

45 Reasons To Love Christmas Cookies

There are thousands of cookie recipes out there. But with so many options to choose from, where do you start? Start here, with this delicious collection of 45 fabulous holiday cookie favorites.



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While there are a lot of things about the holiday season that make me happy, cookies are definitely toward the top of the list. Forget about sugar plums — the visions that dance in MY head are of shortbread bars and molasses chews; biscotti and pecan tassies; French tuiles and Austrian linzer cookies; palmiers and peanut butter blossoms. The sheer number of cookies that you can make is enough to inspire child-like wonder in the most seasoned baker. After days of dreaming about sweets and sifting through recipes, I'm happy to share this list of 45 favorites.

Before diving into the recipes, let's stop to consider why you ought to be making a beeline for your mixer this December (just in case you still need convincing). Think hard about the humble cookie and all the redeeming qualities of this annual baking tradition. Here's the love letter my inner child came up with:

Why Christmas Cookies Are The Best

1. They're inexpensive.
2. They're easy to make.
3. They make great handmade gifts (and are perfect for that co-worker you have no idea what to buy for).
4. There's an astounding variety to please every taste.

5. Bite size = built-in portion control.
6. Dough can be made in advance and frozen.
7. Fun project to make with kids.
8. Cookie exchanges are a great excuse for an early holiday party.
9. They taste great — and make your kitchen smell fantastic.
10. The tradition of sharing cookie plates lets us practice generosity and connect with generations past.
11. Get to play with cookie cutters while blasting Christmas music.
12. Santa needs a midnight snack.

So Many Cookies!

With so many different types of cookies to choose from (and all the variations of each), it can be hard to narrow down your baking list to a reasonable number of recipes. Like a good cheese board, the key to the perfect cookie plate lies in variety and contrast. When picking cookie recipes, think about mixing up colors, textures, shapes, and flavors. A collection with something for everyone might include:

- Something chocolate (and something not)
- Something spiced — cinnamon, ginger, or nutmeg are all great
- Something with nuts (and something without)
- Something crunchy, like biscotti, lace cookies, or bark
- Something non-traditional, like a bar, truffle, or fudge

The easiest way to get variety, of course, is to arrange a good old-fashioned cookie swap. Have 11 guests join you and have each person bring a double batch of a different kind of cookie to trade. After a bit of sampling (and perhaps a glass of wine or two), everyone puts together a take-home container with 12 types of cookies. Even better, have a baking party where you can get an assembly line going and bake all your favorites with friends and family.

Tools Of The Trade

What's nice about baking cookies is that you really don't need much in the way of equipment — a pan, an oven, and a watch are all you truly need. But if you're planning on baking in bulk, here are some things that will make your life easier:

Stand mixer: This one is a game changer for cookies. If you're used to using a hand mixer (or brute strength), you won't believe how much easier it is to pull together cookie dough with a stand mixer. You'll be wanting to make batch after batch! Which brings us to...

An extra bowl: Having a spare stand mixer bowl allows you to get started on the dough for a different kind of cookie while you're still scooping out the cookie dough from the previous batch. It's also key if you're doing layered bars that require more than one type of dough.

Lots of baking sheets: I recommend having four sheets, although you certainly can get by with fewer. It's nice to have at least two so you can be putting more dough on one sheet while your first sheet is in the oven. Four allows you to either bake two sheets at a time or rotate through the sheets so that you're not putting your dough on a piping hot pan.

Parchment paper or silicone baking mat: Both of these will help ensure your cookies don't stick to your baking sheet; the silicone baking mat is also particularly good at making sure the bottoms of your cookies don't burn.

Cookie scoop: While this gadget falls clearly in the "not necessary" category, it *is* a helpful tool if you're doing a lot of drop cookies. These small ice-cream-scoop-like devices help you make cookies that are all the same size, so they'll bake evenly.

45 Best Christmas Cookie Recipes

The best reason of all to bake cookies this Christmas? The perfect cookie recipe! Take a look through our mouth-watering collection of the best Christmas cookie recipes for 45 reasons why YOU should get your oven started.

Cucidati (Italian Fig Cookies)

I had to start off the list with my favorite cookie of the year, a new Yummly recipe created by [Sara Mellas](#). It's the cookie you always wished Fig Newtons tasted like ... and if you're a fan of Fig Newtons already? You're going to *love* these Italian classics.



[Cucidati Italian Christmas Fig Cookies](#) by Yummly

My Ginger Cookies

Or perhaps I should have started the list with these glittery gems, given that the smell is wafting out of my oven at this very moment... (Writing about cookies does inspire one to bake, after all!) Alice Medrich's ginger cookies pack a punch of holiday spice with three types of ginger: fresh grated ginger, ginger powder, and ginger chips. I got my ginger chips at Penzey's, but you can also use the easier-to-find crystallized or candied ginger and chop them finely.



[My Ginger Cookies](#) by Alice Medrich for the [James Beard Foundation](#)

Classic Spritz Cookies

These traditional German butter cookies herald the beginning of cookie season — in Germany and throughout the world. You'll need a special tool called a cookie press to make the classic shapes.



[Classic Spritz Cookies](#) by [A Kitchen Addiction](#)

Chai-Spiced Sugar Cookies

The taste of chai is perfect for this time of year; why not spice up your standard sugar cookie recipe?



[Chai Spiced Sugar Cookies](#) by [My Baking Addiction](#)

Pecan Tassies

These cookie cups from the American south bring a taste of pie to your cookie buffet.



[Pecan Tassies](#) by [Brown Eyed Baker](#)

No Bake Holiday Oreo Truffles

The oreo truffle is an easy recipe that never fails to wow your guests.



No Bake Holiday Oreo Truffles by [The Cozy Cook](#)

Italian Anisette Cookies

These Italian beauties are incredibly versatile — feel free to omit the anise altogether, or replace with an extract of your choice, such as almond or lemon.



Italian Anisette Cookies by [Cooking and Beer](#)

Chocolate Peppermint Patty Sandwich Cookies

With a good dose of both white and dark chocolate, these holiday treats have something for everyone.



[Chocolate Peppermint Patty Sandwich Cookies](#) by Yummly

Maraschino Cherry Shortbread Cookies

These shortbread cookies are rich with butter, of course, but melt in your mouth because of the powdered sugar. And what isn't better with a cherry on top?



[Christmas Maraschino Cherry Shortbread Cookies](#) by OMG Chocolate Desserts

Meringue Cookies

A simple mixture of vanilla, sugar, and egg whites helps these trees win the award for "cutest cookie recipe of the season."



[Christmas Tree Meringue Cookies](#) by [Cooking LSL](#)

Mint Chocolate Macaron

The popularity of macarons isn't all about good looks — the delicate cookie texture and sweet filling make them a delight to eat as well!



[Mint Chocolate French Macarons](#) by [Cookies For England](#)

Cranberry Almond Biscotti

Biscotti provide a welcome contrast to the abundance of sugary, gooey treats that are everywhere this time of year. Biscotti also keep longer than regular cookies, making them a favorite holiday gift.



Cranberry Almond Biscotti by [Food Pleasure and Health](#)

Mexican Wedding Cookies

Mexican wedding cookies (also known as Russian teacakes) are a classic addition to any Christmas cookie spread, and guarantee a white Christmas wherever you go!



Mexican Wedding Cookies by [Yummly](#)

Chewy Molasses Cookies

With a crackly top and a dusting of shiny sugar, these old-fashioned drop cookies please young and old alike.



Best Chewy Molasses Cookies by [Back For Seconds](#)

Melted Snowman Cookies

Take a tip from *Kitchen Fun with My Three Sons* and get your kids involved in making these grin-worthy fun snowman cookies.



Melted Snowman Cookies by [Kitchen Fun with My Three Sons](#)

Pizzelle

A special waffle iron is needed to make the beautiful designs on the traditional Italian pizzelle. If you're not a fan of anise, feel free to substitute orange extract. Pro tip: these make excellent sandwich treats when filled with fig jam!



Pizzelle (Italian Waffle Cookies) by [Tara's Multicultural Table](#)

Best Ever 4-Ingredient Shortbread

With just four ingredients (and lots of delicious butter), these classic shortbreads can be whipped up in no time. Once you've tried them fresh, you'll never go back to store-bought!



[Best Ever 4-Ingredient Shortbread](#) by Yummly

Toffee Pecan Cookies

Is there anything more Christmassy than toffee and nuts? A sprinkling of sea salt over the top makes these cookies simultaneously homey and gourmet.



[Toffee Pecan Christmas Cookies](#) by Eazy Peazy Mealz

Peppermint Chocolate Cookies

Dark chocolate and white chocolate — together at last! With these peppermint chocolate cookies, there's no need to pick a favorite.



White Chocolate Dipped Peppermint Chocolate Cookies by [Cooking Classy](#)

Nutella-Stuffed Hazelnut Snowball Cookies

The secret filling in these festive hand-rolled cookies bring the taste of chocolate and hazelnuts to one perfect little bite.



Nutella-Stuffed Hazelnut Snowball Cookies by [Yummly](#)

Mexican Cinnamon Cookies

This Mexican spin on a snickerdoodle is a great way to bring the flavors of cinnamon and sugar to your cookie tray.



[Mexican Cinnamon Cookies](#) by [12 Tomatoes](#)

Chocolate Crackle Cookies

These rich and fudgy rounds are a true chocolate lover's delight. Take my word on this one; I should know.



[Chocolate Crackle Cookies](#) by [Cinnamon Girl](#)

Walnut Meyer Lemon Shortbread Cookies

December is Meyer lemon season in the southern states. These buttery shortbreads are a great way to highlight the floral citrus flavor of this coveted seasonal fruit.



Walnut Meyer Lemon Shortbread Cookies by Mom Foodie

Biscoff Explosion Cookies

Sometimes known as "St. Nicholas Day Cookies," Speculoos cookies were traditionally served on St. Nicholas Day in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands. Popularized by an airline and the invention of "cookie butter," speculoos has taken the U.S. by storm in recent years. These "explosion" cookies are a decidedly decadent take on the spiced cookie of the old world.



Biscoff Explosion Cookies by Cleobuttera

Star of Bethlehem Cookies

Stars of Bethlehem, Peanut Blossoms, Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies ... whatever you call them, these classics keep coming back year after year. And with good reason! These cookies satisfy all the peanut butter lovers in your life while adding visual drama to your cookie plate.



Star of Bethlehem Cookies (Peanut Blossoms) by [That Skinny Chick Can Bake](#)

S'Mores Kiss Cookies

This playful twist on blossom cookies sees a chocolate kiss resting atop a marshmallow snowdrift. Instead of peanut butter, these cookies have graham cracker crumbs inside. Finally, a nut-free blossom that can be enjoyed by people with peanut allergies!



S'Mores Hershey Kiss Blossom Cookies by [Mel's Kitchen Cafe](#)

Orange Blossom Sablé Cookies

Sablé means "sandy" in French, and refers to the crumbly texture of these shortbread-like cookies. Full of almonds and orange zest, these sablés have a bright and buttery flavor that melt in your mouth along with the chocolate coating.



Orange Blossom Sable Cookies by [Lexi Bites](#)

Persimmon Cookies

Full of seasonal spices, citrus, and persimmons, these cookies just scream "December."



[Persimmon Cookies](#) by [Two Peas and Their Pod](#)

Raspberry Palmiers

Despite their ornate appearance, palmiers are easy to make and add visual and textural variety to your holiday table. Feel free to experiment with different fillings: Fruit jams, nuts, and chocolate are all good choices.



[Raspberry Palmiers](#) by [Palachinka Blog](#)

Pistachio Cookies

The unique and satisfyingly chewy texture of these traditionally gluten-free Sicilian bites comes from the combination of almond meal and egg whites.



Sicilian Pistachio Cookies by [Scarpetta Dolcetto](#)

Chocolate Chip Cookies

No, chocolate chip cookies aren't specifically for the holidays, but as America's favorite cookie, they shouldn't be left off the list! These jumbo bakery-style cookies make a lovely gift that everyone will enjoy.



Levain Bakery Chocolate Chip Cookies by [Kirbie's Cravings](#)

Coffee Blond Brownies

Let's be straight here: Brownies are not cookies. But they DO have a place on your holiday table, particularly when bringing flavors like coffee, pecan, and chocolate to the mix. With piles of cookies everywhere, a brownie can be a nice alternative treat. Looking for more brownie ideas? Check out these [10 Must Bake Brownies](#).



Coffee Blond Brownies by [The Vanilla Bean Blog](#)

Almond Lace Cookies

Lace cookies are another way to add some beauty to your cookie plate. These delicate disks provide a bit of crunch, a bit of chew, and a lot of satisfaction.



Dark Chocolate, Almond & Orange Lace Cookies by My Jerusalem Kitchen

Walnut Mushroom Cookies

These mini mushrooms give the meringue tree cookies a run for their money in the "cutest cookie" category. Why not make both (along with a [yule log](#)) for a forest-themed celebration?



Walnut Mushroom Cookies by Sugar Salted

Chocolate-Pistachio Sablés

I had to include this recipe, as I've been making it every Christmas since the recipe was first published in 2013. These cookies are extra chocolately and buttery, yet not too sweet. Flakes of Maldon sea salt on top provide the perfect salty-sweet-chocolate bite.



[Chocolate-Pistachio Sablés](#) by [Epicurious](#)

Mimosa Truffles

While also not technically a cookie, truffles are another nice counterpoint to the standard cookie bonanza. And what could be more festive than champagne? With white chocolate and orange, this celebratory bite will turn heads.



[Mimosa Truffles](#) by [Brown Eyed Baker](#)

Peppermint Crunch Sugar Cookies

Unlike a rolled sugar cookie, these drop cookies are effortless to make. Adorned with candy cane pieces, they've got just as much Christmas spirit as their cookie cutter cousins.



Peppermint Crunch Sugar Cookies by [OMG Chocolate Desserts](#)

Keto Magic Coconut Macaroons

Everyone can indulge during the holidays with these low-carb, gluten-free keto cookies made with almond flour and sugar substitute.



[Keto Magic Coconut Macaroons](#) by [Yummly](#)

Peppermint Swirl Sugar Cookies

In this take on the sugar cookie, we're bringing festive colors into the mix! Make a batch of green and a batch of red to really wake up your spread.



[Peppermint Swirl Sugar Cookies](#) by [Simple Bites](#)

Glittering Lemon Cookie Sandwiches

These pretty lemon sandwiches look like bells ... or are they Christmas lights? Their bold color and shape make them perfect for packaging up in little boxes and giving away as gifts.



[Glittering Lemon Sandwich Cookies](#) by [Tracey's Culinary Adventures](#)

Christmas Sugar Cookies

THE Christmas cookie classic, sugar cookies with royal icing are perfect for an afternoon baking project with kids. Cook along with this guided step-by-step video recipe from [Yummly](#).



[Christmas Sugar Cookies](#) by [Yummly](#)

Salted Caramel-Stuffed Chocolate Truffle Cookies

Caramel. Chocolate. Truffle. Need we say more?



[Salted Caramel-Stuffed Chocolate Truffle Cookies](#) by [Real Mom Kitchen](#)

Chocolate Caramel Pecan Thumbprint Cookies

Use your thumb to make a divit in the dough and fill it with gooey caramel to make these decadent holiday bites.



[Chocolate Caramel Pecan Thumbprints](#) by [Baked Bree](#)

Classic Holiday Gingerbread Cookies

Whether you're making classic gingerbread men, women, or pups, this classic cookie recipe has got your back (and arms, and legs, and head).



[Classic Holiday Gingerbread Cookies](#) by [Yummly](#)

Chocolate Bark

Bark is a welcome break from traditional cookies. This unusual recipe is not your typical holiday bark, however — it's got a shortbread cookie base that's *topped* with bark. Everyone will want to snap off a piece of this holiday treat!



Chocolate Bark Cookies by Tracey's Culinary Adventures

Christmas

Cookies

Dessert

Party Food

Winter