

Give A Gift Of Great Taste

(NAPSA)—For the holidays, birthdays, anniversaries or any special occasion—or to make an occasion more special—few gifts can be as delightful as a delicious dish you’ve baked yourself.

For people who live gluten-free, it can also be an opportunity to share their lifestyle and show how tasty and lovely a gluten-free life can be.

One treat to try, that can be made gluten-free, is a new twist on an old standby—Chocolate Cherry Peppermint Tassies. These pretty little cookies taste sort of like a peppermint brownie bite filled with a cherry.

Gluten-Free Chocolate Cherry Peppermint Tassies

48 cookies

Gluten-free nonstick cooking spray

25 (2 ½-inch) candy canes or peppermint candies

1 cup plus 1 tablespoon unsalted butter

6 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature

2 cups flour or gluten-free flour blend

4 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

1 cup sugar, use divided

1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ teaspoon kosher salt, use divided

1 large egg

48 maraschino cherries with stems—reserve 2 tablespoons of the maraschino juice

Spray 2 (24 cups each) mini-muffin pans with cooking spray. Grind the candy canes in the food processor until very finely ground. Remove from the food processor and set aside. Put 1 cup butter and the cream cheese in the food processor and process until smooth. Add the flour, cocoa powder, ½ cup sugar, 1 tablespoon vanilla and ¼ teaspoon salt. Process to combine. Add ½ cup of the ground candy canes and process to combine.



Chocolate Cherry Peppermint Tassies are like the holidays in a cookie.

Divide the dough into 48 balls. Place 1 ball in each muffin tin and refrigerate for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Using your thumb or the end of a French rolling pin, press a hole into the center of each ball of dough. Whisk together the 2 tablespoons reserved maraschino cherry juice with 1 tablespoon melted butter, ½ cup sugar, ¼ teaspoon salt, the egg and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Spoon the mixture into each hole. Pat the cherries dry with paper towels and place one in each hole on the filling. Sprinkle the cookies with the remaining crushed candy canes. Bake for 25 minutes. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to finish cooling.

Recipe notes: Use a good-quality gluten-free flour blend that contains xanthan gum. If your flour doesn't have xanthan gum, add 1 teaspoon to your flour.

You can find more delightful dishes in “Simply...Gluten-Free Quick Meals” by Carol Kicinski available at bookstores including Barnes & Noble, Powell’s, Books-a-Million and Amazon.

For more great recipes—with a cherry on top—visit the National Cherry Growers and Industries Foundation at www.maraschinocherries.org. For gluten-free advice and recipes, go to www.simplygluten-free.com.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Carol Kicinski, Professional Recipe Developer, TV Chef and Editor In Chief of Simply Gluten Free Magazine.