

HEALTHIER HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE • MINDFUL EATER • MAGIC OF HOLIDAY COOKIES

# MORSEL

neighborhood.coop

Fall 2022



FREE



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Fall 2022

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# Contributors

**FRANCIS MURPHY**

General Manager

[francis@neighborhood.coop](mailto:francis@neighborhood.coop)

**MONICA TICHENOR**

Freelance Writer

**RICHARD THOMAS**

Board President



## {Co-op Throw Back}

Pictured above is the 2015 iteration of what was known as the Super Sale, which began as an annual event in October 2010 when we set up an 1800-square-foot tent in our parking lot and built a second grocery store inside of it. For various reasons, we ended that version after 2016 and moved it indoors. Now renamed the Stock Up Sale, this year's sale will take place over a week, from Saturday, October 15 through Friday, October 21. The scope of the sale will include grocery case stack displays in the front window run as well as beautiful produce displays in front of the store.

# MORSEL

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF  
**NEIGHBORHOOD CO-OP GROCERY**

**DIRECTOR OF DESIGN**

Amy Dion

[amy@neighborhood.coop](mailto:amy@neighborhood.coop)

**ADVERTISING**

[info@neighborhood.coop](mailto:info@neighborhood.coop)

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Morsel is a quarterly magazine produced by Neighborhood Co-op as a means to share news from the Co-op, promote local food, celebrate the seasons, and inspire our owners and patrons to enjoy a healthy lifestyle full of delicious and nutritious food. The views expressed in Morsel are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Co-op's directors, staff, or ownership. Health and nutrition articles are for informational purposes only and do not constitute medical advice.

**SUBMISSION POLICY**

Morsel accepts submissions on an ongoing basis. Letters, articles, artwork and ideas are all welcome! We reserve the right to edit content for brevity and clarity. Please send inquiries and submissions to [amy@neighborhood.coop](mailto:amy@neighborhood.coop).

**OUR STORE**

1815 W Main Street, Carbondale, IL 62901

Neighborhood Co-op is a cooperative grocery store owned by members of our very own community. Most of our staff are even owners! We are a founding member of the National Cooperative Grocers, a network of more than 200 cooperative grocery stores all across America. We combine our buying power to bring you the best food at the best value while staying locally governed. We work hard to support our community and improve our local food system.

**OUR MISSION**

Neighborhood Co-op Grocery aims to serve the needs of its owners and patrons by providing wholesome foods, economically, in the cooperative tradition and in ways that best promote the health of the individual, the community and the earth.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Generally, meetings are held in the Co-op Community Room once a month at 6p.m.

Contact the Board at:

[boardlink@neighborhood.coop](mailto:boardlink@neighborhood.coop)

Sage Banks

Lauren Bonner

Quiana Enge

Amy Etcheson

Ron Mahoney

Erika Peterson

Jak Tichenor

Richard Thomas

Barbara James

**QUESTIONS**

Email: [info@neighborhood.coop](mailto:info@neighborhood.coop) or call 618.529.3533 x201

**ECO PRINTING**

This magazine was printed by ModernLitho. They are certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) and by the Forestry Stewardship Council® (FSC®) for their efforts in utilizing papers originating from a sustainable, ecological source and for maintaining rigorous processes, procedures and training to ensure their standards of excellence and environmental responsibility.

# Sales & Events

at the Co-op

## OCTOBER

- 05** **Wellness Wednesday**  
*10% off all wellness items!*
- 15** **Empty Bowls**  
*SIU students will be selling handmade ceramic bowls as a fundraiser.*
- 15** **Stock Up Sale**  
*Our big fall sale has transformed to a Stock-Up Sale! Save on many staple items throughout the store.*
- 21**
- 29** **Murdale Safe Halloween**  
*Put on your costume and trick-or-treat at the Co-op and Murdale Shopping Center.*

## NOVEMBER

- 01** **OWNER APPRECIATION**  
**31** **MONTH**
- Owner Appreciation**  
*Owners receive a 10% off coupon good toward any one transaction they choose during the month of November.*
- 02** **Wellness Wednesday**  
*10% off all wellness items!*
- 24** **Thanksgiving Day**  
*Co-op is closed in observance of the Holiday*

## DECEMBER

- 05** **Wellness Wednesday**  
*10% off all wellness items!*
- 25** **Christmas Day**  
*Co-op is closed in observance of the Holiday*





FRANCIS MURPHY

# GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT



## **Patronage Dividends**

The practice of distributing patronage dividends has a long and auspicious history among cooperatives of all types. The idea is simple in theory. The co-op takes the net income arising from owner transactions and allocates this income on a strictly proportional basis back to those whose business transactions have produced the income. Usually, some significant portion of the allocation is retained by the co-op for as long as it may be needed for capital purposes.

Patronage dividends offer significant tax benefits to the co-op and its owners. Amounts allocated to owners are deductible to the co-op, even if a small part of that allocation is currently distributed, while owners need not include any part of the allocation in their taxable income. Earnings allocated as patronage dividends are therefore not taxable to the co-op or its owners.

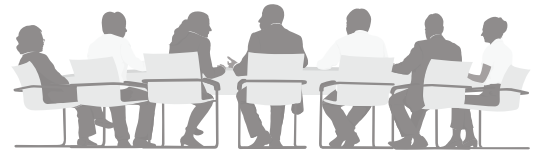
Thanks to your support, the Co-op had one of its most profitable years in the fiscal year that ended on December 31, 2021. A good deal of the net income was also due to the forgiveness of our Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan and receiving Employee Retention Credits (ERC) from the federal government. Net income before taxes was \$448,915. The portion of the net profit that was attributable to owner purchases was approximately 52% of sales. After a reduction for a reserve, based on the portion of the net income attributable to owner purchases, the Board declared a patronage dividend totaling \$124,035, with 20% or \$24,807 being distributed as store credit and 80% or \$99,228 being retained by the Co-op. They also decided on a \$2 minimum distribution which included 1,714 owners in the payout.

Owners receiving a patronage dividend have had a store credit associated with their owner number at the cash registers since September 15. The store credit can be applied to purchases, received in cash, or donated back to the Co-op. Whichever way you choose to use your store credit, you will need to do it within 90 days of September 15, 2022. Store credits not used by December 14, 2022 will revert back to the Co-op. For a store credit not claimed by this cutoff, the Co-op may decide to keep the funds and pay taxes on them or direct the funds to charity or other purpose.

Your continued support has allowed the Co-op to increase its profitability and to return a portion of that profit to its owners. Specific information on the amount of your total purchases and the calculation of your patronage dividend, as well as some frequently asked questions, are on the back of the letter that was mailed in September. Thank you for shopping at your co-op!

## **Home Rule in Carbondale**

Please see the excellent article in this issue regarding home rule in Carbondale by Richard Thomas, the Co-op's board chair. I would just like to add my voice here in support of the City maintaining home rule status through a voter referendum this November. While the Co-op had to spend \$100,000 in 2017 in order to accommodate additional sales taxes passed by the City Council, I feel that those additional revenues have been well spent on significant capital projects that have improved Carbondale as a place to live and do business. Moreover, loss of City services, like fire and police protection, could have a serious impact on the Co-op and other businesses in town.



# Home Rule In Carbondale

by **Richard Thomas**

Residents of Carbondale are facing a critical referendum vote in this coming November's election on whether to maintain Carbondale's home rule status. The outcome will have important implications not just for Carbondale, but for the whole region. I recently spoke to Gary Williams, Carbondale's City Manager, about the implications of this vote. What follows is a brief summary of that conversation.

Carbondale has been a home rule community since 1972. As Gary Williams says, "A home rule community has the authority to solve problems locally. Without home rule status, a city only has those powers granted to it by the State legislature. Home rule, with some preemptions, allows local elected officials to develop policies and ordinances tailored to their individual community. In a nutshell, HR provides local control to cities." Many of our surrounding communities have home rule.

Home rule status happens automatically when a city's population reaches 25,000. Carbondale's population dropped below 25,000 in the last decadal census and in order to retain home rule status there must be a referendum. That referendum will be on the ballot in the November 8th election. Voters will be asked "shall the City cease to be a home rule unit?". A NO response means you want home rule, a YES vote means you want to lose home rule.

To quote Gary Williams again, "The State sales tax is 6.25% and there are 2.5% of HR taxes. The City collects around \$9 million in HR sales tax. In contrast, the City levies only \$1,035,000 in real estate taxes, which amounts to around 3% of your total real estate tax bill. So, the important thing to know is that if the City loses HR and the respective sales tax revenue, real estate tax will be the main source of income."

The home rule sales tax amounts to about one-third of the total general fund revenue. It is important to note that Carbondale residents and nonresidents pay this tax, and well over half of that tax revenue comes from nonresidents, which has the

effect of keeping Carbondale property taxes lower than they otherwise would be. Loss of this revenue will result in very significant losses of services and programs. By far the biggest items in the budget are fire and police services. Not many of us could maintain our current standard of living with the loss of a third of our income.

Home rule status provides Carbondale with the ability to fund capital projects such as the Multimodal Station, bike paths, and the Chautauqua roundabout. It allows the city to regulate rental properties, which make up over 70% of the city's homes. Without home rule even the ability to change speed limits in local neighborhoods in response to requests from residents would go away. These and many other things that make Carbondale a desirable place to live, work, and study are possible thanks to home rule.

Detailed information on the budgetary consequences of losing home rule status may be found at the Carbondale city council website: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/coc/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CEQJX4D7988>





**What does it mean if I vote “Yes” on the home rule referendum question?**

Voting “yes” means that you want the City of Carbondale to lose home rule status.

**What does it mean if I vote “No” on the home rule referendum question?**

Voting “no” means that you want the City of Carbondale to keep home rule status.

**How much does the City expect to lose in sales taxes annually if home rule status is revoked?**

\$19.1 million, or 33% of total revenues.

**Does home rule authority mean higher property taxes?**

No, studies have shown that in states granting more municipal discretion, municipalities impose lower property taxes and less total taxes. Currently, Carbondale’s portion of a resident’s real estate tax bill is approximately 3%. Carbondale has maintained the same annual levy amount since 2000. The City Council has been able to keep the levy flat by utilizing other sales tax revenues, which are also generated by non-residents.

**If the City loses home rule status will my property taxes go up?**

It depends. If the City loses home rule and residents want to keep their same level of service, a person with a \$100,000 home could expect that their City portion of the real estate tax bill could increase by as much as \$1,400 annually. This would be the only tool for the City to recoup the loss of sales taxes that would no longer be available as a non-home rule community. Another way to balance the budget would be to reduce services, which could include police, fire, and street maintenance.

**Are there other home rule communities in Southern Illinois?**

Yes, Murphysboro, Marion, Carterville, Crainville, Herrin, DuQuoin, Elkhart, West Frankfort, Johnston City, Benton, Mt. Vernon, Muddy, Mound City, Christopher, Sparta, and Sesser are many of the home rule communities within our region.

**Do Home Rule municipalities have unlimited powers?**

No, home rule powers are limited. All regulations must relate to local government and affairs and not conflict with laws already exclusive to the State government. Home rule authority allows communities to choose how they want to govern themselves versus statewide elected officials making those decisions.

**How does home rule authority affect funding for local schools?**

Home rule has no effect on Carbondale school districts as they are independent taxing bodies that provide for their own funding through property tax. However, the tax advantages of home rule have benefited Carbondale schools. In 1999, the City of Carbondale and Carbondale High School entered into an agreement for the City to provide \$16 million in funding for a new community high school. To meet this financial obligation, the City exercised its home rule powers and adopted a one-quarter percent sales tax to provide the needed revenue. This finance strategy allowed CCHS to move forward with the project without raising property taxes.

**What kinds of citizen requests can be granted by home rule?**

One of the most common concerns voiced to the City is speeding in neighborhoods. Home rule has allowed Carbondale to lower the speed limit to 25 mph in certain neighborhoods following citizen requests. If Carbondale loses home rule, they will no longer be able to address this concern.

**How do residents oversee the use of home rule?**

Citizens are encouraged to participate in City Council meetings. In the meetings, citizens may address the Council with any concerns they have. All documents are published to the City website prior to the meeting. Also, citizens can contact Council members and City employees via email or phone. For more information on home rule units of government, please visit [ilga.gov](http://ilga.gov).



# Cheers to a Healthier Holiday Experience

by **Monica Tichenor**

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'Tis the season to be merry – or is it stressed out and exhausted? If the dizzying array of costumes, holiday decorations, and gift ideas crowding your social media newsfeeds and favorite brick-and-mortar stores are making you feel a bit panicked, you're not alone.

Unrealistic holiday expectations and obligations can trigger anxiety, loneliness, and feelings of missing the mark when it comes to creating a “perfect” holiday experience (which doesn't actually exist). Grief over lost loved ones or the lack of close social connections is also heightened during the holiday season. We're also bombarded with contradictory messaging about what we should or shouldn't consume, setting up a guilt-inducing relationship with food and our own bodies that can impact our health and well being.

You can flip the harried holiday script by simply not accepting it in the first place. Not everyone's idea of a fun holiday is packed with decorations, gifts, big dinners, and parties. Perhaps yours is quiet, uneventful, and not particularly festive by conventional standards – or you've experienced a traumatic event and don't have the emotional bandwidth to celebrate. That's perfectly acceptable, too.

Setting boundaries and making small adjustments, like those listed below, can help you manage the demands of the season, so you're better positioned to create the more authentic holiday experience you envision and find joy, even in the hard moments.

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# Tips for a Healthier Holiday Season

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**Plan, but be flexible** – Making a “to-do” list is a reasonable thing to do to help manage a busy holiday season, but keep the list simple – and don’t be afraid to drop a few tasks if you’re feeling overwhelmed. Be flexible. People get sick. Flights are canceled. Your new recipe may crash and burn. Or, as in our case one Christmas Eve, your oven might quit working and you’re forced to find charcoal and lighter fluid at a convenience store (miraculously open at midnight), so you can finish cooking the turkey!

**Set a budget and buy local** – If you’re buying gifts for family and friends, set a specific budget and stick to it. Gifts don’t have to be expensive to be meaningful. Consider making a charitable donation in the name of a philanthropic friend or buy a local handmade item. The annual Southern Illinois Alternative Gift Fair and Holiday Art & Craft Sale at the SIU Student Center are great places to find unique, one-of-a-kind gifts with long-term impact.

**Adjust your attitude** – You don’t owe anyone a perfect holiday, especially since there’s no such thing. Enjoy a more realistic holiday experience by focusing on doing fewer things with love, affection, and intention, not perfection.

**Accept your feelings** – If you’re grieving the loss of a loved one, struggle with depression, or have the holiday blues, be kind to yourself by allowing yourself to feel what you feel, without judgment. Cry, yell, or write out your emotions. Be specific with others about what you need and don’t apologize for doing so. Do something kind for another person. If intense despair and hopelessness are making it difficult for you to care for yourself, reach out to a support group or someone you trust.

**Take breaks from your extracurricular schedule** – Overextending yourself is exhausting and harmful. For the sake of your physical and mental health, practice saying “No” without apology. Ask yourself what activities are most important to you. Do they bring you joy? Focus on those activities and let the others go.

**Enjoy favorite holiday foods** – Food is not your enemy. What is most satisfying to you? Listen to your body and enjoy eating favorite foods in moderation. The holidays are a time of celebration. It’s okay to enjoy an iced cookie or a slice of your mom’s apple pie on Christmas Day.

**Don’t skip meals** – Eating at regular intervals helps to maintain steady blood sugar and energy levels. Prepare single-serving meals and snacks ahead of time for quick access from the fridge (or from the freezer into the microwave) when you’re pressed for time.

**Make time for sleep!** – Maintain a consistent sleep routine, such as avoiding electronic devices an hour before bedtime, turning out the lights by 10:30pm, and abstaining from food or drink after a certain time to minimize heartburn and extra trips to the bathroom.

**Move your body** – Your body is a wondrous gift, not an unruly adversary in need of punishment. Excessive exercise, especially late in the day, can trigger the release of high amounts of the hormone cortisol, which can raise blood sugar, cause fat storage around your middle, and disrupt sleep. Engage in simple activities that bring you joy instead. Bundle up for a hike or a neighborhood walk in the crisp air. Turn up the music and dance as you clean the house.

**Stop and breathe** – Find a quieter place, sit in a comfortable chair, with feet flat on the floor and hands on your lap. Close your eyes and try the 4-7-8 breathing technique. Breathe in for four counts, hold for seven counts, exhale for eight counts. Do this several times. Visualize breathing in calm and exhaling stress or negative self-talk. Repeat as necessary.







# Uh-oh, You've Overdone It

**Had a little too much to eat or drink at a party? Don't panic – and don't beat yourself up over it. You are human. We all occasionally overindulge. Let it go and treat yourself kindly by doing things that make you feel better. A few tips:**

- If you've had too many cocktails, the most important action you can take is to stay out of the driver's seat. For your own safety and the safety of others, let a designated driver take you home or call a trusted friend or family member to pick you up.
- If you're uncomfortably full, go for an easy 10-to-15-minute walk, which aids digestion and can help stabilize blood sugar. Check out the holiday decorations in your neighborhood. While you stroll, savor the memory of the delicious food you've enjoyed or name three things for which you are grateful.
- Drink a cup of herbal tea. Ginger and peppermint teas can help to ease an unhappy stomach. Or try chewing fennels seeds, which can relieve nausea, bloating, and gas pain.
- Sip water slowly, which can help flush out excess sodium. You might also try sipping small amounts of electrolyte-infused beverages like Pedialyte Sport® or Gatorade®, which can rebalance electrolyte levels and ease headaches, nausea, dizziness, and fatigue.
- Detoxify by drinking warm lemon water or warm apple cider vinegar water the next morning. Lemon water: Squeeze one lemon into 12-ounces of warm water. Apple Cider Vinegar water: Add 1 tablespoon of organic apple cider vinegar in 12-ounces of warm water. Add a touch of maple syrup, if the taste is too strong.
- Lighten up at breakfast. Try a smoothie with fresh spinach or kale, fresh fruit like bananas or mangoes, coconut milk/water, and protein powder. Add a pinch of ginger to relieve any lingering nausea.



# The Mindful Eater

## How to Heal Your Relationship with Food

by **Monica Tichenor**

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well," wrote English author Virginia Woolf in her essay "A Room of One's Own". Although this popular quote has been taken a bit out of context (Ms. Woolf's essay focuses on the impact of gender inequalities on a woman's ability to pursue her talents), I think her observation highlights a broader fundamental truth: food plays a central role in the human experience.

Think about all the ways in which food helps to mark significant milestones. Birthdays, graduations, weddings, anniversaries, holiday gatherings, family reunions, retirements, memorials – these and so many other special occasions are made more meaningful and memorable by favorite foods and recipes, often passed down through generations.

Eating should make us feel good – and often, it does just that. Unfortunately, we also live in a diet-obsessed culture that prioritizes weight loss over wellness. This unhealthy approach to food can trigger emotional eating behaviors like "yo-yo" dieting and binge eating, which leaves many of us feeling out of control, hungry, depleted, sick, and ashamed.

If you're struggling with disordered eating patterns and want to develop a more joyful and balanced relationship with food, especially as we

approach the holiday season (a time fraught with anxiety about overeating), you might want to try mindful eating.

### What is Mindful Eating?

Mindful eating stems from the broader Buddhist philosophy of mindfulness, a form of meditation that teaches people how to be less reactive to situations by focusing on the present moment and the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that accompany it.

To eat mindfully is to engage your senses and tune in to your thoughts and emotions while you eat, says Dr. Susan Albers, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist at the Cleveland Clinic and a *New York Times* best-selling author on mindful eating (eatingmindfully.com).

"Mindful eating is about awareness," writes Dr. Albers. "When you eat mindfully, you slow down, pay attention to the food you're eating, and savor every bite."

Robin Ridgely, a Family Life Educator for the University of Illinois Extension Service for Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, and Williamson Counties, endorses Dr. Albers' mindful eating approach and cites her work as an inspiration.

"I like how she defines mindful eating, which is more about how you eat than what you eat," says Robin, who also presents mindful eating workshops for Southern Illinois Healthcare's Second Act program. "Dr. Albers calls this intuitive eating, which teaches you to trust your internal

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hunger and fullness cues to help you decide what and how much to eat. Studies show this eating style is associated with positive body image and self-esteem.”

## Dieting vs. Mindful Eating

At one time or another, we’ve probably all counted calories, measured portions, or eliminated certain foods in an effort to lose weight, whether we’re trying to make a permanent change or just want to fit into an outfit for a special event. But diets set us up for failure because they are rooted in deprivation, says Robin, and the results rarely last.

“Diets are restrictive by definition and almost always bring a negative connotation to the table,” she says. “Mindful eating is a healthier option because we learn to slow down and enjoy the foods we choose to eat to the fullest. This can trigger satiety – the sense of feeling full – when we have actually eaten less, as opposed to gulping down large quantities of food before our stomach gets the chance to say, ‘I have had enough, I’m full!’”

Diet culture also labels certain foods as off-limits and then shames people when they fail to adhere to food restrictions, setting up what Dr. Michelle May, M.D., CEO of Am I Hungry? Mindful Eating Programs and Training ([amihungry.com](http://amihungry.com)), calls the Eat-Repent-Repeat Cycle.

“Many people vacillate back and forth between overeating and restrictive eating. When they eat what they want, they feel guilty. When they eat what they ‘should,’ they feel deprived. As a result they may develop a love-hate relationship with food. Their self-esteem tends to go up and down depending on whether they are off or on their diet. This is the eat-repent-repeat cycle.”

To counter this dysfunctional relationship with food, Dr. May advises that we focus on all aspects of the eating process, which includes (1) awareness of physical and emotional cues, (2) recognition of non-hunger triggers for eating, (3) learning to meet other needs in more effective ways than eating, (4) choosing food for both enjoyment and nourishment, (5) eating for optimal satisfaction and satiety, and (6) using the fuel consumed to live vibrantly. Learn more about this joyful approach to eating at [amihungry.com/what-is-mindful-eating](http://amihungry.com/what-is-mindful-eating).

## Tips for Becoming a More Mindful Eater

Satisfying our hunger with food that tastes good and meets our nutritional needs should be a pleasurable experience, not one filled with anxiety, guilt, and shame. Mindful eating teaches us to be more aware of physical and emotional cues, so that we can distinguish between actual hunger and underlying emotional needs.

“Mindful eating makes the connection between our emotions and our eating habits, which can help us break unhealthy eating behaviors,” says Robin. “You may discover that when you are anxious or nervous, you reach for sweets or chocolate. Learning to recognize both the anxiety and resulting urge for sweets enables you to use better tools to manage that urge, like taking a quick walk or engaging in a mindful activity like focused breathing or a body scan, or simply by reaching for a glass of water.”

Eating with intention and attention also helps to prevent distracted eating, which often occurs when we’re stressed or doing other things while we eat, like working at a computer, driving, watching television, or talking on the phone. Distracted eating interrupts the brain-gut connection, so you miss satiety cues. If you’ve ever unintentionally eaten a pint of ice cream after a difficult day or found yourself holding an empty bag of chips, but don’t remember eating a single chip, you’ve experienced this phenomenon, says Robin.

“One of the simplest things you can do to improve your relationship with food is to remove external distractions while you eat, so turn off the television, step away from the computer, and put down your phone. Focus on your food and eat slowly to maximize enjoyment.”





**To help you on your path towards more a mindful and pleasurable experience while eating, Robin offers these additional tips.**

- Try this mindful eating exercise. Take an individually wrapped piece of chocolate and examine the wrapper, taking in details you hadn't noticed before. Then, very slowly, go through the steps of unwrapping it, putting it only to your lips, taking a tiny bite, putting the entire thing in your mouth without chewing, and finally letting it melt on its own while you notice the flavor and the texture like never before. The entire process should take 2-3 minutes. This is a great introduction to noticing food and enjoying it. This can also be done with a raisin or piece of fruit.
- Start small. Pick one meal per day, one snack per day, or one meal every three days to practice mindful eating. Set a goal that you can meet and then gradually increase.
- Try not to label food as good or bad. Labeling food as bad tends to make us want it more or feel horrible about ourselves if we give in and enjoy it, which can trigger us to overeat. Enjoy the food you love in moderation and without judgment.
- Make mealtime a treat. When possible, walk away from your work and set a place at the table. This could be the kitchen, break room, or conference room. Try to eat in the same place whenever you can. Set your phone and other devices aside. Relax and focus on the meal. Think about who grew it, raised it, or prepared it.
- Slow down. Put the fork down between bites and chew your food thoroughly. It can take 20-minutes for our brain to recognize the signals sent by our gut that we are full. Eating slowly also improves digestion, which helps us get more nourishment from our food.
- Savor the moment. Pay attention to the act of eating and savor every bite, noticing the flavor, texture, and smell of the food. In doing so, you may find that one piece of pizza or one brownie is all that you want.

### **Mindful Eating Resources**

Am I Hungry? Eat Mindfully, Live Vibrantly, Dr. Michelle May, MD – [amihungry.com](http://amihungry.com)

Eating Mindfully, Dr. Susan Albers, Psy.D. – [eatingmindfully.com](http://eatingmindfully.com)

The Center for Mindful Eating – [thecenterformindfuleating.org](http://thecenterformindfuleating.org)



# **Recipe for Mindful Eating**

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 or 2 servings of food you love
- 2 tablespoons of hunger
- 1 heaping teaspoon each of intention and attention
- Sprinkle of trust
- Optional: pleasure, enjoyment, celebration, tradition

### **Directions:**

1. Care for yourself physically by getting adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition.
2. Create a self-care buffer zone by regularly nurturing your body, mind, heart, and spirit.
3. When you're hungry, consider what you want, what you need, and what you have to eat before choosing food.
4. Decide how you want to feel when you're finished eating; serve yourself accordingly (or adjust the portion if someone else served you).
5. When the food you crave isn't particularly healthful, omit all guilt and shame and include the desired food in your meal plan. Remind yourself that all foods fit when you practice balance, variety, and moderation.
6. Sit down to eat and minimize distractions.
7. Savor the appearance, aromas, textures, and flavors as you eat.
8. Eat slowly and mindfully for maximal enjoyment from every bite.
9. Stop when you feel content and energetic.
10. Repeat steps 1-9 for the remainder of your life.

Source: Dr. Michelle May, MD, [amihungry.com](http://amihungry.com)





# The Magic of Holiday Cookies

by **Monica Tichenor**

With the exception of bright twinkling lights on a wintry night, nothing dazzles my eyes or warms my heart more during the holidays than walking into a party and seeing festive tables overflowing with beautifully crafted cookies of every shape, color, size, and flavor. Gazing in rapt silence before diving in, I know the holidays have truly arrived.

I know I'm not alone in my reaction. When the church I attend hosts its annual Holiday Cookie Walk, shoppers are so astounded by the sheer volume of confections on display that spontaneous applause and cries of joy often ring out before the buying frenzy begins.


People laugh and talk as they load up boxes of cookies, occasionally engaging in mock fights over who gets the last batch of a particular favorite. Everyone leaves smiling. And why not? There's something truly magical about homemade holiday cookies and their power to bring us together, no matter what the circumstances of our lives might be at the moment.

## Why We Love to Bake

Classic sugar cookies, gingerbread, pinwheels, snickerdoodles, almond spritz, chocolate bark, coconut macaroons, holiday biscotti, rum balls, peppermint meringues, truffles – the list of holiday cookie favorites is long and ever-growing. And baking them is almost as fun as eating them for reasons you may not have considered.

Why do we find baking, especially baking holiday cookies, such a rewarding experience?





• **Nostalgia and Family Connections** - Baking cookies can summon happy memories of our youth – being in a warm kitchen filled with delicious smells, flour covering every surface, and up to our elbows in sticky cookie dough as we cut holiday shapes with our favorite cookie cutters. Baking also allows us to express our love and care for others, especially during times of crisis, which helps to strengthen our human connections.

• **Creative Expression and Stress Relief** – Baking offers a relatively inexpensive way to be creative while also relieving stress, says Boston University's Donna Pincus, an associate professor of psychology and brain sciences who talked with the *Huffington Post* in September of 2021 about why so many people turned to baking during the pandemic.

"There's a lot of literature for connection between creative expression and overall well-being," she says. "Whether it's painting or it's making music [or baking], there is a stress relief that people get from having some kind of an outlet and a way to express themselves. During a time when we have had little control over an ever-evolving and difficult situation, it has been an adaptive coping strategy to turn to activities that we can control."

• **Mindfulness** – Because recipes present a step-by-step process towards a specific goal, baking teaches people to practice the art of mindfulness, a state of active attention in the present moment. Engaging all five of your senses while you calmly work through a recipe's instructions keeps you focused and helps to disrupt negative thought patterns, says Donna.

"Baking actually requires a lot of full attention. You have to measure, focus physically on rolling out dough. If you're focusing on smell and taste, on being present with what you're creating, that act of mindfulness in that present moment can also have a result in stress reduction. You're not spending time ruminating over your thoughts."

• **Life Skills** – If you're willing to roll up your sleeves and get a little messy, you'll discover that baking imparts useful life skills, such as learning to follow directions, to persevere, to be patient, to take risks, to trust your instincts, to hone your problem-solving skills, to be resourceful, to see mistakes as opportunities to grow, to be creative, and to have fun.

### **Baking is for Everyone**

You don't have to be a cookie maven or even a particularly gifted chef to reap the many benefits of baking. I've dumped many unfortunate cookie (and bread) experiments in the trash over the years, but every now and then, I manage to hit a home run, which wouldn't happen if I simply gave up. So, what are you waiting for? It's time to bake!

To help you get started, following this article you'll find two recipes for holiday cookies with a healthy twist. For more ideas, visit the Food Network for a list of 100 (yes, 100!) holiday cookie recipes at [foodnetwork.com/holidays](https://www.foodnetwork.com/holidays).

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## Superfood Holiday Bark

Recipe: Erin Stewart, featured in Harper's Bazaar

Yields: 3-4 cups | Total time: 30-40 minutes

Ingredients:	1/2-cup mix of dried
1-cup cacao butter	cranberries, pistachios,
1-cup raw cacao powder	goji berries, and cacao
1/3-cup agave nectar or	nibs. Optional add-in:
maple syrup	handful of pumpkin,
Pinch of sea salt	sunflower, hemp, or
1 tsp. vanilla	chia seeds

### Instructions

Melt the cocoa butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat, or over a double boiler.

Pour the melted cacao butter into a mixing bowl. Add the cacao powder, agave, sea salt, and vanilla, and whisk till the ingredients are totally smooth.

Pour the chocolate mixture onto a foil-lined baking sheet. Allow it to cool for 2-3 minutes.

Sprinkle the chocolate with nut and fruit mix. (Add seeds of your choice, if desired).

Transfer the chocolate to the freezer for about 20 minutes. Remove it and break it into pieces with your hand or cut with a knife. Store in sealed container in fridge. Holiday bark will keep for three weeks.

## Vegan Orange Cinnamon Christmas Cookies

Recipe: Vegan Heaven, [veganheaven.org](http://veganheaven.org)

Yield: 20-25 cookies | Total time: 21 minutes

For the cookies:	make gluten-free, use oat flour or Bob's Red Mill 1-to-1 gluten-free flour)
3/4-cup powdered brown sugar (see directions)	
2-cups ground almonds	
1 3/4-cup ground hazelnuts	For the icing:
1 tbsp. orange juice	1/2-cup powdered brown sugar
2 tbsp. cinnamon	1 to 1-1/2 tbsp. water or plant-based milk
1/2-cup water	
3/4-cup whole-wheat flour (to	1/2 tsp. cinnamon

### Instructions

First, make the powdered brown sugar: Put the brown sugar (3/4-cup) in a blender and pulse for about 30-60 seconds until the sugar is powdered.

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl.

On a floured board or baking parchment, roll out the dough to about 0.4 inch (1 cm) thickness and cut into star shapes using a cookie cutter.

Line a baking tray with parchment paper and place the star-shaped cookies on top.

Preheat the oven to 360-degrees and bake for 6-8 minutes. Make sure not to bake them too long. They're supposed to be a bit soft.

While cookies are baking, make the icing: Combine all ingredients and stir until smooth. If it is too thin, add more powdered sugar. Let the cookies cool down and spread icing evenly using a knife or the back of a spoon. Sprinkle with more cinnamon.





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## **Holiday Pies**

The Co-op will be offering 8-inch Willamette Valley pies for the holidays this year. Handmade with all-natural ingredients, varieties include Apple, Cherry, and Marionberry. Co-op Bakery will also be offering their popular Pumpkin and Pecan pies.

## **Deli Made Fixings**

Don't have time to cook all your extras for your Thanksgiving meal? The Co-op can help! Our Deli has many holiday side dishes: Cranberry Relish, Maple Glazed Yams, Green Beans Aux Champignon, Rosemary Roasted Potatoes and more!

