

COOKIE HAPPINESS

A Sweet Way To Celebrate The Holidays—And 500 Years Of Good Taste

(NAPSA)—This holiday season, you can get a taste of history and create great desserts at the same time.

Although molasses is very in with today's health- and taste-conscious cooks, its history in America actually dates back to 1493 when Columbus brought it to the West Indies. Molasses became an important trade item between the Old and New Worlds. In fact, some historians say it was not the British tax on tea that precipitated the Revolutionary War but the Molasses Act of 1733 that imposed a heavy tax on the sweet stuff brought in from anywhere but British-held islands in the Caribbean.

Once that was settled, molasses became a delicious part of American cooking. The savory sweetness of all natural molasses imparts moistness and a delicate caramel aroma to cookies, pies and brown breads, while adding iron, calcium and other nutrients.

To savor the past and present of molasses for yourself, consider these recipes.

Grandma's Gingerbread (3 dozen)

8 Tbsp. (1 stick) butter or shortening
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Grandma's Molasses
 1 egg
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 1 tsp. baking soda
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
 1 tsp. ginger
 1 tsp. cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. ground cloves

Beat butter with sugar and molasses. Mix in egg. Sift dry ingredients and add to wet mixture. Mix well. Chill in freezer 1 hour or in refrigerator 2 hours. Heat oven to 350°F. Roll out a portion of the dough $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. thick on lightly floured board. Chill remaining dough. Cut with cookie cutter, place on greased baking sheets and



As the holidays become a more coveted time to spend with loved ones, why not bake traditional gingerbread cookies and other home-made treats? The spicy, comforting aroma will waft through your home and take you back to warm memories of holidays past.

decorate with raisins, chips or nuts, if desired. Bake 8-10 minutes. Cool.

Grandma's Chocolate Pecan Pie (9-10 servings)

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups pecan halves
 4 Tbsp. ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) butter
 4 oz. chocolate chips
 3 eggs
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Grandma's Molasses
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup light corn syrup
 1 Tbsp. sugar
 1 tsp. vanilla
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt

Ready-made piecrust, such as chocolate cookie

In 350°F oven, toast pecans on baking sheet for 4 minutes. Remove. Raise temp. to 375°F. In small pan over low heat, stir butter and chocolate until melted, about 1 minute. In mixing bowl, lightly beat eggs. Blend in molasses, corn syrup, sugar, vanilla and salt. Stir in chocolate mixture and then pecans. Spoon mixture into piecrust and bake until filling is set, 45-50 minutes. Cool and serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

Grandma's Oatmeal Lace Cookies (6 dozen)

8 Tbsp. (1 stick) butter
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Grandma's Molasses
 1 tsp. vanilla
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
 1 cup regular or quick oats
 1 cup nuts, finely chopped (optional)

Preheat oven to 375°F. Melt butter in saucepan. Remove from heat; stir in milk, molasses and vanilla. Sift together sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Blend into milk mixture. Stir in oats and nuts. Drop by level teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart on greased cookie sheet. Bake 6 to 8 minutes. Cool.

TIP:

Brown sugar is simply molasses added to white sugar, so in recipes calling for one cup brown sugar you can substitute one cup of granulated sugar plus $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses.

For more recipes, log on to www.grandmasmolasses.com or call 1-866-454-8229.