



Perky Peppermint Chocolate Shortbread Cookies

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 45 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

cream: to mix foods together until they become a smooth, uniform blend, like butter and sugar.

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

sprinkle: to scatter small drops or particles of an ingredient evenly or randomly over food.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

Equipment

- Oven
- Baking pan, 9 x 13
- Large mixing bowl
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon or electric hand mixer
- Metal fork
- Knife, to cut shortbread into squares

Ingredients

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- 5 to 8 fresh mint leaves
- 2 sticks or 1 C butter, softened ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free butter)
- 1/2 C powdered sugar
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)******
- 2 C all-purpose flour ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)******
- 1/4 C chocolate chips ******(for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY sub carob chips; for DAIRY/NUT/SOY ALLERGY use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips)******
- 2 T granulated sugar

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free butter.

Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour. Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

Chocolate: Substitute carob chips for chocolate chips.

Dairy/Gluten/Nut/Soy: Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

Instructions

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intro

Shortbread is a buttery and crumbly cookie from Scotland. A basic shortbread dough has three ingredients: flour, butter, and sugar. We've perked ours up with mint and chocolate chips!

preheat + tear + cream

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Have your kids tear **5 to 8 fresh mint leaves** into little tiny bits and set aside. In a large bowl, cream together **2 sticks or 1 cup softened butter, 1/2 cup powdered sugar, and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract** until incorporated.

measure + mix

Measure and mix **2 cups of flour** into the butter mixture, along with the torn mint leaves and **1/4 cup of chocolate chips**. Continue to mix until it forms a soft dough. It will be crumbly at first, like sand and clay,

but keep mixing, and it will eventually form a dough.

press + prick + sprinkle

Press the dough into an ungreased 9 x 13 inch pan and prick all over with a fork. Sprinkle the top with about **2 tablespoons of sugar** by tilting the pan to cover the top evenly and then shaking any excess sugar back into your sugar canister.

bake + top + cut

Bake for about 40 to 45 minutes, until very lightly browned and just golden around the edges. Let stand for 5 minutes and, if desired, top with glaze and sprinkles from **Rainbow Glazed Coconut Sprinkles**. Then, cut into 24 squares while still warm. "Blasta" (Blast-uh) or "Delicious" in Scots Gaelic!

Featured Ingredient: Mint!

Hi! I'm Mint!

"I'm a green herb with a sweet, cool taste and pleasant aroma. You may have tasted me in gum and toothpaste, but my favorite is mint chocolate chip ice cream!"

History & Etymology

With its fresh scent hard to miss, mint was undoubtedly one of the earliest herbs discovered. It has been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 1,000 BCE and has been part of Chinese medicine even longer. Ancient Romans and Greeks used mint to flavor cordials and fruit compotes, as well as for baths and perfumes.

Mexicans call mint "yerba buena" or "good herb."

The United States produces over 70 percent of the world's peppermint and spearmint.

The word "mint" comes from the Old English "minte," from German "minze," from the Greek "minthē."

Anatomy

The mint plant is from the *Mentha* genus. It is an aromatic perennial herb. The plants can grow 4 to 48 inches tall and have runners below and above ground that can spread.

There are 18 to 24 species of mint currently recognized. Other mints are natural hybrids and cultivated hybrids. Some herbs with "mint" names, like cat mint (catnip), are not part of the *Mentha* genus.

Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*) is also known as common garden mint. Peppermint (*Mentha × piperita*) is a natural hybrid cross between spearmint and watermint (*Mentha aquatica*).

How to Pick, Buy, & Use

Mint is easy to grow at home or can be purchased at the grocery store. You can keep a bunch of fresh mint in a glass of water for up to two days.

Mint is harvested for its leaves, fresh or dried, for many culinary uses to add a cool, refreshing flavor. Foods that mint is added to include beverages, candies, ice cream, jellies, meat dishes, sauces, syrups, and teas.

Mint essential oil and menthol are added as flavoring to breath fresheners, candy, chocolate, drinks, gums, and toothpaste. It can also be used for aromatherapy.

Mint pairs well with these foods: asparagus, beans, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant, peas, potatoes, tomatoes, and yogurt. You can combine mint with these herbs and spices: basil, clove, cumin, dill, ginger, oregano, parsley, and thyme.

Nutrition

Although mint has some health benefits, it is best to eat it in moderation.

Mint has small amounts of vitamins A and C, along with the minerals calcium and iron.

Mint may aid in digestion, but if you have gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), it may aggravate symptoms.