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Good Housekeeping The Great Christmas Cookie Swap Cookbook: 60 Large-Batch Recipes To Bake And Share



Synopsis

Butterscotch Fingers, Chocolate Crinkles, Gingerbread Cut-Outs, Peppermint Meringues: all these Christmas cookies sound delectable, but nobody can bake dozens of recipes at the same time. The solution? A swap! All across America, families, neighbors, community, and church groups gather at Christmas cookie swaps, where each participant brings a large batch of his or her favorite recipe to share. Everyone fills a plate or tin with samplings of the tasty treats; the more people, the merrier; and the more kinds of cookies to try. It's a fun way to enjoy a variety of Christmas tastes without doing all the work yourself; and to celebrate with those you love. Good Housekeeping helps home bakers enter into the joy, camaraderie, and pure deliciousness of this tradition with a new collection of 60 favorite Christmas cookie recipes from around the world; each configured to make batches of at least eight dozen cookies. Choose from holiday classics and contemporary twists; they're easy to make with everyday ingredients. And each recipe has been triple-tested for success in the famed Good Housekeeping Test Kitchen, so you can bake with confidence. For extra help, there are also great tips on techniques and shortcuts, as well as fun ideas for throwing the best cookie swap ever. Finally, as a special bonus, the book features removable blank recipe cards in the back; so you can pass along the recipe.

Book Information

Series: Good Housekeeping

Hardcover-spiral: 160 pages

Publisher: Hearst; Spi edition (October 6, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1588167577

ISBN-13: 978-1588167576

Product Dimensions: 1.2 x 6 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (28 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The Great Christmas Cookie Swap Cookbook is a book with a very specific purpose. While reading

it I would sometimes forget its singular job and wonder why a cookie recipe required FOUR pounds of butter -- a necessity when making multiple batches. It was disconcerting and amusing. The vast majority of the sixty recipes are standard cookie recipes that would be expected fare at a cookie swap - Peanut Butter Cookies, Classic Sugar Cookies, Drop Sugar Cookies, Sour Cream Sugar Cookies, Coconut Macaroons, Almond Macaroons, Scottish Shortbread, Snickerdoodles, Mexican Wedding Cookies, etc. Although most of the recipes are old favorites, the Good Housekeeping editors did sprinkle a few interesting cookies and variations that would be standouts at any cookie swap - like Praline-Topped Brownies (which I prepared and are quite delicious), Finska Kakor (which were also great) and Apricot Raspberry Rugelach - a rugelach combination I had not tried and the result was terrific. This is a solid cookbook but geared toward the cook that does not have many or any cookie cookbooks, because 95 percent of the recipes would be found in any basic cookie volume. The book's selling point is the convenience of having the large batch calculations done for you. Of course, doubling, tripling or quadrupling recipes really doesn't require much effort --but if the reader has serious time constraints -- and, there are many people in precisely such a position -- this cookbook may fill a void. The book is attractive, easy to read (small font size but dark ink), easy to use (spiral bound) and the finish on the pages should make any spills or splashes easy to clean up.

I was initially taken aback by the smaller than usual size of the book (7.5" x 6") but it delivers the promised 60 large-batch recipes as well as a few useful tips for hosting a cookie swap and packaging cookies. I often forget to check the size of books when reading 's product description. The book is spiral-bound so it lays flat on the counter when you're cooking. The page count listed in the description is misleading as it includes attached recipe cards. There are 125 pages of content, a two-page index, and a page with photo credits followed by 16 recipe cards (which can be torn out on perforated lines). I would have liked to have seen more photos of finished cookies. Photos of the finished products were provided for four bar cookies, four drop cookies, ten rolled and cut-out cookies, and seven of the shaped and refrigerator cookies. There were a few photos of the process such as cutting biscotti slices and cutting and shaping rugelach. The recipes produce between 84 and 320 cookies, with an average yield of 96 bar cookies (such as brownies and blondies) and 120 of the other types of cookies. I like that each recipe includes not only the basics (such as the active time, bake time and suggested yield) but also nutrition info. The nutrition information includes approximate calorie count; grams of protein, carbohydrates, and fat; and milligrams of cholesterol and sodium. Of course, yield and nutrition information is approximate since the size of the cookie

depends on the cook, and it is difficult to make each cookie identical in size.

I have so many cookie and holiday cookbooks that I almost passed on this one... but it's large batch and there were a couple recipes I'd never tried so I figured why not one more. The format appeared to be geared towards a very new beginner baker since it outlines how to grease a cookie sheet, how to measure dry ingredients, what baking soda and powder are and how to pack the cookies to take them to a party. Considering the tone of the early chapters, I was surprised at all the errors that would frustrate a new baker. I chose three cookies from this book to add to my menu for my annual holiday party: Florentines, Palmiers and Butterscotch fingers. After my experience I thumbed through; there are other errors throughout the book but these are what I had to deal with personally on each recipe.* The Florentines were missing a step - I had to google it so I could finish the cookies. Step three says you should drop the batter on the cookie sheets. Unfortunately After step 2, a batter consistency does not exist. However, once you get through the process - these are very tasty.* Step 1 for the palmiers says to cut the butter into the flour mixture. There isn't a flour "mixture", just flour. I had to re-read the entire recipe a couple times to make sure I didn't miss something. Also, this is just a picky point, but in the ingredient list it should say 1C sugar DIVIDED.* The butterscotch fingers were the worst for me. I believe the baking time is way off on this one. I made 27 different baked goods for this party and made these somewhere in the middle so I don't think it was temperature fluctuations caused by an un-calibrated oven. The directions say 12-14 mins per batch. I did 13 mins. on the first batch they were almost black...

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