

## Frosted Nativity Cookies

Cutout cookies at Christmas have been a meaningful tradition in our family for decades. Making, baking, and frosting cookies takes time, so you'll have lots of finger-lickin' fun. With young grandkids, prepare the dough beforehand. Or bake the cookies ahead and just frost and decorate them with your grandkids. During other seasons of the year, cut the cookies into different shapes.

**Difficulty:** 

**Prep time:** Allow several hours to enjoy this activity

**Baking time:** 7 or 8 minutes for each cookie sheet

### Gather with Grandma

#### Cookie dough

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1½ cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. almond flavoring (optional)
- 2¾ cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar
- ½ tsp. salt

#### Frosting

- 2 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened
- 2 T. milk (add 1 more tablespoon at a time if needed)
- 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring
- Food coloring
- Sprinkles

### Make with Grandma

1. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar. Mix in the egg and flavorings.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt.
3. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture and mix well.

4. Divide the cookie dough in half and form it into 2 flat circles.
5. Wrap the dough and refrigerate it for 1 or 2 hours or until it is easy to handle.
6. Preheat the oven to 375°. Spray cookie sheets with nonstick cooking spray.
7. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough about ¼ inch thick. Cut the dough with cookie cutter shapes of your choice. For Christmas, use angels, stars, and other Nativity shapes.
8. Place the cookies on the prepared cookie sheets. Bake the cutouts for 7 or 8 minutes or until light golden brown around the edges.
9. Remove the baking sheet and place it on a cooling rack. When partially cooled, remove the cookies from the baking sheet.
10. To make the frosting, mix together the powdered sugar, butter, milk, and vanilla until smooth and creamy. Add food coloring if desired.
11. Frost and decorate the cookies when completely cool.

*Makes about 5 dozen 2- to 2½-inch cookies*

**Tip:** Select cookie cutters according to the holiday or season.

- Christmas: Nativity-shaped cutters. Order online if you can't find them in stores.
- Valentine's Day: Heart-shaped cookies. Cut the dough into hearts. With a small cookie cutter, cut out centers of half the hearts before baking. After they are baked and cooled, spread a little raspberry jam on the whole cookies. Top them with a cookie with the center cut out. The red jam shows through. Sprinkle with powdered sugar if desired.
- Fall: Leaves, apples, pumpkins, and crescent moon cookies create fun.

### *A Spoonful of Sharing*

While you enjoy cookies and milk, read the Christmas story from the Bible (Luke 2:1-20) or a children's book. Or listen to a recorded version. The grandkids could also use the Nativity-shaped cookies to tell the story of Jesus's birth. Then fill colorful tins with cookies to send home with your grandchildren.