

START A "JARRING" HOLIDAY TRADITION

Gifts in a jar offer a heartfelt expression of holiday joy

Urbandale, Iowa (December 8, 2015) – It's that time of year again! A joyously hectic season when personal holiday traditions not only bring smiles, laughter and hugs, but cookies to bake, presents to wrap and parties to throw.

Holiday parties reinforce another tradition: the hostess gift. While a great idea to show gratitude, the gift often ends up being an afterthought. Frequently arriving as a hastily purchased bottle of wine, it conveys a nice but impersonal thank-you. "Personal" requires work, and who has time to bake countless fresh batches of cookies or nut breads as a thank-you for every holiday host, neighbor, friends, teachers, scout leaders and the mail carrier?

So now is the time to offer you a gift of your own. An idea that not only creates a fun new family tradition, but is one that also delights recipients with a thoughtful and personally created surprise. Gifts in a jar.

Gifts contained in "jars" can be made in anything that's clear and has a secure lid. The filling can range from homemade sugar scrubs or potpourri, to ingredients for soups, dips or marinades. But the most festive holiday gifts in a jar provide some of your own personal holiday spirit with the promise of easily recreated holiday treats after all the rest have disappeared.

The basic concept is simple:

- Choose a favorite holiday baked-goods recipe
- Select clear containers with secure lids
- Fill with layers of dry ingredients, alternating different colors for a festive look
- Apply a personalized label
- Tie colorful ribbons around lids or necks for holiday color
- Attach a handwritten recipe card for a personal touch

Traditional Mason jars make great carriers, as do clear canisters, unusual bottles or any other see-through decorative containers. Save even more time by involving the whole family in measuring, assembling and decorating.

Fun to make and receive year round, but especially useful during the holidays, these gifts can be done ahead of time, fit any budget and be personalized for special dietary needs. Baby showers, end of year teacher gifts, thank you gifts and welcoming new neighbors are just some additional occasions when small personal gifts add an extra heartfelt touch.

Gifting the truly festive look of jars filled with **Cranberry White Chocolate Cookie** mix is sure to get quick smiles. Completing the transition of colorful dried cranberries and multi-textured white chocolate morsels into luscious bites requires only the addition of eggs, vanilla, and butter or margarine. The final step is popping the cookies into an oven and turning your thoughtful gift into a sweet memory of the holidays.



CRANBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE MIX AND COOKIES

Prep Time: 15 minutes
 Bake Time: 10 to 12 minutes
 Makes: 40 cookies

WHAT YOU NEED

DRY CRANBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE COOKIE MIX

2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
 1 cup granulated sugar
 1 cup white chocolate chips
 1 package (6 ounces) dried sweetened cranberries
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt

COOKIES

1 container Cranberry White Chocolate Mix
 1/2 cup butter, softened
 2 large eggs
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

HERE'S HOW

1. For Dry Cranberry White Chocolate Cookie Mix, COMBINE all ingredients in a clear 2-quart container with tight fitting lid. COVER with lid. STORE in a cool dry place until ready to give as a gift.
2. To make cookies, PREHEAT oven to 350°F.
3. COMBINE 1 container dry cookie mix with butter in a large mixing bowl.
4. ADD eggs, one at a time, mixing until well combined after each addition. STIR in vanilla until blended.
5. DROP dough using a tablespoonful for each cookie onto ungreased cookie sheet.

6. BAKE 10 to 12 minutes or until light golden brown. Let COOL on cookie sheet on wire rack 1 minute. REMOVE and cool completely.

TIPS

- Attach a festive recipe card with dry mix ingredients and additional ingredients needed to make the squares to the container before giving.
- Dry mix can be prepared and held in container up to 2 weeks before giving as a gift.
- Store baked cookies, in a tightly covered container, in a cool dry place up to 2 days.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Nutrition information per serving (1 cookie): 88 calories; 2g total fat; 2g saturated fat; 0g polyunsaturated fat; 0g monounsaturated fat; 9mg cholesterol; 55mg sodium; 17g carbohydrate; 0g dietary fiber; 1g protein; 15.0IU Vitamin A; 2.1IU Vitamin D; 21.6mcg folate; 3mg calcium; 0mg iron; 8.2mg choline.

For more quick-and-easy egg recipes and tips to use the rich and creamy goodness of eggs in your family's meals and snacks, visit www.iowaegg.org or www.facebook.com/theiowaeggcouncil

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