

Christmas Maraschino Cherry Shortbread Cookies

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Presentation & Short Story: These delightful Christmas Maraschino Cherry Shortbread Cookies are like a festive hug for your taste buds! Picture this: a buttery, melt-in-your-mouth shortbread infused with the sweetness of maraschino cherries and the indulgence of chocolate chips. Each bite transports you to a cozy holiday scene, where laughter fills the air and the scent of freshly baked treats lingers. Whether you're gifting them to loved ones or indulging in a quiet moment with a cup of cocoa, these cookies are sure to spark joy and spread Christmas cheer!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup maraschino cherries, chopped (spread cherries on paper towel to drain well or you can use dried maraschino cherries)
- 2/3 cup chocolate chips

Instructions:

1. **Mix flour and salt**, then set aside.
2. **Cream 1 cup unsalted softened butter** with 1/2 cup powdered sugar, and mix in vanilla.
3. Add the **flour and salt mixture** and mix until it starts forming larger clumps.
4. Mix in **chocolate chips and maraschino cherries**.
5. **Form the dough into a log** and press it well (the log

should be about 2 inches thick). Wrap it in plastic wrap and chill in the fridge for at least 1-2 hours.

6. Preheat the oven to 325°F (165°C) and **line a baking sheet with parchment paper**.
7. **Cut the log into 1/4 or 1/3 inch thick slices** (if the slices crumble, press them back together with your hands) and place them onto the baking sheet with one inch of space between.
8. **Bake the cookies** for 10–15 minutes (until they just start to turn lightly golden brown on top).
9. Let them **cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheet** before transferring them to a rack to cool completely.

Notes:

- Ensure the maraschino cherries are well-drained to prevent excess moisture in the dough.
- Press the dough firmly when forming the log to prevent crumbling when slicing.
- Adjust baking time according to your oven's temperature for the perfect golden-brown finish.
- Enjoy these cookies as a delightful treat or package them up for a heartfelt homemade gift! ☐