

Fun-Filled Baking With Kids

(NAPSA)—Baking with kids not only promotes togetherness and family traditions, but it can be a significant learning experience, improving and enhancing math and reading skills, teaching teamwork and discipline and fostering an appreciation of food.

Since the kitchen can be a challenge for children, the first step for parents is to establish some basic ground rules:

- Children should always ask for assistance if using the oven, cooktop, microwave or knives.

- Bakers should always wash hands with soap and water before handling food.

- Bakers should always assemble ingredients and equipment in advance.

- Parents should always have pot holders handy for little hands at work.

- Parents should always explain baking steps in detail, from equipment to ingredients.

To make baking more instructive for kids, choose equipment carefully. Baker's Secret®, for instance, offers a line called Precisionware™, heavy-gauge, nonstick coated metal bakeware with stamped precision guides, among them cookie targets on baking sheets and fill lines on muffin and cake pans.

Taking the guesswork out of baking, these guides specify the proper level of cake and muffin batter and the amount of cookie dough and where it's placed—for uniform results. No overflowing muffins or cakes or cookies that melt together in the oven. Portion guides let kids determine serving



Portion guides will delight kids in the kitchen.

sizes by simply following the markings. It's a system designed to delight parents and youngsters alike.

Here are two kid-friendly recipes perfect for a first experience in the kitchen:

Peanut Butter & Jelly Thumbprints

- ½ cup softened butter
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups flour
- Pinch salt
- ½ cup finely chopped peanuts
- ½ cup jam or jelly

Preheat oven to 350° F. Cream butter and peanut butter together until smooth. Add brown sugar and beat until smooth. Beat in egg, vanilla, mix until light and fluffy. Add sifted flour, salt, mixing constantly until well blended.

Roll dough into one inch balls. Roll each ball over

chopped peanuts and place balls on cookie targets on an ungreased Precisionware cookie sheet. Press thumb into center of dough to make a small indent. Repeat with remaining dough.

Bake about 10-12 minutes, until set and pale golden brown on the edges. Cool on sheet about 5 minutes, and then remove. Fill each cookie with ¼ teaspoon of jam or jelly. Yields 30 cookies.

Orange and Pineapple Muffins

- 1 8½ ounce can crushed pineapple
- ¾ cup milk
- 1 large beaten egg
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon double-acting baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup melted sweet butter

Preheat oven to 400° F. Drain pineapple, reserve juice. Combine pineapple juice, milk, orange peel, beaten egg. Sift flour in large bowl; flour together with sugar, baking powder, salt. Blend in juice-milk mixture, alternating with melted butter. Mix until blended but not overmixed. Stir in drained pineapple.

Pour batter into lightly greased Precisionware muffin pan. Bake 18-22 minutes, until golden brown.

Yield: 12 muffins.