

# 2011

## 100 Days of Holidays Sneak Peek

Get ready to create! We've been prepping for the 2011 holidays to make it the most delicious, most beautiful, best-yet holiday season. Here are some of the ways we'll be celebrating, starting on September 16.



### See Our Charity Stencils

Help a cause (and carve a cute pumpkin!) with our stencils that give back.

### Shop Our Holiday Store

Browse our all-new online store, featuring products and projects from our 100 Days of Holidays program.

### Enter Photo Contests

We're looking for the most creative Halloween and Thanksgiving desserts, the coolest family Christmas photo, and the prettiest mantels and wreaths. More than \$1,000 in prizes!

### Choose a Gift

Find the perfect present for the hobbyists in your life with our editor-selected gifts that you can sort by recipient and price.

### Find Your Decorating Style

Take our quiz to find just-for-you holiday decorating ideas!

### PLUS

Join us on Facebook for a whole season of contests, giveaways, holiday recipes, challenges, and more!

Better  
Homes  
and Gardens

# Our Best Holiday Gems



Free for you—the top projects, recipes, and ideas from our 100 Days of Holidays program.

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## OUR MOST POPULAR GEMS

**Pumpkin Stencil**  
Scarecrow Design

**Halloween Recipe**  
Pumpkin Custards with  
Peppery Pecans

**Thanksgiving Centerpiece**  
Cattail Collection

**Thanksgiving Recipe**  
Florance Mama's Candied Yams

**Christmas Centerpiece**  
Red Carnations Atop Urns

**Handmade Christmas Gift**  
Christmas Card Wreath

**Christmas Cookie**  
Cinnamon-Sugar Roll Cookies

**Christmas Ornament**  
Cable-Knit Ornament

**Christmas Food Gift**  
Almond Breton Biscuits in a Cake Pan

**New Year's Recipe**  
No-Knead Focaccia Tiles

**PLUS**

A preview of 2011's upcoming contests and features!

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### Scarecrow Design

Turns out you weren't frightened off by this scarecrow's sly grin—he was the most downloaded pumpkin stencil of the season.

To use this stencil, simply size it on a copier to fit your pumpkin shape. Tape it to your pumpkin and poke the outline of the pattern with a pin before carving your masterpiece.

Get more stencil ideas at:  
[BHG.com/topstencil](http://BHG.com/topstencil)

**MOST  
POPULAR  
PUMPKIN  
STENCIL**



**MOST  
POPULAR  
HALLOWEEN  
RECIPE**

### Pumpkin Custards with Peppery Pecans

Pumpkin was most definitely the flavor of the season. You loved this creamy pumpkin custard sprinkled with cayenne-glazed pecans and drizzled with maple syrup.

PREP: 15 MINUTES  
BAKE: 45 MINUTES  
MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ of a 15-ounce can (scant 1 cup) pumpkin
- ¾ cup whipping cream, half-and-half, or light cream
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup Peppery Pecans
- ¼ cup maple syrup

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a medium bowl, combine eggs, pumpkin, cream, brown sugar, pumpkin pie spice, and salt. Beat with a wire whisk until smooth.
2. Place four 6-ounce custard cups in a 2-quart square baking dish. Divide pumpkin mixture among cups. Place baking dish on an oven rack.

Pour boiling water into baking dish around cups to a depth of 1 inch.

3. Bake for 45 to 55 minutes or until a knife inserted near the centers comes out clean. Remove cups from water; cool on a wire rack. If desired, cover and chill for 1 to 8 hours.

4. To serve, unmold custards onto four dessert plates. Sprinkle with Peppery Pecans and drizzle with maple syrup.

**Peppery Pecans:** Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Line a 9x9x2-inch baking pan with foil; lightly coat foil with nonstick cooking spray. In a medium bowl, combine 1 cup broken pecans, 3 tablespoons granulated sugar, 2 tablespoons light-color corn syrup, and ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper. Spread nuts in the prepared baking pan. Bake for 15 minutes, stirring twice. Spread on a piece of greased foil to cool. Break into clusters. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 24 hours. Use to top puddings, ice cream, or salads. Makes about 1 cup.

Get more pumpkin recipes at:  
[BHG.com/toppumpkin](http://BHG.com/toppumpkin)

### Cattail Collection

Natural elements dominated the fall season. This easy cattails-in-glass centerpiece graced many of your tables at Thanksgiving.

To make a pretty centerpiece, incorporate different textures. This arrangement relies on a birdseed filler, which supports an arrangement of cattails. The square vase is wrapped with a length of raffia to complete the natural tableau.

**Tip:** Many found-in-nature elements work well as long-lasting centerpieces. Put dried corn kernels in a glass vase, display pecans on silver platters, cut a fall branch from your tree and place in a long skinny jar, or collect squatty gourds as pretty tabletop groupings.

Get more Thanksgiving centerpiece ideas at: [BHG.com/topcenterpiece](http://BHG.com/topcenterpiece)



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THANKSGIVING  
CENTERPIECE**



**MOST  
POPULAR  
THANKSGIVING  
RECIPE**

### Florance Mama's Candied Yams

A celebrated chef helped you celebrate at Thanksgiving. This delicious sweet potato dish was created by Tyler Florence's grandmother and was served by many of you at your big dinner.

PREP: 25 MINUTES

BAKE: 1 HOUR

MAKES: 8 TO 10 SERVINGS PLUS  
LEFTOVERS

- 3 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced crosswise in 1/4-inch-thick rounds
- 1 orange, thinly sliced into rounds
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In an ungreased 2-quart baking dish place sweet potato slices,

overlapping slightly and covering the dish. In a saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Cook until sugar is dissolved, then add the orange slices. Pour the mixture over the potatoes, covering the entire surface.

2. Cover the dish tightly with foil. Bake 40 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork. Remove foil and bake 20 to 25 minutes more or until the top is golden brown. Let stand 15 minutes before serving.

Get more Thanksgiving side dish recipes at: [BHG.com/topsides](http://BHG.com/topsides)

### Red Carnations Atop Urns

Simple and striking were the themes when it came to your Christmas centerpieces. This trio of red carnation balls was your favorite inspiration.

This tabletop take on pomander balls makes an eye-catching Christmas display. Simply soak florist's foam balls in water and cover with red carnations. Place the finished balls atop white vases or urns placed in a row in the center of your table.

Get more centerpiece ideas at: [BHG.com/toptable](http://BHG.com/toptable)



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CHRISTMAS  
CENTERPIECE**



**MOST  
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HANDMADE  
CHRISTMAS  
GIFT**

### Christmas Card Wreath

We've all got Christmas cards that we want to display—this great gift helped your recipient share the season's sentiments in a decorative way.

It's easy to transform a simple wreath into a Christmas card display. Wrap a straw wreath with upholstery webbing (available at fabrics stores), using small sewing pins to secure. Tie a bow at the top and loop a length through the back to hang. If the recipient loves vintage collectibles, attach antique Christmas cards to the wreath with binder clips. Or include a small tin of clips with the wreath so the recipient can add their own cards as desired.

Get more handmade gifts at: [BHG.com/topgift](http://BHG.com/topgift)

## Cinnamon-Sugar Roll Cookies

This was the tightest battle of the season. Your favorite Christmas cookies included classics and new favorites, but in the end this delicious twist on basic cookie dough came out on top.

PREP: 40 MINUTES

FREEZE: 2 HOURS

BAKE: 8 MINUTES PER BATCH

MAKES: ABOUT 60 COOKIES

- 1 recipe Basic Cookie Dough
- ½ cup salted and roasted mixed nuts, finely chopped
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 recipe Vanilla Glaze
- Chopped salted and roasted mixed nuts (optional)

**1.** Prepare Basic Cookie Dough. Between sheets of lightly floured waxed paper, roll dough into a 16x9-inch rectangle. In a medium bowl, combine ½ cup mixed nuts, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture clings together. Sprinkle mixture evenly over dough. Starting from a long side, roll up dough tightly. Wrap in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Freeze about 2 hours or until dough is firm enough to slice.

**2.** Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Cut roll into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 2 inches apart on the prepared cookie sheet.

**3.** Bake in the preheated oven about 8 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on cookie sheet for 2 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool. Drizzle cookies with Vanilla Glaze. If desired, sprinkle with additional chopped mixed nuts.

**To Store:** Layer cookies between sheets of waxed paper in an airtight container; cover. Store at room temperature for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

**Vanilla Glaze:** In a small bowl, stir together 1 cup powdered sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Stir in enough milk (3 to 4 teaspoons) to make a glaze of drizzling consistency.

**Basic Cookie Dough Recipe:** In a large bowl, combine ¼ c. butter (softened), ¼ c. shortening,



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CHRISTMAS  
COOKIE

and 2 ounces cream cheese (softened). Beat with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add 1 c. brown sugar, ½ tsp. baking powder, ½ tsp. salt, ½ tsp. ground cinnamon, and ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg. Beat until combined, scraping bowl occasionally. Beat in 1 egg and 2 tsp. vanilla until combined. Beat in as much of the 2-½ c. all-purpose flour as you can with the mixer. Using a wooden spoon, stir in any remaining flour. Makes about 2-¾ cups dough.

Get more Christmas cookie recipes at:  
[BHG.com/topcookies](https://www.bhg.com/topcookies)

## Cable-Knit Ornament

Our readers start making their ornaments just after Halloween. This one was your favorite and was likely featured on many trees last Christmas.

Turn an old sweater into a warm and festive ornament. Cut a 6-inch-long tube from a sweater sleeve. Slip a plastic-foam ball into the tube. Gather cut ends at the top and bottom of the ball using straight pins to hold the fabric in place, trimming where necessary. Glue red velvet ribbon around the ball as shown, dividing the ball into quarters. Use a red pearl-head pin to secure a felt poinsettia or a small purchased artificial flower to the top of the ornament.

Get more Christmas ornaments at: [BHG.com/topornament](https://www.bhg.com/topornament)



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CHRISTMAS  
ORNAMENT



**MOST  
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CHRISTMAS  
FOOD GIFT**

## Almond Breton Biscuits in a Cake Pan

Fresh-from-your-kitchen cookies are a favorite of your holiday giving. This cake pan and cookie combo had the most fans.

PREP: 25 MINUTES

CHILL: 3 HOURS

BAKE: 12 MINUTES

MAKES: ABOUT 54 COOKIES

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 egg yolks
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup finely ground almonds
- Coarse plain and/or colored sugar
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten

**1.** In a large bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, powdered sugar, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping side of bowl occasionally. Beat in egg yolks until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with

the mixer. Using a wooden spoon, stir in any remaining flour and the almonds.

**2.** Divide dough in half. Shape each portion of dough into an 8-inch-long roll. Wrap in plastic wrap or waxed paper and chill about 3 hours or until firm enough to slice.

**3.** Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

**4.** Place coarse plain and/or colored sugar in a shallow dish. Brush rolls with egg white, then roll in sugar to coat. Cut rolls into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Place slices 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheet.

**5.** Bake in the preheated oven about 12 minutes or until edges start to brown. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; let cool.

**To Store:** Layer cookies between waxed paper in an airtight container; cover. Store at room temperature for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months. To give, tie a simple cake pan with a festive bow. Place the cookies in cupcake liners for more stability in the pan.

Get more cookie food gifts at:  
[BHG.com/topfoodgift](http://BHG.com/topfoodgift)

## No-Knead Focaccia Tiles

New Year's appetizers ruled—they topped desserts and main dishes as your favorite of the holiday's must-makes. This easy, please-everyone focaccia dish stood out.

RISE: 1 HOUR

BAKE: 30 MINUTES

STAND: 12 HOURS

MAKES: 6 TILES, 12 SERVINGS

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. active dry yeast
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt
- Olive oil
- Toppings such as toasted pumpkin seeds, oil-packed dried tomatoes, pitted olives, or thinly sliced limes
- Seasonings such as smoked paprika, ground cumin, or oregano

**1.** In large bowl combine 3 cups of the flour, the yeast, and salt. Add 1-2/3 cups warm water (120 degrees F to 130 degrees F). Stir until all is

moistened. The mixture will be a soft, sticky dough. Cover bowl and let dough stand at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours.

**2.** Line a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with parchment paper. Brush parchment with olive oil. With a fork, stir the remaining 1 cup flour into the dough. Turn dough out onto prepared pan. Using well-oiled hands or a rubber spatula, gently push dough into pan (dough will be sticky). Cover; let rest for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until puffy.

**3.** Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Using a sharp, floured knife, score dough into 6 portions. Gently press desired toppings into surface of dough. Brush lightly with olive oil. Sprinkle with desired seasonings. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown.

**4.** Transfer to wire rack. Cut into 6 tiles and serve warm.

Get more New Year's recipes at:  
[BHG.com/topnewyearfood](http://BHG.com/topnewyearfood)



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NEW YEAR'S  
RECIPE**