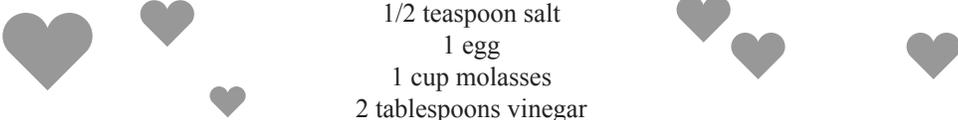


Gingerbread Valentines

Ingredients:



1 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 egg
1 cup molasses
2 tablespoons vinegar
5 cups sifted flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon each of ground ginger, cinnamon, and cloves
1 package red hots candies
1 jar silver ball candy decorations

Procedure:

Thoroughly cream shortening, sugar, and salt. Add egg, molasses, and vinegar. Mix well. Sift together dry ingredients. Add to molasses mixture, mix well. Chill about 3 hours. Roll out, 1/8 inch thick, on lightly floured surface. Trace children's hands onto paper and cut out with scissors. Place paper hands on dough and cut around with a knife. Place on greased cookie sheet and let children decorate their own hands. Use red hots for fingernails, silver balls for rings, etc. Bake at 375 degrees for 6 - 8 minutes, cool on wire rack. Makes about 15 hands.

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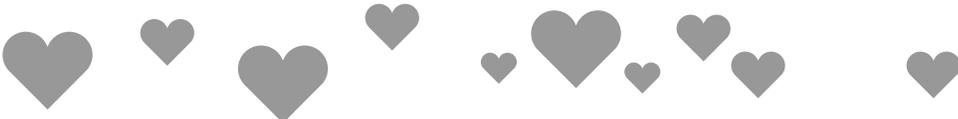
Perfect Peppermint Patties

Ingredients:

1 pound confectioners sugar
3 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
2 to 3 teaspoons peppermint extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup evaporated milk
2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
2 tablespoons shortening

Procedure:

In a bowl, combine first four ingredients. Add milk and mix well. Roll into 1-in balls and place on a waxed paper-lined cookie sheet. Chill for 20 minutes. Flatten with a glass to 1/4 in.; chill for 30 minutes. In a double boiler or microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate chips and shortening. Dip patties; place on waxed paper to harden. Yield: about 5 dozen



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