows evenly over cake. Cool. For topping, combine chocolate chips and peanut butter in a small saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until melted and well blended. Remove from heat; stir in cereal. Spread over bars.

**Caramel Pecan Turtle Bars**

Makes 16 bars

Ingredients for crust: ¾ cup all-purpose flour

½ cup brown sugar

2 tbsp. cornstarch

¼ cup butter, softened

½ cup finely chopped pecans

Ingredients for filling:

25 Werther’s Original Chewy Caramels

2 tbsp. butter

2 tbsp. heavy cream

2 tbsp. corn syrup

½ cup semisweet chocolate chips

Line an 8 by 8 inch pan with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray; let foil overhang edge of pan by 2 inches. Blend flour, brown sugar, and corn starch in a large bowl. Cut in butter with two forks or pastry blender until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Press into prepared pan. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 11 to 13 minutes or until crust is lightly browned. Remove from oven. Heat unwrapped caramels, butter, cream, and corn syrup in a large microwave safe bowl on high for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until mixture is smooth. Carefully spread over baked crust. Bake for 11 to 13 minutes or until caramel is just starting to bubble. Remove from oven and place on wire rack. Sprinkle bars with chocolate chips and let rest for 5 minutes until chocolate is melted. Carefully spread chocolate over the caramel using the back of the spoon for a swirl effect, leaving portions of caramel exposed. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until chocolate is set. Remove from pan by lifting opposite ends of foil. Place on cutting board and peel away foil before cutting.

**Easy Caramel Apple Bars**

Makes 36 bars

Ingredients:

½ cup cold butter

1 pouch (1lb 5 oz.) Betty Crocker oatmeal cookie mix

1 egg

1 cup finely chopped peeled apple

¾ cup caramel topping

¼ cup all-purpose flour

Heat oven to 350°. Spray bottom of 13 by 9 inch pan with cooking spray. In large bowl, cut butter into cookie mix using fork or pastry blender. Stir in egg until mixture is crumbly. Reserve 1 ½ cups cookie mixture. Press remaining cookie mixture into bottom of pan. Bake for 15 minutes. Sprinkle apple evenly over crust. In a small bowl, mix caramel topping and flour; drizzle over apples. Sprinkle reserve cookie mixture over apples. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely, about 2 hours.

**Dried Cranberry and Chocolate Cookies**

Makes 3 to 4 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

2 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup quick cooking or old-fashioned rolled oats

1 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. baking soda

2 tsp. kosher salt

2 ½ sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 cup light brown sugar

½ cup granulated sugar

1 large egg, at room temperature

1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract

2 cups semisweet or white chocolate chips

1 ½ dried cranberries

Preheat oven to 325°. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, mix the flour with the oats, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a standing mixer fitted with the paddle, beat the butter and both sugars at medium speed until creamy. Add the egg followed by the egg yolk and vanilla, beating well between additions and scraping down the side of the bowl as necessary. Beat in the dry ingredients, then add the chocolate chips and cranberries and beat until well incorporated. Spoon heaping tsp. of dough onto the baking sheets, 2 inches apart. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, until the cookies begin to brown at the edges. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheets, and then transfer them to a rack to cool completely.

**Gooey Chocolate Chip Bars**

Ingredients:

Use cookie dough from Dried Cranberry and Chocolate Cookie

2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

14 oz. condensed milk

2 tsp. pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly butter a 9 by 13 inch baking dish. Line the dish with parchment paper, leaving 1 inch of overhang on the long sides. In a small saucepan, melt the chocolate chips in the sweetened condensed milk over low heat, stirring constantly, until smooth and thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in the vanilla and let cool to room temperature. Press half of the cookie dough into the prepared baking dish. Pour the cooled chocolate mixture over the dough and spread evenly. Top with small dollops of the remaining cookie dough. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the top is lightly browned. Let it cool completely before cutting into bars.

**Heavens bread Cookies**

4 egg whites

½ lb. sugar

1 package vanille sugar

5.3 oz. Marzipan

10.6 oz. ground peeled almonds

1 tsp. cinnamon

While beating whites, pour sugar mixture in and beat until stiff. Set aside. Break up marzipan with fork and add almonds and cinnamon. Fold paste mixture slowly under egg white mixture. Fill in Spritz bag with largest tip and spritz on a cookie sheet lined with baking paper. Bake for 25 minutes at 305°. Carefully remove from baking sheet onto cooling racks. For decorations, dip both ends in bittersweet chocolate and let dry.

**Crescent Macadamia Truffle Cups**

Makes 24

Ingredients for filling:

4 oz bar sweet cooking chocolate, chopped

¼ cup unsalted butter

¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar

2 tbsp flour

2 tbsp coffee flavored liqueur or cold coffee

1 egg

8 oz can Pillsbury Refrigerated Quick Crescent Dinner Rolls

24 whole macadamia nuts

Ingredients for topping:

3 oz white baking bar, chopped

1/3 cup soft cream cheese or pasteurized process cream cheese product

½ cup whipping cream

2 tbsp powdered sugar

1 tsp vanilla

Heat oven to 350°. In small saucepan over low heat, melt sweet chocolate and ¼ cup butter, stirring constantly until smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in brown sugar, flour, liqueur, and egg; set aside. Unroll dough into 2 long rectangles; firmly press perforations to seal. Cut each rectangle in half crosswise and crosswise into six 2 inch squares. Press or roll out each square to 2 ¾ inch square. Place 1 square in each of the 24 ungreased miniature muffin cups. Firmly press in bottom and up sides, leaving corners of dough extended over the edges of each cup. Place 1 macadamia nut in each dough lined cup. Spoon about 2 tsp filling mixture over nut in each cup. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until filling is set and corners of dough are golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes; remove from pan. Place on wire racks; cool completely. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until thoroughly chilled. In small saucepan over low heat, melt white baking bar and cream cheese, stirring constantly until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate until thoroughly chilled, about 1 hour, stirring occasionally. In a small bowl, beat whipping cream, powdered sugar and vanilla just until soft peaks form. Add chilled white baking bar mixture; mix at low speed just until well blended. Pipe or spoon topping over top of chilled cups. Refrigerate to set topping.

**Glazed Eggnog Bread**

Ingredients:

2 ¼ cup all-purpose flour

2 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

2 large eggs

1 cup granulated white sugar

1 cup eggnog

½ cup salted butter, melted

1 tsp. vanilla or eggnog extract

½ tsp. rum extract, optional

Ingredients for eggnog icing:

½ cup powdered sugar

¼ tsp. vanilla extract

Dash freshly grated nutmeg

2 to 3 tsp. eggnog

Preheat the oven to 350°. Greased the bottom and ½ inch up the sides of a 9 by 5 inch loaf pan. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and nutmeg. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and set aside. In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, sugar, eggnog, melted butter, vanilla, and rum extract. Add egg mixture to the flour mixture and stir just until moistened (batter will be lumpy). Spoon batter into the prepared pan. Bake for about 45 to 50 minutes. Check for doneness by inserting a toothpick into the center of the loaf, it should come out clean. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely on a rack. Prepare icing: combine sugar, vanilla, and nutmeg. Stir in enough eggnog to reach drizzling consistency. Drizzle cooled loaf with icing. Grate a little bit of fresh nutmeg over the icing, and then let icing set completely before wrapping loaf.

**Mint-Glazed Butter Thins**

Makes 24

Ingredients:

¾ cup sugar

1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature

1 large egg

½ tsp. vanilla extract

½ tsp. pure peppermint extract, divided

¼ tsp. salt

1 ¼ cup all-purpose flour

2 cup powdered sugar, divided

2 tbsp. or more heavy whipping cream

Position racks in top and bottom third of oven; preheat to 350°. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment. Using electric mixer beat first 4 ingredients, ¼ tsp. peppermint extract, and salt in large bowl until fluffy. Beat in flour. Place 1 cup powdered sugar in bowl. Working with 1 level tbsp. at a time, shape dough into balls; roll in powdered sugar to coat. Place on sheet. Press each lightly with flat-bottomed cup. Sprinkle each with more powdered sugar, then press again to thin 3 ¼ inch round. Bake cookies for 8 minutes. Reserve sheets; bake until golden at edges, about 9 minutes longer. Meanwhile, stir 1 cup powdered sugar, ¼ tsp. peppermint extract, and 2 tbsp. cream in a small bowl until smooth, adding more cream by ½ tsp. if glaze is too thick to spread. Transfer cookies to rack; spread glaze over warm cookies. Cool on rack.

**Frangipane Bites**

Ingredients:

1 stick softened butter

½ cup sugar

2 eggs

1/3 cup almond paste

1/3 cup cake flour

Preheat oven to 350°. Line two 24 cup mini muffin pan with paper liners. Combine above ingredients in a food processor. Divide among liners, filling one third of the way. Press a dry fig, prune, or cranberry into each one and sprinkle with sliced almonds and course sugar. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes until golden brown.

**Raspberry Almond Shortbread Thumbprints**

3 ½ dozen

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened

2/3 cup sugar

½ tsp. almond extract

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ cup raspberry jam or favorite jam

Ingredients for glaze:

1 cup powdered sugar

2 to 3 tsp. water

1 ½ tsp. almond extract

Combine butter, sugar, and ½ tsp. almond extract in large bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy. Reduce speed to low; add flour. Beat, scraping bowl often, until well mixed. Cover refrigerate at least 1 hour. Heat oven to 350°. Shape dough into 1 inch balls. Place 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets. Make indentation in center of each cookie with thumb. Fill each indentation with ¼ tsp. of jam. Bake for 14 to 18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Let stand for 1 minute on cookie sheets; remove to wire cooling rack. Cool completely. Combine all glaze ingredients into small bowl with wire whisk until smooth. Drizzle over cookies.

**Oatmeal Brownie Gems**

Makes 48 bars

Ingredients:

2 ¾ cup quick cooking or old-fashioned oats, uncooked

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts (optional)

1 tsp. baking soda

1 cup butter, melted

1 ¾ cup M&M’s semisweet chocolate mini baking bits

19 to 21 oz. package fudge brownie mix, prepared according to package directions

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, combine oats, flour, sugar, nuts, and baking soda; add butter until mixture forms coarse crumbs. Toss in M&Ms until evenly distributed. Reserved 3 cups mixture. Pat remaining mixture onto bottom of 15 inch by 10 inch by 1 inch pan to form crust. Pour prepared brownie mix over crust, carefully spreading into thin layer. Sprinkle reserved crumb mixture over top of brownie mixture; pat down lightly. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or toothpick inserted in center comes out with moist crumbs. Cool completely. Cut into bars. Store in tightly covered container.

**Easy Macaroons**

Makes 6 dozen

Ingredients:

1 pint sherbet orange, lemon, lime, or raspberry

2 tbsp. almond extract

1 white cake mix

6 cup shredded coconut

Mix sherbet and almond until smooth. Mix in dry cake mix. Stir in coconut, one cup at a time. Drop by teaspoonful onto greased or non-stick cookie sheet, 1 inch apart. Bake at 350° for 15 to 18 minutes, until bottom is lightly browned. Cool on cookie sheet for a few minutes, then transfer to cooling rack. Store between layers of waxed paper.

**Shortbread**

Makes 2 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

¾ cup butter, softened

¼ cup sugar

1 ¾ cup all-purpose flour

½ tsp. almond extract or vanilla

Heat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar with electric mixer on medium speed. Stir in flour and almond extract. If dough is crumbly, mix in additional 1 to 2 tbsp. of softened butter. On lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 9 by 6 inch rectangle, ½ inch thick. Cut into11 by 2 inch squares with a knife or cut with cookie cutters. On ungreased cookie sheet, place squares or shapes about 1 inch apart. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until set. Remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely, about 30 minutes.