



Maine Holiday Gifts from the Kitchen

Getting Started

The best gifts are those that come from the heart, and nothing expresses that more than a thoughtful gift straight from the kitchen. These gifts tell the recipient how much you think of them.

A homemade gift from the kitchen doesn't need to be fancy or expensive, but it should be something the receiver isn't likely to make for him or herself. Try to match your homemade gift to the types of foods the recipient enjoys.

Presentation

The way a gift is presented is almost as important as the gift itself. If possible, use a container that may be used again after the food you have given has long since disappeared. Yard sales and garage sales are great places to shop for unique containers.

Many types of containers and jars can be easily recycled for gift-giving. Always make sure jars are free of cracks or chips and have tight-fitting, rust-free lids. Metal tins should also be rust-free and have snug covers.

When preparing layered jar mixes, be sure to pack each layer tightly before adding the next layer. Use a large spoon or even a small drinking glass to tightly pack layers of flour or sugar. For ease of packing, wide-mouth jars work the best.

Decorate containers with small kitchen utensils, jingle bells, beads, greenery, dried flowers or cinnamon sticks. Jar lids may also be painted and decorated.

Always include instructions for using and storing any food gifts and it is a good idea to include an ingredients list for anyone with food allergies.

Table of contents



- 2 Minestrone Bean Soup Mix
- 3 Alphabet Soup Mix
- 4 Cranberry Rice Pilaf Mix
- 5 Apple Crisp Topping
- 6 Oatmeal Raisin Muffin Mix
- 7 Cranberry Pecan Muffin Mix
- 8 Oatmeal Raisin Spice Cookie Mix
- 9 Gingerbread Cookie Mix
- 10 Peach Crisp in a Mug
- 11 Granola
- 12 Seasoned Coating Mix for Meat, Poultry, and Fish
- 13 Convenience Salt-Free Seasoning Mix

Minestrone Bean Soup Mix

Ingredients:

- ½ cup brown rice
- ¼ cup dried red kidney beans
- ¼ cup dried Great Northern beans
- ¼ cup dried Yellow Eye beans
- ¼ cup dried split peas
- 1 cup macaroni or other small pasta

Directions:

1. In a quart-sized jar, place the first 5 ingredients in layers.
2. In a separate plastic bag place the macaroni; squeeze out all air and seal.
3. In a separate plastic bag, place the following:
 - 1 tablespoon onion flakes
 - 1 bay leaf
 - ½ teaspoon oregano
 - ½ teaspoon garlic powder
4. Squeeze all air out of the bag and seal.
5. Place the bag of pasta on top of the rice and bean layers; add the bag of spices on top and cover jar with lid.
6. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 6 months.



Alphabet Soup Mix

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups uncooked alphabet pasta
- 2 tablespoons dried vegetable flakes
- 1 teaspoon sodium-free chicken bouillon granules
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup small fish-shaped or cheese crackers

Directions:

1. Use pint-sized wide-mouth jar.
2. Divide pasta and layer half of the pasta, vegetable flakes, bouillon granules, pepper, and remaining pasta in jar.
3. Place crackers in a small food storage bag. Squeeze out air and seal.
4. Add bag of crackers to jar and cover jar with lid.
5. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 6 months.

Cranberry Rice Pilaf Mix

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoon sodium-free chicken bouillon granules
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup chopped dates
- 1 cup long grain converted rice, divided
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries

Directions:

1. Use a wide-mouth pint-sized jar.
2. Place brown sugar and bouillon granules in a small bowl and mix well.
Place this in the bottom of jar. Press in tightly.
3. Place pecans in jar and then dates. Press tightly.
4. Place 1/2 cup rice into the jar.
5. Place the dried cranberries in next and press in tightly.
6. Top with remaining 1/2 cup rice and cover jar with lid.
7. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 3 months.



Apple Crisp Topping Mix

Ingredients:

- ½ cup oats
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg

Directions:

1. Use a wide-mouth pint-sized jar
2. Layer all ingredients in the jar.
3. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use within 2 months

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Oatmeal Raisin Muffin Mix

This recipe makes 4 jars of mix. Give this gift with a new muffin tin or holiday muffin cup liners.

Baking mixture ingredients:

- 4 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup nonfat dry milk
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- ⅓ cup + 1 tablespoon canola oil

Additional ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups rolled oats (not instant)
- ⅓ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Directions:

1. Use 4 quart-sized wide-mouth jars
2. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl and stir.
3. Cut in oil until the mixture is free of lumps.
4. In each quart jar place the following, in layers:
 - 1 ½ cups baking mixture (see above)
 - 1 ½ cups rolled oats (not instant)
 - ⅓ cup sugar
 - ½ teaspoon cinnamon
5. In each of the 4 plastic bags, place ½ cup raisins. Squeeze out air and seal.
6. Add 1 bag of raisins to each jar and cover with jar lid.
7. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Store in the refrigerator and use within 1 month.



Cranberry Pecan Muffin Mix

Ingredients:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped pecans
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup dried cranberries

Directions:

1. Use a quart-sized wide-mouth jar.
2. Layer ingredients in jar in the order given.
3. Pack ingredients down slightly before adding another layer.
4. Cover jar with lid.
5. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 6 months.

Oatmeal Raisin Spice Cookie Mix

Ingredients:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon baking soda
¾ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup sugar
¾ cup raisins or dried cranberries
2 cups uncooked quick oats

Directions:

1. Use a quart-sized wide-mouth jar.
2. Combine flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, and baking soda in a bowl.
3. Layer brown sugar, sugar, dried fruit, oats, and the flour mixture in jar.
4. Press each layer firmly before planning the next ingredient.
5. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 6 months.

Gingerbread Cookie Mix

Ingredients:

3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground allspice

Directions:

1. Use a quart-sized wide-mouth jar.
2. Mix 2 cups of flour with the baking powder and baking soda.
3. Mix remaining 1 ½ cups flour with the spices.
4. Layer the ingredients in the jar starting with the flour and baking powder mixture, followed by the brown sugar and ending with the flour and spice mixture.
5. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use mix within 6 months.

Peach Crisp in a Mug

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons quick oats
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped pecans
- 1 (4 ounce) container peaches in natural juice

Directions:

1. Use one mug.
2. Place dry ingredients inside a snack-sized re-closable bag and place bag in bottom of mug
3. Place the peaches on top of the dry ingredients.
4. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Use within 2 months.

Granola

Ingredients:

3 cups rolled oats
1 cup cornflakes
½ cup toasted wheat germ
¼ cup chopped nuts
½ cup thawed juice concentrate (apple, orange or white grape)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ cup honey
1 ½ cups dried fruit

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Coat cookie sheet with cooking spray.
3. Combine all ingredients, except dried fruit, on cooking sheet.
4. Bake for 30-35 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes.
5. Once cooled, add the dried fruit and mix well.
6. Store in an airtight container.
7. Attach gift tag for final product.

Yield: 6 cups

Store in refrigerator and use within 1 month.

Seasoned Coating Mix for Meat, Poultry, and Fish

Ingredients:

2 cups fine bread crumbs
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon paprika
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
½ teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons butter

Directions:

1. Combine all dry ingredients.
2. Cut in butter thoroughly.
3. Measure out $\frac{3}{4}$ cup mix at a time and store in the refrigerator in either sealed plastic bags or small airtight containers.
4. Attach gift tag instructions.

Yield: 3 cups

Store in refrigerator and use within 1 month.

Convenience Salt-Free Seasoning Mix

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- 1 ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon dill weed
- 2 teaspoons paprika

Directions:

1. Combine all spices in an airtight container.
2. Divide into smaller amounts to give as gifts.
3. Attach gift tag instructions for final product.

Yield: Approximately 4 ½ tablespoons

Use mix within 6 months.



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