

# Holiday Treats

*Sweeten up your Yom Tov with these delicious desserts!*

by Melissa Kaye Apter from *Lil' Miss Cakes*

**M**y favorite part of any holiday is the traditional food, particularly the desserts. But traditional holiday desserts can get a little boring year after year. I like to take the tried and true flavors of each holiday and give them new life.

Rosh Hashana, or the Jewish New Year, is often associated with apples and honey. Every bakery around town offers up its own dense and rich honey cake. I used to feel obligated to bake my family my perfect version of the overly sweet treat, but soon realized that I was the only one eating it. I felt that I needed to start a new tradition and come up with a more updated dessert. Although cupcakes, cake pops, and whoopie pies are all trending right now, a good cookie never goes out of style, so I came up with the idea to bake a honey sweetened sugar cookie. A light and tender cookie is the perfect way to end a big New Years feast. The honey

flavor is mild and delicate but still gives you all the flavor you expect this time of the year.

The holiday of Chanukah, or the Festival of Lights, is defined by two things: potato latkes and sufganiot (jelly doughnuts). Since latkes are not really dessert, there was no other choice but to tackle the amazing jelly doughnut. I am a total doughnut lover. There is no real way to improve on this amazing pastry so I didn't even try. Doughnuts are kind of hard to make at home though, so a jelly doughnut muffin bite seems like a great alternative. These cute treats are really fun and easy to prepare, plus they are baked, not fried, which cuts down on all that greasy oil.

These desserts have all the flavors you and your family crave over the holiday season, but they are much more fun. Don't be afraid to think outside the box and experiment with those seasonal flavors you know and love.

## HONEY SUGAR COOKIES

*Makes about 4½ dozen cookies.*

### INGREDIENTS:

|                                      |                        |  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 cup vegetable shortening           | 1 tsp. vanilla extract | 2 tsp. baking powder                               |
| ¾ cup sugar                          | 1 egg                  | 1½ tsp. cornstarch                                 |
| ¼ cup honey                          | 1 egg yolk             | ½ tsp. salt  |
| 1 Tbs. vanilla bean paste (optional) | 3 cups flour           | Confectioners' sugar,<br>for rolling out the dough |

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Line sheet pan with parchment paper.

In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the shortening, sugar, honey, vanilla paste, and vanilla extract until light and fluffy.

Add in the egg and egg yolk and mix until incorporated.

In a separate bowl mix the flour, baking powder, cornstarch, and salt together.

Add the dry ingredients to the mixer and carefully mix until the dough comes together.

Instead of using flour, use confectioners' sugar to roll out the dough. Roll the dough out thinly and cut out shapes using your favorite cookie cutter. Transfer shapes to parchment lined baking sheet and bake for 7-9 minutes until the edges are lightly brown. Allow to cool completely before enjoying!

**\*TIP:** *These cookies freeze well.*



Photo Credit: Allison Montal



# BAKED JELLY DOUGHNUT BITES

*Makes about 3 dozen donut bites.*

## INGREDIENTS:

1½ cups all purpose flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
¼ tsp salt  
¾ cup sugar  
1 large egg

¼ cup vegetable oil  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
¾ cup soy milk  
4 tbsp margarine, melted  
½ cup sugar, for rolling  
1 Tbs. cinnamon, for rolling  
⅔ cup red jam (raspberry, strawberry, etc.)

## INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly grease a mini muffin tin with cooking spray or vegetable oil.

In a small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt.

In an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the sugar and egg until light yellow in color. Beat in vegetable oil and vanilla extract. Stop the mixer and add in flour mixture. With the mixer running on slow speed, stream in the soy milk and mix until combined.

Divide batter evenly into prepared mini muffin cups, filling each about ¾ full (approx 1 tbsp batter).

Bake for 9-11 minutes, until a tester inserted into the center comes out clean.

Place melted margarine in a small bowl. Mix the sugar and cinnamon for rolling in a small bowl or deep-sided plate.

When the muffins come out of the oven, fit a small piping tip into a piping bag or ziplock bag with the corner cut off and pipe your jam of choice into each muffin.

Brush the tops of each muffin with melted margarine. Remove donuts from pan and roll in cinnamon sugar. Place on a cooling rack to allow sugar to set.

Serve immediately.

*Melissa is a classically trained pastry chef. After realizing her passion for baking and pastry fine arts, she attended the pastry program at the French Culinary Institute in NYC. She went on to work at a local bakery for almost 10 years, and then started her own custom cake company, Lil' Miss Cakes. She specializes in making your dessert dreams a reality! Contact Melissa by emailing [melissa@lilmisscakes.com](mailto:melissa@lilmisscakes.com), or visit her website at [www.lilmisscakes.com](http://www.lilmisscakes.com).*

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