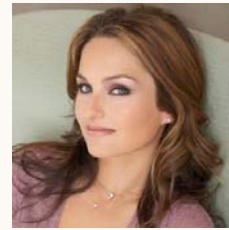




Giada's Treats for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*



Courtesy Giada De Laurentiis

Watch Giada prepare these special treats on the TODAY show on October 8 as she joins Jumpstart's Read for the Record. Serve these recipes during your reading event as an elegant – and yummy – treat for children in your life.

Very Hungry Caterpillar Sugar Cookies

Cookies

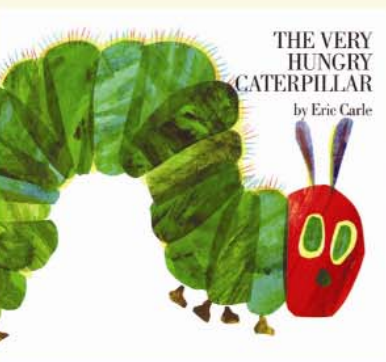
- 1 (16.5-ounce) tube refrigerated sugar cookie dough (recommended: Pillsbury)
- 1/4 cup flour, plus extra for dusting

Frosting

- 1 stick (4 ounces) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 pound powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup water, plus extra, as needed
- Assorted food coloring *see Cook's Note
- Special Equipment: Butterfly, Caterpillar or Leaf Shaped cookie cutters... about 4 to 5-inches long
- Decorating suggestion: multi-colored sprinkles, colored decorating sugar, mini chocolate chips, small candies, mini marshmallows

For the cookies

- Place an oven rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Set aside.
- In a medium bowl, combine the cookie dough and flour until smooth.
- On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to 1/4-inch thick.
- Using animal-shaped cookie cutters, cut out shapes from the dough and place, about 2-inches apart, on the prepared baking sheets.
- Form the scraps of dough into a ball, roll out to 1/4-inch thick, and continue to cut out animal-shapes.
- Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until the edges are lightly golden brown.
- Cool for 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely, about 15 minutes.



The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle is the official campaign book of Jumpstart's Read for the Record

For the frosting

- In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter until smooth, about 20 seconds.
- Add the powdered sugar, vanilla extract and 1/4 cup water.
- Beat on low speed until combined. Increase the speed to high and beat until the mixture is smooth, adding more water, as needed, 1 teaspoon at a time until the frosting is spreadable.
- Divide the frosting between 3 small bowls. Color the frosting by mixing in 1 drop of food coloring at a time until the desired color is reached.
- Spread the frosting over the cooled cookies and decorate.

Cook's Note: If using natural food coloring (such as Seelect brand), be sure to shake the bottle before adding the coloring to the frosting.

Yield: 16 cookies

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 10 to 12 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 17 minutes

Baked Macaroni and Cheese Cupcakes

Ingredients

- Vegetable cooking spray
- 2 cups dried breadcrumbs
- 8 ounces small pasta such as pennette, shells, or elbows
- 8 ounces ground turkey or chicken, preferably dark meat
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus extra for seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus extra for seasoning
- 2 cups grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 cups grated white cheddar cheese
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 2 cups chopped broccoli, blanched **see Cook's Note*
- 1 pound asparagus, cut into 3/4-inch pieces, blanched

Preparation

- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Spray 2 12-cup muffin or cupcake pans with vegetable cooking spray.
- Using 1 cup of breadcrumbs, coat the inside of each muffin cup with breadcrumbs, shaking off any excess.
- In a medium skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat.
- Add the ground turkey, or chicken, if using, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper, Cook for 5 to 8 minutes, stirring frequently, until cooked through. Set aside and cover to keep warm.
- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain and place in a large bowl.
- Add the cooked turkey and the cheeses. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Spoon the prepared pasta mixture into the cupcake molds, filling evenly to about 2/3 full.
- Place a few pieces of tomato, broccoli and asparagus in each cup. Top with a thin layer of the remaining breadcrumbs and drizzle with olive oil.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown on top. Let cool for a few minutes and carefully unmold with a spoon.

Cook's Note: To blanch vegetables, bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the vegetables and cook for 1 to 2 minutes until very crisp. Using a small strainer, remove the vegetables and place immediately into a bowl of iced water. Drain and use.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

Prep time: 45 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

Inactive prep time: 18 minutes