

4 Recipes to get 'er done right this Christmas...

Step 1. Print the grocery list and recipe's. Look through your home and determine what you have now that is on the grocery list. (cross off those ones from your list-one less thing!)

Step 2. Plan shopping and baking day(s), write on calendar; commit and do.

Step 4. Get your groceries.

Step 5. Do your baking, like you said you would in step 2.

Step 6. Package your baking according to "eat immediately", "giving as gift", "freezing", etc. Click here for easy ideas using your baking as gifts!

Feel free to save this file and use it again and again at Christmas if you are happy with the recipes. Just print and go!

Tina's Christmas Baking!

Warning! 2 nutty recipes in this batch. Almonds and cashews. I'll start working on a nut free one...but still try the gingerbread and the Peppermint Bark.

Recipes you'll be making:

- Gingerbread Dough-Men / Houses
- Rosemary Cashews
- Almond Bark
- Peppermint Bark

## Gingerbread Dough (For Men and Houses)

*\*\* (Make this recipe first, let dough sit in fridge wrapped until baking day) \*\**

An "O'Connor family" tradition, this recipe makes the most delicious, soft gingerbread. Pairs well with m & m's, but feel free to ice the gingy-men also. Excellent for making gingerbread houses! This recipe makes A TON of cookies (6 to 8 dozen depending what you make (7 cups of flour!!), but we always end up making at least 2 to batches. These are a hit with most people, so good choice for bringing no matter where you go. Kids can do a lot to help, and have lots of fun with gingerbread, and so can you! Rolling, cutting, shaping, decorating, once you try this, you'll be making it part of your tradition too!

1 Cup	Melted Shortening
1 Cup	White Sugar
2 Cup	Molasses, Table
2	Eggs, beaten
1 Cup	Milk
7 Cups	Flour
1 ½ Tbsp	Baking Soda
1 tsp each	Ginger, Cloves, Cinnamon, Salt

- ❖ In a large bowl, mix together shortening, sugar, molasses and eggs.
- ❖ In a separate bowl, combine the dry ingredients, flour, baking soda and spices.
- ❖ Add the dry ingredients to the butter-sugar blend, alternating in small amounts with small amounts of milk. Mix and form a ball of dough. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours.
- ❖ Preheat oven to 325 or 350 F. (just see how your first few batches cook at 325, then decide...you'll know).
- ❖ Roll out on floured surface to ¼" thick. Cut with cookie cutters, trace with gingerbread stencils and use a knife, or make your own shapes with your hands or other tools! Decorate with m & m's (if desired, plus it is recommended!) and then bake firm but not too brown. Recipe always said 10 to 12 minutes, but I start checking at 8 minutes, and then decide. They get crunchier the longer they are cooked, so enjoy either way!

## Rosemary Cashews

Inspired by my Aunty Shelley, who gave me these, along with the recipe, one Christmas. This ridiculously simple recipe is so delicious, and passes off as a very debonair appetizer. Add the recipe on a card and wrap in a cute package, and you've got a classy gift.

1 lb	Unsalted Cashews
2 tbsp	Fresh Rosemary Leaves, minced
½ tsp	Cayenne Pepper
2 tsp	Brown Sugar
1 Tbsp	Kosher Salt
1 Tbsp	Butter, melted

- ❖ Preheat oven to 350 F. Spread cashews on a baking sheet and toast in oven until warm, about 5 minutes.
- ❖ In a large bowl, combine the rosemary, cayenne, sugar, salt and butter. Thoroughly toss the warm cashews with the spiced butter and serve!

## Almond Bark

Need I say more. Roasted almonds and Chocolate...together, plus it's so easy. Seriously easy. Although it is hard to keep around, 'cause it tastes so *good!*

2 Cups	Almonds, natural
2 Boxes	Baking Chocolate Squares (or chips), Dark, Milk, Semi, or White

- ❖ Spread almonds on a parchment paper lined baking sheet. Bake in 350 F oven for 5 minutes.
- ❖ Melt chocolate in a double boiler. If you don't have a double boiler, use any pot and find a metal or ceramic bowl that will fit nicely in the top of the pot you are using. Works like a charm.  
\*\*Time Saver. If you are also making the peppermint bark, melt your chocolates from both recipes at the same time, and just divide in half between almonds.\*\*
- ❖ Pour melted chocolate over the thin layer of almonds on the cookie sheet. You can marble / swirl the dark and white by alternating each as you pour on the almonds. Smooth the chocolate over so all the almonds are hiding!
- ❖ Chill in fridge (or porch if you are in Canada at Christmas!) for 2 hours. Break into "bark-like" pieces and enjoy!

## Peppermint Bark

Crushed up peppermint candy canes mixed into delectable chocolate. Just 10 minutes to whip up, this is an easy one to have around for hostess gifts, or as a nice after dinner offering with coffee and tea. Or just whenever you feel like a pick-me up!

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|---------|---|
| 1 Box   | Peppermint Candy Canes, crushed (unwrap, put into plastic bag and bang with rolling pin...so fun! |
| 2 Boxes | Baking Chocolate Squares (or chips), Dark, Milk, Semi, or White                                   |

- ❖ Spread peppermints on a parchment paper lined baking sheet in a thin layer.
- ❖ Melt chocolate in a double boiler. *\*\*Time Saver. If you are also making the peppermint bark, melt your chocolates from both recipes at the same time, and just divide in half between almonds.\*\** If you don't have a double boiler, use any pot and find a metal or ceramic bowl that will fit nicely in the top of the pot you are using. Works like a charm. (\*\*don't use plastic\*\*)
- ❖ Pour melted chocolate over the thin layer of peppermints on the cookie sheet. You can marble / swirl the dark and white by alternating each as you pour over the mints. Smooth the chocolate over so all the peppermints are covered.
- ❖ Chill in fridge (or porch if you are in Canada at Christmas!) for 2 hours. Break into "bark-like" pieces and enjoy!

Shopping List:

**Produce**

Fresh Rosemary Leaves (2 Tbsp)

**Dairy**

Butter (1 Tbsp )

Eggs (2)

Milk (1 cup)

**Other**

Parchment Paper

If following my gifting ideas, you will also need:

Blank Recipe Cards

Gingerbread house instructions or template

Baking Packaging-different sized boxes, clear bags,

Cookie Cutters (as gift)

**Pantry / Baking Supplies**

Cookie Cutters

2 Cups Almonds (unsalted)

4 Boxes Baking Chocolate, White and/or Dark or Milk (squares or chips, 16 oz)

1 lb (500 g) Unsalted Cashews

Candy Canes, box of 12

M & M's chocolate

Decorations for Gingerbread men and houses (optional)-icing, jelly beans, marshmallows, pretzels, ju jubes

Cayenne pepper (1/2 tsp)

Brown Sugar (2 tsp)

Kosher Salt (1 Tbsp)

Shortening (1 cup)

Sugar (1 cup)

Molasses (2 Cups)

Flour (7Cups)

Baking Soda (1 ½ Tbsp)

Ginger (1 tsp)

Cloves (1 tsp)

Cinnamon (1 tsp)

Salt (1tsp)