

# Kids in the Kitchen

Make cookies—and memories—together this holiday season. BY AMY BOXRUD

According to Scandinavian tradition, there should be at least *syv slag* (seven types) of cookies to serve to friends and family at Christmastime. With Christmas cookies such a beloved part of the holidays, why not use holiday baking as an opportunity to connect with the young person in your life? Choose a favorite family recipe to make together. Or try this recipe for decorated *julemenn* (also known as *kakemenn*). It's a Norwegian holiday favorite that kids love to decorate.

## Christmas Men / Julemenn

7 Tbsp. (100 g) melted butter, cooled  
1-1/4 cups (3 dl) sugar  
7 fluid ounces (2 dl) whole milk  
1 tsp. hornsalt\*  
(or 2 tsp. baking powder)  
4-1/4 cups (1 l) flour

\*Hornsalt is a leavening agent found in many older Norwegian recipes. Also called baker's ammonia or ammonium carbonate, it's available at many ethnic markets and Scandinavian import shops.

1 Mix together butter, sugar and milk. Mix the hornsalt with half of the flour and add to butter mixture. Continue to add the flour a little at a time until the dough comes together in a ball. It may be a bit sticky.

2 Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate. For best results, chill overnight.

3 Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Remove dough from refrigerator and allow to warm up a bit.

4 Roll out dough to a thickness of one-quarter inch. Using cookie cutters, cut into shapes. Bake figures

for 7–8 minutes on a cookie sheet lined with baking paper. Remove from oven before cookies begin to brown.

5 Allow the cookies to cool completely. Decorate with food coloring used as paint, if desired.

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## Activities for Young People

### PRESCHOOL Colorful Cookies

Preschool kids love to decorate cookies. If making Christmas Men, bake the cookies ahead of time and cool thoroughly. Let your child use a thin paintbrush to apply food coloring.

**Expand it:** After the cookies are decorated, enjoy a “tea” party and share stories from your childhood. Norwegian holiday music and special tableware set a festive mood.



### ELEMENTARY AGES Ready to Roll

Elementary aged kids are eager helpers. If making Christmas Men, have the dough thoroughly chilled. Help your child roll it out and cut shapes before baking and decorating.

**Expand it:** Teach young bakers some Norwegian words, such as the ingredients or colors used in decorating.

### TEENAGERS Boss Bakers

Many teenagers are ready to take the lead in the kitchen. Choose a favorite family recipe together and provide guidance only as needed. As you bake together, share holiday memories about the recipe or from your childhood.

**Expand it:** Find a recipe in Norwegian and have your teenager translate the list of ingredients using a dictionary or online resource. Americans have the added challenge of converting from metric to English measurements. (Use an online conversion tool.)

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