



CELEBRATION PANCAKE MIX

Add a bottle of maple syrup to the gift basket, and you've turned someone's breakfast into something special. Store the mix, which is based on a recipe from Pillsbury, in pint jars so it's easy to measure the correct amount when making the pancakes.

Makes about 5 pints

8 cups sifted all-purpose flour
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 cup nonfat dry milk powder
1/3 cup baking powder
1/4 cup sugar
1 tbsp. salt
2 cups vegetable shortening

To make the mix:

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl. Use a whisk to blend well. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender or forks until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Measure 2-cup portions into pint jars. Cover tightly and store at room temperature up to 6 weeks for best quality.

To make the pancakes:

Lightly whip 1 large egg with 1 cup water. Whisk in 2 cups pancake mix. Spray a griddle with non-stick cooking spray and heat to medium-high. Use a 1/4-cup measuring cup to pour batter onto hot griddle, forming 4-inch pancakes. Cook 2 to 3 minutes per side. Cakes are ready to flip when air bubbles break on the surface and do not fill in with batter.



CRUNCHY CALIFORNIA GRANOLA

Makes 4 quarts

- 1 1/2 cups walnut halves*
- 1 cup whole almonds, with skins*
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter*
- 1/4 cup orange juice*
- 1/3 cup honey, at room temperature*
- 1/2 tsp. salt (optional)*
- 9 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
(not quick-cooking or stone cut)*
- 1 1/2 cups toasted pine nuts or pumpkin seeds*
- 1 1/2 cups coarsely chopped dates*
- 1 cup dried currants*
- 1 cup chopped dried cherries*

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line 2 large baking sheets with foil. Place walnuts and almonds on 1 sheet and toast until lightly browned, about 10 minutes. When cool enough to handle, chop nuts coarsely.

Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees. Melt butter in microwave. Whisk orange juice, honey and salt into melted butter. Spread oats in even layers over 2 lined baking sheets. Drizzle butter mixture evenly over oats. Lightly toss oats with a spatula so they are evenly coated. Toast in oven until lightly browned, about 30 minutes. Halfway through cooking time, rotate pans and lightly toss oats so they brown evenly. Cool to room temperature. Add chopped nuts, pine nuts, dates, currants and dried cherries. Toss gently to blend.

When completely cooled, oats will become crisp. Transfer to jars with tight-fitting lids.



CHAI TEA MIX

Give special friends a jar of chai tea mix and they'll think warm thoughts of you every time they wrap their fingers around a steaming mug of this spicy, fragrant beverage.

Makes about 6 pints

2 cups dry milk powder
1 cup French vanilla flavored non-dairy creamer
2 1/2 cups sugar
2 cups unsweetened instant tea
1 tbsp. ground ginger
1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
1 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
1 tsp. ground cardamom

To make the mix:

In a large bowl, use a whisk to thoroughly blend all ingredients. Add ingredients, 1 cup at a time, to a blender or food processor. Blend until mixture is the consistency of fine powder. Store in pint jars with tight-fitting lids. If you use nonfat dry milk powder, reduce the amount to 1 cup and add 1 cup powdered non-dairy creamer.

To make the tea:

Stir 2 heaping tbsp. mix into a mug of hot water.



SAVORY SPLIT PEA SOUP

Suggest to your gift recipients that they add a bit of leftover ham or chicken when making this recipe. They'll have a hearty, thick soup simmering in no time.

Makes about 5 pints

- 1 (16-oz.) package dried green split peas*
- 1 (16-oz.) package dried lentils*
- 1 (16-oz.) package pearl barley*
- 2 cups orzo (rice-shaped pasta)*
- 1 cup dried onion flakes*
- 1 tbsp. celery seed*
- 1/2 cup parsley flakes*
- 1 1/2 tsp. thyme*
- 1 1/2 tsp. pepper*

To make the mix:

Mix all ingredients together. Store in pint jars with tight-fitting lids.

To make the soup:

In a large pan, combine 2 cups soup mix with 8 cups water or broth. Add 2 cups chopped, cooked meat, if desired. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer gently for 45 to 60 minutes or until peas are tender. Season with salt, if desired. This soup can also be made in a slow cooker; set on low and cook for 8 hours.