

# Baked With Love

10 EASY AND DELIGHTFUL TREAT RECIPES  
FROM MY HOME TO YOURS



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# WELCOME

Hello! My name is Karen Gordon, the face behind Karentology. Our goal, at Karentology, is Making Pretty Easy. We're here to help you create the prettiest gifts, in the easiest ways possible!

While store-bought gifts are lovely, some of the most heartfelt gifts are homemade ones. To inspire you, we've filled this e-book with easy and delicious recipes that you can make at home and give to friends and family. These recipes are a delight to both the eyes and taste buds. For those who don't bake, we've also included ideas that don't require an oven!

Happy Gifting!

*Karen*



## Why use this book?

While I would love to spend all day in the kitchen, the truth is, I don't have that sort of time - between my full-time job, my Karentology business, managing my Instagram and Pinterest accounts, plus my bi-weekly recipe column in 80+ publications, my time is scarce! I'm sure yours is as well and that's why you need this book!

Through the years, I've perfected the art of achieving the yummiest, tastiest and prettiest treats with the least amount of effort possible! In this book, I share my favorite, well-tested recipes and secrets to Making Pretty Easy! I hope you'll find them inspiring.

Since baking is a science, it's important to always measure your ingredients carefully. To obtain better accuracy, I recommend measuring by weight over volume. As such, I've provided both measurements in each recipe.

When it comes to flavours, I say, go wild! Many of the add-on ingredients are interchangeable. For instance, if cranberries aren't in season when you want to make the White Chocolate Cranberry Crumble Bar, use Blueberries instead! I promise, it'll be equally beautiful and delicious!

I hope you'll enjoy these recipes and that you'll find them useful when coming up with edible gift ideas for friends and family!



# COOKIES

I haven't met anyone who doesn't like cookies! They are clearly the most universally acceptable treats for any occasion.

Not only are cookies easy to bake, they also make the best gifts! Regardless of the event, nothing delights more than a batch of freshly baked cookies. Best part, they can easily be customized!



# CHOCOLATE-CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

*An all-around cookie-lover's dream! They look and taste like they came from a bakery!*



**Makes 20 cookies**

## Ingredients

1 cup (227g) butter, softened, not melted  
1 cup (200g) brown sugar  
1 cup (200g) granulated sugar  
2 large eggs  
2 tsp (10ml) vanilla extract  
3 cups (360g) all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup (50g) cocoa powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
2 tsp baking powder  
1-1/2 cups (255g) semi-sweet chocolate chips

## Instructions:

- In a stand mixer, fitted with a paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars until well blended. Add eggs and vanilla extract, beat until light and creamy.
- Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and baking powder together.
- Add the flour mixture to the creamed butter. Mix until dough forms coarse crumbs. Add the chocolate chips and mix until dough starts to clump.
- Using a 1/4-cup ice cream scoop, place level scoops of cookie dough on a parchment lined cookie sheet. Place the entire cookie sheet into the freezer to freeze for at least 2 hours.
- Move oven rack to the middle position. Place second parchment lined cookie sheet in oven and preheat to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Without removing the cookie tray, using a pair of tongs, place 6 frozen scoops of cookie dough 3 inches apart on the preheated cookie sheet.
- Bake for 10 minutes until cookies look just about set around the edges. The middle will look underdone. That's okay. The cookies will set up as they cool. Allow cookies to cool for 5 minutes on the tray before sliding cookies with the parchment paper onto cooling rack to finish cooling. Enjoy!

## ***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

To get that perfectly round cookie, while the cookies are still hot, place a large cookie cutter (larger than the cookie itself) around the cookie. Holding the cutter, spin the cookie around. Voila! Perfectly round cookies!



# OATMEAL PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Lightly crisp on the outside, chewy in the middle, and packed with yumminess, these cookies take oatmeal to a whole new level!

# OATMEAL PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

## Ingredients

1 cup (227g) creamy peanut butter  
1/8 cup (30g) butter, melted  
2 large eggs  
1/2 cup (100g) brown sugar  
1 tsp (5ml) vanilla extract  
1-1/4 cups (100g) rolled oats  
1/2 tsp baking soda  
3/4 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup (85) semi-sweet chocolate chips  
1/2 cup (85g) Reese's peanut butter pieces



## Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- In a stand mixer, add peanut butter, butter, eggs, brown sugar, and vanilla extract. Beat until light and creamy.
- Meanwhile, in another bowl, whisk the rolled oats, baking soda, cinnamon, chocolate chips, and Reese's peanut butter pieces together until combined.
- Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients. With a wooden spoon, mix until the mixture is combined. Do not over mix.
- Using a 1 tablespoon cookie scoop, place cookie dough 2 to 3 inches apart on a parchment lined cookie sheet.
- Bake for 11 to 12 minutes until cookies are slightly golden around the edges. The center will look underdone but that's okay. It'll set up as it cools.
- Remove from oven and cool on cookie tray for 5-10 minutes before transferring the cookies to a cooling rack to finish cooling. Enjoy!

## ***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

While the cookies are still warm, randomly place 5-6 additional pieces of Reese's Peanut Butter candies on top of the cookies and press down lightly. Adding extra candies before baking will cause the candies to crack. My method will keep them whole and make them much prettier!



# WHITE CHOCOLATE DIPPED PEPPERMINT BUTTER COOKIES

These peppermint-y buttery cookies are dipped in white chocolate and then sprinkled with extra crushed candy canes to create a deliciously crunchy, yet chewy combination. They make perfect gifts around the holidays!



# WHITE CHOCOLATE DIPPED PEPPERMINT BUTTER COOKIES



Makes 18 cookies

## Ingredients

2-1/8 cups (255g) all-purpose flour  
1 cup (227g) butter, softened  
1/2 cup (100g) granulated sugar  
1 egg  
2 tsp (10ml) vanilla extract  
1/2 cup (100g) crushed candy canes

## Chocolate Dip & Topping

1 cup (170g) white chocolate, chopped  
(milk, dark or a combination may be used instead)  
1/2 cup (100g) crushed candy canes

## Instructions:

- In a stand mixer outfitted with a paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar until well combined. Add egg and vanilla, and beat until light and creamy.
- Add flour and mix until mixture comes together.
- Add 1/2 cup of the crushed candy canes and mix until evenly distributed. Do not over mix.
- Transfer dough to lightly floured surface. Roll into a 2" diameter log. Wrap it in plastic wrap and place it in the refrigerator to chill for a minimum of 2 hours.
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Removed chilled dough, slice into 1/2" thickness. Place on a parchment lined cookie sheet 3 inches apart and bake for 11-12 minutes until barely golden around the edges.
- Allow cookies to cool on baking tray for 10 minutes before moving them to a cooling rack to finish cooling.
- Once cookies are cooled, add white chocolate to a microwaveable bowl. Microwave in 15 second intervals, stirring in between until the mixture is smooth.
- Dip half the cookie into the melted white chocolate. Immediately sprinkle crushed candy canes on the chocolate dipped side. Place on parchment lined cookie sheet to set - approx. 40 minutes or refrigerate for 10 minutes. Enjoy!

## ***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

To get that perfectly round sliced cookie, slide plastic wrapped cookie dough into an empty paper towel tube before chilling. To cut even slices, lay a ruler along side the dough and use your sharpest, thinnest bladed knife and slice in a continuous motion.



## NEAPOLITAN ICE CREAM COOKIES

This is my most requested and saved cookie recipe! These delicious, soft, and chewy butter cookies with just the slightest crunch around the edges are made with chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry dough. Your friends and family will wonder how you managed to get each cookie to look like a scoop of Neapolitan ice cream!

# NEAPOLITAN ICE CREAM COOKIES



Makes 24 cookies

## Ingredients

1 cup (227g) butter  
1 cup (200g) granulated sugar  
1 large egg  
1 tsp vanilla  
2-1/4 cups (270g) all-purpose flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
1/4 tsp baking soda  
1/3 cup sparkling sugar

## Strawberry dough

1/2 tsp strawberry extract  
2 tbsp (6g) flour  
Pink gel food colouring

## Chocolate dough

1-1/2 tbsp (6g) cocoa powder

## Instructions:

- In a stand mixer, outfitted with a paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar together until well combined.
- Add egg and vanilla extract, and beat until light and fluffy.
- Add flour and mix until dough comes together. Remove and weigh dough and divide into 3 portions.
- To the first portion, add strawberry extract, flour, and pink gel food colouring. Knead dough until the colour is even. Set aside.
- To the second portion, add cocoa powder and knead until smooth. Set aside.
- Weigh each flavored dough and divide each dough into 24 equal portions and roll each portion into a ball.
- To assemble, in the palm of your hand, add 1 portion each of the vanilla, strawberry, and chocolate dough. Press lightly together and roll into a ball. Then roll the ball in the sparkling sugar.
- Place 6 balls on a cookie sheet and bake for 10-11 minutes until lightly golden around the edges.
- Remove from oven. Slide cookies and parchment paper onto a cooling rack to cool completely. Enjoy!

## ***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

To prevent the transfer of color, roll the vanilla dough first, then the strawberry, and then the chocolate dough. To prevent the colors from getting muddy when rolling, wipe the palm of your hands frequently and do not over-work the dough.



## S'MORES COOKIES

These S'Mores Cookies are even better than the real thing! Soft and buttery, chewy yet lightly crisp, these cookies are packed with gooey marshmallow and chocolate chunks. These are my all-time favorite cookies!

# S'MORES COOKIES



Makes 20 cookies

## Ingredients

3-1/2 cups (420g) all-purpose flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 cup butter  
1/2 cup (100g) brown sugar  
1/2 cup (100g) granulated sugar  
2 tsp (10ml) vanilla extract  
2 eggs  
2 cups (340g) good milk chocolate, chopped  
2 cups (100g) plain mini marshmallows

## Instructions

- In a medium size bowl, add flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Whisk to combine. Set aside.
- In a stand mixer outfitted with a paddle attachment, cream butter until light and fluffy. Add sugars and beat until creamy. Add vanilla extract and eggs, and continue beating until light and fluffy, about 3-4 minutes.
- Add flour mixture and beat until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
- Add the chocolate and mini marshmallows. Mix until dough starts to clump.
- Using a 1/4 cup ice cream scoop, place level scoops of cookie dough on a parchment lined cookie sheet. Place sheet in freezer for at least 3 hours.
- Move oven rack to the middle position. Place second parchment lined cookie sheet in oven and preheat to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Without removing the cookie tray, using a pair of tongs, place 6 frozen scoops of cookie dough 3 inches apart on the preheated cookie sheet.
- Bake for 10 minutes until cookies look just about set around the edges. The middle will look underdone. That's okay. The cookies will set up as they cool. Allow cookies to cool for 5 minutes on the tray before sliding cookies with the parchment paper onto cooling rack to finish cooling. Enjoy!

## *Making Pretty Easy Secret:*

Since these cookies tend to expand while baking, once you remove them from the oven, place a large cookie cutter (larger than the cookie itself) around the cookie and spin it to make them round. Immediately top each cookies with 3-4 extra chunks of chopped milk chocolate for extra decadence!



## BARS & SQUARES

Dessert bars and squares are some of the easiest treats to prepare. They can often be whipped up in 1 bowl and poured directly into the pan and baked. Perfection is not required.

All you need is a baking pan, a handful of ingredients, and a sharp knife that magically turn your dessert into a platter of delicious treats! The hardest part of making bars and squares is waiting for them to cool before you dig in!



# LEMON LILIKOI (PASSIONFRUIT) BARS

No other treat says Aloha like these Lemon Lilikoi Bars! A Hawaiian take on Lemon Bars.



Makes 18 bars

## Ingredients

### Shortbread crust

2-1/4 cups (270g) all-purpose flour

2/3 cup (80g) confectioners sugar

1 cup (227g) butter, softened

### Lemon Lilikoi Filling

8 large eggs

3 cups (600g) granulated sugar

1/4 cup (60ml) freshly squeezed

lemon juice

3/4 cup (180ml) lilikoi puree

2/3 cup all-purpose flour

## Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly grease a 9x13" pan with cooking spray. Line pan with 2 pieces of parchment paper so that the paper overhangs all 4 sides by several inches. Set aside.
- In a stand mixer with a paddle attachment, add the crust ingredients. Beat until mixture resembles large coarse crumbs. Transfer to prepared baking pan. Using your fingers, press down firmly, creating an even bottom crust and a 3/4 inch-tall edge along the sides of the pan. Freeze for 30 minutes before baking.
- Bake for 20 to 22 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned.
- While crust is baking, make filling. To the same stand mixer bowl (no need to wash), add filling ingredients. With a whisk attachment, whisk until well combined and no flour streaks remain.
- When crust is ready, remove pan from the oven and while crust is still hot, lightly prick holes in the crust with a fork. (Do not prick crust all the way through). This will help the the filling to stick to the crust.
- Give the filling one last stir and pour directly over the warm crust. Return pan to the oven and bake for another 35 to 40 minutes or until the filling is set.
- Remove pan from the oven and allow it to cool completely before covering with foil and chilling in the refrigerator overnight. For clean slices, bars must be well chilled.
- To remove, use parchment paper overhang as handles and lift dessert out of pan. Place on cutting board and cut into squares using a sharp knife. Dust with confectioners sugar.

### *Making Pretty Easy Secret:*

For cleaner slices, use the thinnest blade knife possible. Heat the knife in very hot water, then dry off on a tea towel before cutting. Clean the knife after each cut.



## BUTTER TART CHEESECAKE BARS

Two desserts are combined to make one sinfully luscious dessert. The bars start with a Biscoff cookie base, are layered with creamy cheesecake, and then topped with a layer of butter tart filling. As it bakes, the butter tart filling bubbles down, infusing the cheesecake with a rich caramel-y flavour. The texture is a sinful combination of creaminess from the cheesecake and the chewiness from the Biscoff crust.



# BUTTER TART CHEESECAKE BARS



Makes 16 squares

## Ingredients

### Biscoff Crust

30 Lotus Biscoff cookies  
1/4 cup (50g) granulated sugar  
1/2 cup (113g) butter, melted

### Cheesecake Layer

16oz (500g) Philly cream cheese, softened  
1/2 cup (100g) granulated sugar  
2 large eggs  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1/8 tsp salt

### Butter Tart Filling

1/2 cup (113g) butter  
1/2 cup (110g) brown sugar  
1/2 cup (120g) light corn syrup  
1 tsp vanilla extract

## Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Lightly grease 9×9" baking pan and line with 2 pieces of parchment paper so that the paper overhangs all 4 sides by several inches. Set aside.
- To make the butter tart filling, in a medium saucepan over medium heat, whisk butter, brown sugar, corn syrup, heavy cream, and vanilla until mixture comes to a boil. Cook for 1 minute and immediately remove from heat. Allow mixture to cool.
- In a food processor, add Biscoff cookies and sugar. Pulse until fine crumbs. Add melted butter and continue mixing until combined. Transfer to the prepared baking tray and press down firmly to create an even crust. Set aside.
- In a stand mixer outfitted with a whisk attachment, whisk cream cheese and granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Add one egg at a time, whisking in between until well combined. Add vanilla extract and salt. Continue whisking until mixture is fully combined.
- Pour cream cheese mixture over the Biscoff crust. Then pour the cooled butter tart filling mixture over the cream cheese layer. Smooth the top with the back of a spoon.
- Place pan in the oven and bake for about 35-37 minutes until the top is golden brown. Remove the pan from the oven and place on cooling rack to cool. Do not remove dessert. Once cooled, wrap pan in foil and place in refrigerator overnight.
- Once fully chilled, use the parchment overhang as handles to lift cheesecake from the pan. Place on a cutting board and slice into 16 pieces. Enjoy!

## *Making Pretty Easy Secret:*

For perfect squares, begin by measuring the middle of the dessert. Then using your thinnest, sharpest knife, cut down the middle. Measure one half and slice down the middle. Repeat for the other side. There should now be 4 columns, each measuring 2.25" wide. Turn the dessert and repeat process until you have 16 squares.



## CRANBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE CRUMB BARS

If you like the combination of sweet and tart, then you're going to love these bars. They consist of 4 layers - a sugar cookie base, a layer of sweet yet tart cranberry jam, a layer of white chocolate chips, and finally, a crumbly layer of cookie dough. No equipment needed other than a bowl, wooden spoon, sauce pan, and baking tray! Easy-peasy!

# CRANBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE CRUMB BARS



Makes one 9" pan

Sugar Cookie Dough  
2 cups (240g) all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup (100g) granulated sugar  
1 cup (227g) butter, cold and cubed  
1 large egg  
2 tsp vanilla extract

Cranberry Jam  
1 lb (480g) fresh or frozen cranberries  
1/2 cup (100g) brown sugar  
2 tbs (30ml) water  
1 tbs (15ml) freshly squeezed lime juice  
1/2 tsp grated lime zest  
1-1/2 cups (255g) white chocolate chips

## Instructions for Cranberry Jam:

Add rinsed cranberries, brown sugar, and water to a medium size saucepan. Heat over medium until skins burst and the mixture becomes thick and jammy, about 10-15 minutes. Remove from heat, add lime juice and zest. Stir well. Set aside to cool. Once jam is cooled, prepare crust.

## Instructions for Cookie Dough Crust:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Spray a 9x9" baking pan with cooking spray and line with parchment paper. Set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk flour and sugar until combined. Add the cold, cubed butter. Using your fingers, rub butter into the flour and sugar mixture until they resemble coarse crumbs.
4. In a small bowl, whisk the egg and vanilla extract together. Add the egg mixture to the crumbs. Using a wooden spoon, stir until the dough starts to clump together.

## To assemble:

1. Add half the dough to the prepared pan. With fingers, press firmly to create an even crust.
2. Bake for 13-15 minutes until the crust is lightly golden around the edges.
3. Remove from oven and let crust cool.
4. Spread cranberry jam evenly over the cookie crust. Add 1-1/4 cup white chocolate chips, reserving a 1/4 cup for the top. Crumble remaining cookie dough over top of the white chocolate. Do not press down. Then sprinkle remaining white chocolate chips over top.
5. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for approximately 25 minutes until lightly golden around the edges. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.
6. Once cooled, cover with foil and place baking pan in refrigerator to chill for at least 4 hours.
7. Remove dessert from tray. To make clean slices, warm a sharp knife with hot water, then dry, before slicing into the dessert. In between cuts, rinse the knife with hot water and dry with a paper towel. Enjoy!

## *Making Pretty Easy Secret:*

Fresh cranberries are difficult to find year round. I recommend purchasing cranberries when they are available. Before freezing, rinse cranberries well. Place them on a large tea towel to dry. Once dry, place cranberries in a single layer on a cookie tray and freeze until firm. Transfer to a heavy-duty freezer bag and freeze until needed.



## NO BAKE TREATS

If you don't enjoy baking but would still like to whip up something yummy, try these deliciously easy, no-bake desserts. The Lucky Charm Shamrock Squares are made using the stove and microwave while the Salted Caramel Almond Clusters are made with the help of a microwave only! Both are quick and easy!



# LUCKY CHARM SHAMROCK SQUARES

Lucky Charm cereal and minty white chocolate help dress up the everyday marshmallow squares



Makes 20 Squares

## Ingredients

- 57g (1/4 cup) butter
- 400g (6 cups) miniature marshmallows
- 1 tsp (5ml) vanilla extract
- 200g (5 cups) lucky charm cereal
- sprinkles (optional)
- 170g (1 cup) white chocolate, chopped
- 1 tsp (5ml) coconut oil
- 1/8 teaspoon food grade peppermint oil
- 1/8 teaspoon food grade spearmint oil
- green food gel

## Instructions

1. Spray an 11x13" pan with cooking spray. Cut parchment paper to fit the length of the pan allowing extra parchment to hang over the long sides of the pan to act as handles. Set aside.
2. In a large non-stick saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Add marshmallows. Heat and stir until 80% of the marshmallows have melted. Add vanilla extract and continue stirring until well combined. Add cereal and stir until the cereal is well coated. Transfer marshmallow mixture to the parchment lined tray.
3. Oil both hands. Firmly press down to level out the marshmallow cereal mixture. Sprinkle with sprinkles if using, then set aside for at least 2 hours to firm up.
4. Using the overhanging parchment paper as handles, lift the slab out of the tray onto a cutting board. Using a long sharp knife, score and cut slab into 20 squares. Set aside.
5. In a microwavable bowl, add chopped white chocolate and coconut oil. Microwave in 15 second intervals, stirring in between until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Add the peppermint oil, spearmint oil, and green food gel coloring to the chocolate and stir well.
6. Dip the bottoms of the cereal squares in the chocolate mixture. Allow excess to drip, then place squares, with the chocolate-side facing up, on a parchment lined tray until set, approximately 30 minutes.
7. Enjoy!

## ***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

To prevent the melted white chocolate from seizing, only use oil-based flavouring and gel food coloring. Do not use alcohol based or water-based extracts or color. If alcohol based extract is only available, add extract to the melted marshmallow mixture.

For soft marshmallow squares, use mini-marshmallows and melt them on the lowest heat possible. Do not rush the process.



# SALTED CARAMEL ALMOND CLUSTERS

Made with only a handful of ingredients, homemade treats don't get any easier than these! Store-bought roasted almonds along with caramel candies help simplify the process. I recommend you make extras because once you taste them, it'll be hard to stop at one!

# SALTED CARAMEL ALMOND CLUSTERS



Makes 12 Clusters

- 1 – 2 cups whole almonds, raw or roasted and lightly salted
- 2 bars Lindt dark chocolate, chopped
- flaked sea salt or pink sea salt
- 30 individually wrapped soft caramel candies
- 2 tbs heavy cream

Instructions:

To Roast Raw Almonds:

- Add almonds to a small skillet. Toast on medium low heat until fragrant. Remove and set aside. If using store-bought roasted almonds, skip this step.

For the Caramel:

- Add unwrapped caramel candies and cream to a microwavable bowl. Heat on high in 30 second increments, stirring in between, until mixture is smooth. Set aside.

To Melt the Chocolate:

- Add chopped chocolate to a microwavable bowl. Microwave in 15 second increments, stirring in between until the chocolate mixture is melted and smooth.

To Assemble:

- Add 1 tablespoon of melted caramel 3" apart on a parchment lined cookie sheet. Press 5-6 roasted almonds into the caramel. Add 1 to 2 tsp of melted chocolate on top of the almonds and caramel. Top with flaked sea salt or coarse pink sea salt. If using store-bought lightly salted roasted almonds, skip the sea salt.
- Set cookie sheet in the refrigerator to set for about 20 minutes. Enjoy!

***Making Pretty Easy Secret:***

To create a pretty chocolate swirl, once the puddle of chocolate that's been added on top of the almonds and caramel has set, warm up the leftover chocolate and drizzle over the original puddle of chocolate. This will help create more defined swirls. Top with sea salt.



# For more recipes and Making Pretty Easy ideas

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