Teladoc® HEALTH | Western Michigan University



Give the gift of food

The holidays are filled with gift-giving opportunities. Hostess gifts, presents for co-workers, tokens for friends and family—the list goes on and on. It takes time to shop and buy, and it could also break the bank if you let it.

A great solution to fulfilling your gift list is to give food gifts. And it's cost-effective when you make these gifts yourself. Your loved ones will not only appreciate the treats, but they will appreciate that they're homemade by you.

21% of people prefer receiving foods & snacks as a holiday gift[1]

Make it fun

Preparation can be a shared experience for friends and family. Grab your kids and get them measuring, mixing and tying bows to create teachers' gifts. Plan a date night cooking up treats for your families. Host a wine or mocktail night with your friends and spend the night putting finishing touches on deliciously filled boxes and bottles.

Make it festive

Giving edible gifts is a popular choice that's appreciated. Packaging your homemade food gifts in special ways makes it even more special. Consider:



Layering dry ingredients for cookies in a 16 oz wide-mouth glass jar. Copy the recipe on pretty paper and tie it to the jar with a bright ribbon.



Putting candy or nuts in cellophane sleeves and tying them closed with tinsel.



Stowing baked goods in window bakery boxes. Decorate with a piece of pine, eucalyptus or dried orange slice tied with natural twine.



Weaving pretty ribbons around the top of reusable jars for homemade jams, flavored oils or vinegars.

Make it delicious

Homemade gifts can run the gamut from sweet to spicy to super creative. Make a version of something you're known for or choose something that each of your individual recipients loves. The following recipes are widely loved classic holiday treats that make great homemade gifts. Choose one and show your affection this holiday season.



Easy peppermint bark

Makes: 16 pieces | Prep: 1 hour | Cook: 6 min | Total: 1 hour 6 min

This four-ingredient recipe makes magic in short order.[2] Remember that dark chocolate has nutrients that are beneficial for you, but a little goes a long way.

Ingredients

- 9 oz dark chocolate baking chips or melting wafers
- 9 oz white chocolate baking chips or melting wafers (without palm oil)
- 1 tsp peppermint extract
- 3 regular-sized candy canes

Preparation

Line an 8×8 pan with parchment paper. Melt the dark chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl in 30-second intervals, stirring after each interval until completely melted and smooth. It will likely take 1 to 3 minutes. Do not overheat as the chocolate will scorch. Stir in ½ tsp of the peppermint extract. Pour melted chocolate into the prepared pan and spread it with the back of a spoon until an even layer is formed. Place in the fridge to set for about 30 minutes or until firm to the touch. While dark chocolate is chilling, crush your candy canes. Pulse in a food processor or place candy canes in a freezer bag and crush using a rolling pin or the bottom of a glass. Set aside. Once dark chocolate has set, follow the above instructions to melt the white chocolate. Stir in remaining ½ tsp of peppermint extract. Pour melted white chocolate over the dark chocolate and spread it with the back of a spoon until an even layer is formed. Sprinkle the candy cane pieces evenly over the white chocolate layer and lightly press with your hands. Place pan back in the fridge to chill until set, about 30-60 minutes. Once chocolate has hardened, let it sit at room temperature for 5-10 minutes before cutting or breaking into pieces. Store peppermint bark in a dark, cool place. It should last about 7-10 days in a cool kitchen or even longer (about 3 weeks or so) in the fridge or freezer.

Nutrition

Serving size: 1 piece

Calories: 178 | total fat: 10 g | saturated fat: 7 g | sodium: 16 mg | cholesterol: 3 mg
total carbs: 21 g | fiber: 1 g | sugars: 19 g | protein: 2 g | potassium: 119 mg

Healthy oatmeal cranberry cookies

Makes: 12 cookies | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 14 min | Total: 24 mins

With texture, crunch, tart cranberries and a hint of sweetness,[3] these can be eaten anytime, even for breakfast. And the dry ingredients look beautiful layered in a jar as a gift. **This recipe is vegan.**



Ingredients

- 1 cup quick oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ cup avocado oil
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup dried cranberries

Note
If you're giving this as a gift, layer the dry ingredients in a glass jar. Print out the recipe on pretty paper and attach it to the jar. That way, your recipient knows what to add and what steps to follow for delicious cookies.

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a large cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a mixing bowl, whisk quick oats, flour, cinnamon and baking powder. Stir in maple syrup, avocado oil and vanilla extract using a rubber spatula, until the dough is sticky and consistent. If too dry, add a little extra avocado oil. If too runny, add a little extra flour. Fold in dried cranberries and stir to incorporate evenly. Divide the mixture into 12 even portions, lightly oil your hands, and roll into a ball. Place each cookie dough ball on the prepared baking sheet leaving a thumb of space between them. Press the top of the balls with your hands to form thick cookies. Bake the cookies for 14-16 minutes until they're nicely golden brown on the edges.

Nutrition

Serving size: 1 cookie

Calories: 158 | total fat: 5 g | saturated fat: 4 g | sodium: 63 mg | cholesterol: 0 mg
total carbs: 27 g | fiber: 1 g | sugars: 13 g | protein: 2 g | potassium: 67 mg

Sweet and spicy nuts



Makes: 6 servings | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 15 min | Total: 25 mins

These are iconic treats[4] that are welcome additions with drinks, with dessert or as a gift, wrapped with a bow.

Ingredients

- ½ cup pecans
- ½ cup almonds
- ⅓ cup pistachios
- ⅓ cup cashews
- ⅓ cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup
- ½ tsp curry powder
- ⅛ tsp cayenne (or more to taste)
- ½ tsp dried rosemary
- ¼ tsp salt
- Non-stick cooking spray

Preparation

Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine nuts and seeds in a medium-sized bowl. Add the maple syrup, spices and salt and toss to combine. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray, then transfer coated nuts to baking sheet and spread evenly in 1 layer. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, stirring once, until nuts are fragrant and lightly toasted.

Nutrition

Serving size: ⅓ cup

Calories: 258 | total fat: 22 g | saturated fat: 3 g | sodium: 99 mg | cholesterol: 0 mg
total carbs: 11 g | fiber: 4 g | sugars: 4 g | protein: 8 g | potassium: 302 mg

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[1]https://yougov.com/en-us/articles/53169-holiday-shopping-2025-what-americans-buy-spend-and-value-at-christmas
[2]https://www.eatingbirdfood.com/easy-peppermint-bark/#wprm-recipe-container-54819
[3]https://www.theconsciousplantkitchen.com/healthy-oatmeal-cranberry-cookies/
[4]https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ellie-krieger/spiced-nuts-recipe-1952173

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