

Have a Holly Jolly Cookbook

It's the tastiest time of the year! Enjoy the holidays at home with divine recipes that will brighten your table and heart.

BY HANNAH STRANDBERG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAYLA GALLAGHER

Light up your holiday foodscape with Christmas Light Oreo Bites. Not to mention, they'll add a delicious splash of color to your holiday drop-off gift baskets.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS, and this year, we may be home a little more than usual. So let's really spruce things up! Holiday baking fills the home and heart with nostalgia and warmth. Lucky for us, author of *Unicorn Food* and *Mermaid Food*, Cayla Gallagher, is back in the kitchen with the third book in her Whimsical Treats cookbook series, *Reindeer Food: 85 Festive Sweets and Treats to Make a Magical Christmas*. This winter, follow her journey to new realms of sweetened confectionery goodness.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

Gallagher separates her journey into five chapters: Cakes, Cookies, Candy, Other Treats and Extras, and Drinks. Within each chapter, Gallagher shares her best tips for frosting, food coloring, decorating and more. She's created an assortment of recipes that both beginners and pros will enjoy following. If there's one sure thing about cooking with Gallagher, it's this: Your holiday table will look (and taste) better than ever before!

WHAT WE'RE MAKING

A standout recipe from Gallagher's cookbook is her Wintry Snowstorm Cake. Packed with flavor from frozen blueberries, fresh strawberries and cream cheese frosting made from scratch, it's a unique cake that will make any winter festivity feel special. "If you love the holidays, but aren't necessarily a fan of classic holiday flavors, this cake is for you," Gallagher says.

Another favorite is her Christmas Bauble Cakelettes. "These pretty little ornaments are essentially jumbo cake pops. They are coated in a beautiful metallic chocolate coating and will look very at home on your holiday dessert plate!" Gallagher says. They'd look darling in a gift basket or as an accent on a holiday charcuterie board. However you choose to display them, these bauble cakelettes will add sophistication galore.

"This recipe is one of my first that went viral on Instagram—everyone thought I was pouring Christmas candies into macaroni and cheese!" Gallagher says. In reality, Christmassy Rocky Road Fudge is a sweet concoction filled with white chocolate, macadamia nuts and all the Christmas-themed candies you desire.

Christmassy Rocky Road Fudge

MAKES 2 (9X9-INCH) PANS

This recipe is one of my first that went viral on Instagram—everyone thought I was pouring Christmas candies into macaroni and cheese! In reality, this is a sweet, chocolaty, peppermint slice of goodness. I have been known to eat an entire batch myself, so exercise caution when nibbling. It can be addictive!

- 4¾ cups good-quality white chocolate
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- ½ cup corn syrup
- 3 teaspoons pure peppermint extract
- ½ cup macadamia nuts
- 1¼ cups Christmas-colored candies (+ extra for topping)
- 5 cups mini marshmallows
- Candy cane and gingerbread man icing decorations

1. Place the white chocolate, butter, and corn syrup in a pot over medium-low heat. Stir consistently until completely melted. Don't worry if the chocolate and butter have separated.

2. Remove from the heat, and stir the mixture with a spatula or a whisk until the chocolate and butter have fully combined. Add the peppermint extract and allow it to slightly cool. Add the macadamia nuts, Christmas candies and marshmallows, and mix until just combined. Pour the mixture into a square aluminum container, and sprinkle some extra candies and cute icing decorations (mine look like candy canes and gingerbread men) on top. Cover with aluminum foil and place this in the freezer until set, about 1 to 2 hours.

3. Slice the rocky road into bite-sized squares, and you're done! Note: Beware, you will eat this so quickly without realizing it—it's probably the most addictive dessert I've ever made!



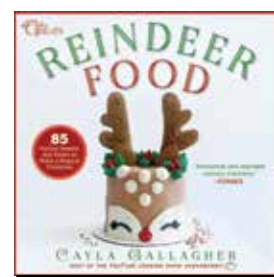
Last but not least (seriously, there's plenty more where this deliciousness came from), how could we not mention the Eggnog Pancakes? If you're looking for an exciting new holiday classic, fire up the griddle and pour new life into a timeless holiday ingredient. "Pancakes are one of my favorite breakfast foods, and these are extra festive, making them perfect for Christmas morning! Both the batter and the glaze contain eggnog, guaranteeing you tons of flavor," Gallagher says.

LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN

In Gallagher's kitchen, the possibilities are endless. Learn how to frost a vanilla cranberry cake to resemble a cable knit sweater. Discover Peppermint Hot Chocolate Cookies topped with toasted marshmallows. Weave dough into cookie-sized edible stockings. Up your winter cocktail game with homemade Champagne Gummy Bears dusted with edible gold-leaf flakes.

Try something new this season with Cayla Gallagher's *Reindeer Food: 85 Festive Sweets and Treats to Make a Magical Christmas*, available to preorder now. Gallagher's fun recipes provide the perfect foundation for a cozy, vibrant Christmas at home. Find your new family favorite dessert, and savor every minute spent baking warmth into the frostiest season of the year.

"Once you taste whipped ganache, you'll never go back to regular ganache again!"



Reprinted with permission from *Reindeer Food: 85 Festive Sweets and Treats to Make a Magical Christmas* by Cayla Gallagher, published by Skyhorse Publishing, October 2020; skyhorsepublishing.com.



1. These jiggly Red, Green and White Christmas Jellies will put a spring in your step and a smile on your face. After five easy steps, you'll have a tasty delicacy to share with the family.

2. Put a magical twist on rice-cereal treats with Crispy Christmas Trees. They're simple to make and a fun activity for all ages. Plus, "If you'd rather not use a stovetop, step 1 can be done in a microwave-safe bowl," Gallagher says.

3. This deliciously layered crepe cake masquerades as Santa's Christmas sack. For those with a love of fruity, sugary goodness, the Santa Sack Red Velvet Crepe Cake is for you.

4. Weave cookie dough into delectable Woven Stocking Cookies you know Santa (and everyone) will love.

5. Love breakfast food and eggnog? Make your holiday dreams come true and combine the two. Both the batter and the glaze contain eggnog, guaranteeing lots of flavor, Gallagher says.