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101^v DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

101+ RECIPES & CRAFTS FOR A DIY HOLIDAY



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101 Days of Christmas eBook

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Introduction

For our family, Christmas really is the most wonderful time of the year, and we look forward to the holiday season all year long. Not because of the presents we'll receive but because of the memories and traditions it holds, the opportunities to give and serve as a family, and the focus we put on enjoying each other and all that it offers!

101 Days of Christmas launched three years ago, and I've continued to share DIY Christmas ideas on [Life Your Way](#) in the 101 days leading up to Christmas every year since.

As we head into [our fourth annual 101 Days of Christmas series](#), I've gathered even more projects, recipes and printables from the archives to add this ebook to [the one we published last year](#) in an easy-to-browse, easy-to-print format!

Whether you're looking for a craft to do with your children, a new cookie recipe to share with your friends and neighbors, or a simple handmade gift, you'll find all of my favorite ideas and tutorials in this ebook.

Here's to a simple but meaningful Christmas!

9 :: Gingerbread Star Christmas Tree



Want a ridiculously easy way to wow your kids? Well, look no further—this is it!

The girls watched me rolling out the dough the other evening: “Whatcha making?” they whispered, one by one. “You’ll see,” I replied. Then I pulled out the star cookie cutters, and that was enough excitement for them: “Ooh, star gingerbread cookies!” they exclaimed. “The tiny one is mine,” Baby Girl said.

When I began adding the green outline and stacking the pieces together, you would have thought I was hanging the literal stars in

the skies. “WHAT is that?!” “Look what Mom’s doing!” And then... “It’s a tree! She made a tree!”

When I spotted this [Wilton Cookie Tree Cutter Kit](#) on Amazon for just \$5, I couldn’t resist. I only used half a batch of gingerbread cookie dough and the five smallest cookie cutters from the kit to make a small tree, but my kids loved oohing and ahing over it almost as much as they enjoyed eating it, which is always a win.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 batch soft gingerbread cookie dough (from above)
- 5 star cookie cutters in graduated sizes
- decorator gel or icing
- optional: sprinkles, candies, etc.

Directions:

Prepare dough according to original directions and chill until firm, about two hours.

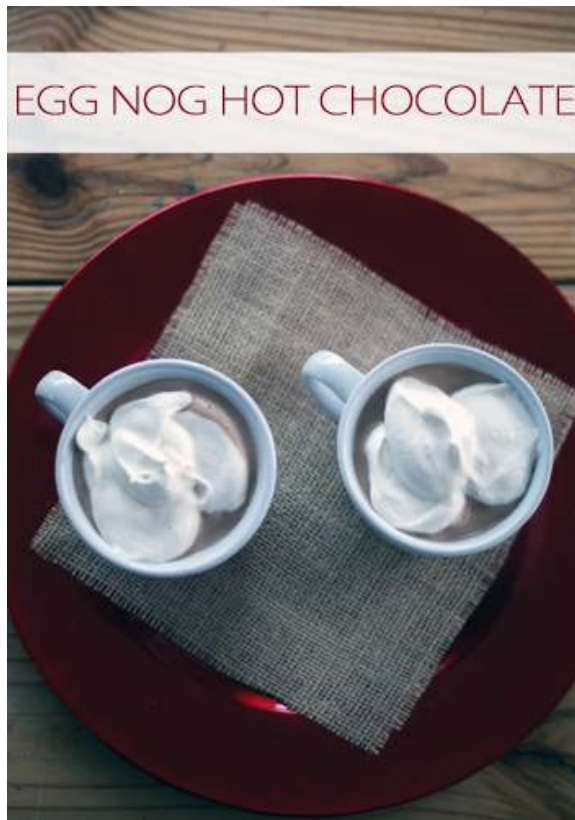
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Remove dough from the fridge, unwrap and roll out on a lightly floured surface until dough is 1/8” thick. Use star cookie cutters to cut out your cookies and place them on parchment paper-lined cookie sheets with plenty of room to spread.

Bake for 10-12 minutes. The edges will look cooked, but the cookies should still be soft in the middle. Move to a wire rack to cool.

Once cooled, outline the cookies with the decorator gel and stack them together, largest to smallest, alternating the points as you go. Break the toothpick in half and stick it halfway into the tiniest star to help hold it up on the top of the tree. Cover gently with plastic wrap if you won’t be eating it right away.

17 :: Eggnog Hot Chocolate



Mmm, this recipe combines two of my favorite holiday drinks—[hot chocolate](#) and [eggnog](#)—into one rich and creamy indulgence!

You could definitely use store-bought eggnog instead, but I don't think anything really compares to the eggnog recipe my friend Barb shared with me last year. On the other hand, if I'm going to make eggnog, I might prefer to just drink it straight and save the stuff in the carton for using in hot chocolate instead.

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup white sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/3 cup water
- 2-1/2 cups [homemade eggnog](#)*
- 1-1/2 cups milk

*You'll want to [pasteurize your eggs](#) when making eggnog for this recipe or, in the words of [Shaina](#), you could end up with scrambled egg hot chocolate instead!

Directions:

Combine cocoa powder, sugar, salt and water in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Let simmer for 1-2 minutes, stirring often.

Add eggnog and milk and continue heating over medium-low until hot.

Top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of nutmeg.

Makes 4 servings.

37 :: Milk Carton Ice Candles



I can clearly remember making these with my mom when I was five or six years old, and even though I only remember one time, I've always had it filed under "holiday traditions" in my memory banks. I had to ask her for the details over the summer because I couldn't remember exactly how we'd made them or even what made them so special!

As it turns out, milk carton ice candles are as simple as they get, but they're so much fun to make! I think I might have the girls make some of these for their Sunday School teachers this year because they were fascinated by the process just like I was.

Supplies:

- paper milk carton*
- crushed ice
- candle wax
- crayons for color (optional)
- essential oils or fragrance (optional)
- wicks
- tin can

*I used a quart cream carton

Directions:

Cut wax into pieces with a paring knife and add to a (clean) tin can. Set the can inside a saucepan and heat over medium-low until the wax melts. (Do not leave the wax unattended while it's heating.) If you want to use crayons for color, add a peeled crayon to the can as well.

While the wax is melting, cut your milk carton to height. Cut wick so that it is 1/2" taller than your carton. Poke a small hole in the bottom of the carton and thread the wick through it just enough to hold the wick in place.

When the wax is ready, fill the carton with crushed ice, holding the wick vertically. Adjust the wick as needed, and then the ice should hold it in place.

Add fragrance to the melted wax. Stir gently with wooden skewer.

Pour the wax carefully into the carton until it just covers the ice.

Set in a bowl or tray (to catch the melting ice) and let harden—about an hour. Peel the cardboard off and let the candle air dry before wrapping.