

Cookie recipe

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 teaspoons almond extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon red food coloring
- 24 pieces round peppermint candy
- 1/4 cup sugar
- Melted chocolate, for drizzling, optional

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a mixer bowl or by hand, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in egg, almond extract, vanilla, and salt. Blend flour into mixture in several additions, beat until just combined.

Remove half the dough from the bowl. Blend red food coloring into the half remaining in the bowl until the coloring is even. Cover dough a kitchen towel to keep it from drying out as you work. Use a floured teaspoon to measure 1 teaspoon each of white and red dough for each cookie. Roll into 4-inch ropes on a lightly floured surface. Place a red and white rope side-by-side, press together lightly and twist to form a spiral. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Curve top down to form handle of a candy cane. Bake until set, about 9 minutes. While the cookies are baking, put peppermint candies in a resealable plastic bag and crush into small pieces with a rolling pin. Mix the candy with the sugar. Place cooling rack over shallow pan. Immediately remove cookies from cookie sheet and gently place onto cooling rack. Sprinkle with candy/sugar mixture.