



Sweet family traditions

There's a reason this is called the most wonderful time of the year. Beautiful lights and decorations, holiday parties, the anticipation of the gifts that'll light up faces, and the tradition of family Christmas baking that gets hearts glowing.

Norman Love is a great believer in the idea of families spending time together in the kitchen over the holidays. He's opened up his private cookbook providing two holiday recipes to encourage people to get in the kitchen and start baking with their loved ones.

"In this economy, cooking together is a great way to create holiday memories," says Love, a Top 10 Chocolatier in North America.

"My most memorable

experiences with family and cooking surround Thanksgiving and other family holidays like Christmas. I still recall today how much everyone looked forward to tasting my grandmother's specialties," he says.

He is sharing her recipe for Mint Chocolate Chip Cookies.

He also discloses a recipe for gingerbread dough hoping people will have fun creating their own gingerbread houses. The recipe for the dough and icing were handed down to him from an old German baker he worked with 25 years ago.

"So many of us have memories of baking with our moms and grandmothers," Love says. "We hope people continue to pass down the tradition of making homemade treats together for the holidays."

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RECIPES

NORMAN LOVE'S MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Ingredients

- 1½ cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 each large eggs
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups mint chocolate chips

Directions: In a KitchenAid stand mixer with the paddle attachment, cream the butter, sugar, and brown sugar together until light and fluffy.

Add the eggs and vanilla and mix slowly.

Add the dry ingredients and mix.

Add the mint chocolate chips and mix everything until combined.

Scoop the cookies into uniform balls using a cookie scoop or by rolling them in your hands.

Place the cookies onto a sheet pan.

Bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees F (Times may vary depending on the cookie size and oven).

NORMAN LOVE'S GINGERBREAD DOUGH FOR HOUSES

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup dark molasses
- 2 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves

Directions: In a KitchenAid stand mixer with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Add the egg, molasses, and vinegar and mix slowly.

Add the sifted dry ingredients and mix everything until combined.

Roll out the dough onto lightly floured surface to ¼ inch thick.

Lay the pattern pieces for the house on the dough and cut out the shapes (you can find pattern pieces for your house on the internet).

Place the pieces onto a sheet pan with parchment paper.

Bake the pieces for 12-15

minutes at 375 degrees F (times may vary depending on the oven).

Icing for Gingerbread Houses

Ingredients

- 3 large egg whites
 - ½ teaspoon cream of tartar
 - 4 cups powdered sugar
- Directions: In a KitchenAid stand mixer with the whip attachment, whip the egg whites and cream of tartar until foamy.

Slowly add the powdered sugar and mix for 5-7 minutes.

Once the icing is ready, use immediately or keep covered with plastic wrap until you are ready.



ROSE O'DELL KING, SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-PRESS

Norman Love with freshly baked coconut macaroons.