



BETTER THAN A (CHOCOLATE) BAR: PUMPKIN MOLASSES CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Two items that are year-round staples in my pantry are chocolate chips and pumpkin puree. The chocolate chips speak for themselves — how many times have you come home from work or school and decided to whip up a batch of chocolate chip cookies to destress?

But why the pumpkin puree? Beyond pies, pumpkins puree is a featured ingredient in many sweet and savory dishes, such as soups (coconut pumpkin curry), muffins, and lattes. Please note that I'm referring to pure pumpkin puree, not pumpkin pie filling, which already contains sugar and spices. My favorite brand is Farmer's Market Organic Pumpkin should you happen to see it in the baking aisle.

It seems only fitting to marry these two staples in October. After some experimenting, I developed this cookie recipe for a sweet treat, richer than anything you will find among your trick-or-treat treasures.

In terms of taste, it's a cross between your favorite box of crispy spiced wafers and a soft hermit cookie. In terms of texture, the scales tip in favor of the hermit's chewiness. ⚖️

Susan E. Poppiti is a math educator and program manager at Educational Connections. Susan can be reached at spoppiti@hotmail.com.



PUMPKIN MOLASSES CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Ingredients

- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light brown sugar
- 1 jumbo egg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup blackstrap molasses
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup pumpkin puree
- 2 cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Using a hand mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar in a large bowl. Then mix in the egg, molasses, and pumpkin puree.

In a separate bowl, combine the flour, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and baking soda. Gradually incorporate the dry ingredients into the creamed butter and sugar mixture. The dough may appear dry at first but will quickly become slightly sticky, similar to a chocolate chip cookie dough. Then, fold in the chocolate chips.

Spoon the dough onto the baking sheet with a tablespoon and gently flatten the tops. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes and remove to a cooling rack. This recipe will make 2 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen, depending on size.

The deep molasses color and spicy flavor pair well with a Madagascar vanilla bean or butter pecan ice cream.

Have fun baking some homemade treats!