



Martinmas Lanterns



The tradition of making Martinmas lanterns comes from Germany. On the night of November 11th, German children walk in processions carrying lanterns and singing songs. Sometimes a man on horseback dressed like St. Martin walks along beside them.

It is possible that the lantern walk arose from the traditional St. Martin bonfire, which is still lit in a few cities and villages throughout Europe. The light from the lanterns symbolizes the light that holiness brings to the darkness of the world, just as St. Martin brought hope to the poor through his generosity and kindness.

Making homemade lanterns with your children or grandchildren and then processing around the neighborhood is a wonderful way to keep this Martinmas tradition alive.

A simple lantern can be made from a dry, clean jar; some colored tissue paper; and glue (I use Mod Podge because it leaves a glossy finish). Tear or cut the tissue paper to form pictures or abstract, colorful designs. Apply a thin layer of glue, place the tissue paper on the jar, and cover with another thin layer of glue. Leave to dry overnight. Secure a wax candle tealight (or LED) to the inside bottom of the jar, and make a handle with string or wire.

Vanilla Horseshoe Cookies

- 1/2 c butter
- 1/2 c confectioners' sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 c all-purpose flour
- 1 c rolled oats, uncooked

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Cream butter. Add sugar gradually while continuing to cream; beat until fluffy.
3. Stir in vanilla and salt, then add flour. Add rolled oats and blend by hand, kneading the oats into the dough while still in the bowl.
4. Take a bit of dough, roll into a short "snake" shape, and then bend into a horseshoe on the cookie sheet. Repeat until cookie sheet is filled. These cookies don't rise much, so they can be placed pretty close together. Bake until lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Remove carefully from cookie sheet, as cookies are very rich and break easily, and place on rack to cool. Dust tops of cooled cookies with confectioners' sugar.

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