

Jell-O cookies satisfy our nostalgic craving

Recipe was result of sugar rationing during World War II

I kind of miss Jell-O. Oh, of course, you can still buy a box — in almost any fruity flavor you want. You can even buy the little cups of premade gelatin in the refrigerator



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HOME PLATES

aisle. But I miss the infinite ways our moms and grandmothers used Jell-O. I miss parfaits with Cool Whip, cherry Jell-O with banana slices and cottage cheese salad. When I go to a potluck these days, I'm disappointed no one brings Jell-O anything.

My kids aren't exactly Jell-O-deprived. They'll likely remember the dinosaur-shaped jigglers I cut out of pans of cherry gelatin or the poke cakes made with the colorful stuff. But I do worry we've raised a generation or two who've never eaten frozen Jell-O salad.

Barbara Smith wanted to carry on tradition by introducing her grandkids to the Jell-O cookies she made as a young woman. Smith remembers the cookies as a product of wartime rationing. Sugar was limited, but the powdered mix includes sugar.

The cookie recipes several of you sent include added sugar, but Smith can easily adjust the amount to make the cookies she remembers. Plates regular Debbie Westhafer-Schoonmaker found the recipe on the Kraft website at www.kraftrecipes.com. Barbara Beebe sent a magazine ad that features the recipes. Faith, from Concord, found it in a history of Jell-O.

I couldn't quite envision what the cookies would look like, but they're actually quite pretty and springlike, dusted with extra gelatin on top. There's a slight variation in the recipes readers sent. Both call for the same basic ingredients — flour, baking powder, butter, sugar, Jell-O

Jell-O Pastel Cookies

Note: Use the smaller amount of flour for drop cookies, the larger amount for pressed cookies.

3½ to 4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1½ cups butter or margarine, softened
1 cup sugar
2 3-ounce packages Jell-O (the same flavor), divided
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix together flour and baking powder. Set aside.

2. In a large bowl, beat butter or margarine with mixer until creamy. Add sugar and one package of Jell-O. Beat until light and fluffy.

3. Blend in egg and vanilla, then gradually add flour mixture.

4. Either shape dough into 1-inch balls and place 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet or force dough through a cookie press onto ungreased baking sheets. Sprinkle cookies with remaining dry Jell-O.

5. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, until the edges are lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets 3 minutes, then remove to wire racks to cool completely.

— Jell-O

can find the sugar at Lucky's.

"I am fascinated by all sorts of sugars, and I remember how excited I was when I found my first box of Billington's," she says. "It is not cheap, over \$3 a box."

Another reader found it in stock at Lunardi's in San Jose (\$3.39).

Camille, in Menlo Park, says Anderson should shop online.

"You can get it at Amazon for \$2.10 per box, although you do have to purchase 10 at a time," Camille says. "If you spend \$25, Amazon will ship for free, which is cheaper than driving to the local market."

Finding the sugar is worth the effort, Camille says: "It is indeed terrific. We use it every day in our coffee. Who needs to pay for fancy coffee when you have all that rich, dark goodness at home? Karen is correct that this sugar is also