



Frankie's Mini Holiday Adventure

By Susan Mills

Today is a special day. I'm going back to the Garcia Bakery for a sneak peek of the tasty treats they are preparing for this holiday season.

Tinkley-ting! Bells chime as Frankie and her mom open the door of the Garcia Bakery. There is a large crowd inside. The sweet smell of breads, muffins, and cakes are everywhere. As Frankie's number is called, she steps up to the tall glass display case. Mr. Garcia waits on her. "Hello Mr. Garcia!" greets Frankie.

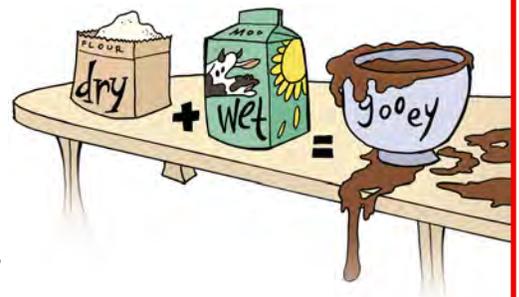


"Hi Frankie!" Mr. Garcia responds. "Are you ready for the sneak peek tour?" he asks. "You bet!" shouts Frankie. Mr. Garcia leads Frankie and her mom inside the bakery.

The Garcia Bakery has all the ingredients for a perfect Christmas. It's like elves at Santa's village inside the bakery. Each baker has a station. There are stacks of flour, sugar, eggs, big spoons, pans and ovens. Frankie walks over to a big mixer with large blades; the blades are pointing up and away from the bowl, and batter is dripping from them.

She points to a mixer button, and asks, "What does this do?"

Not paying attention, a tall baker wearing a crisp, white hat responds by pushing the button. **SPLAT!** Batter splatters all over his face, and clean hat. Frankie laughs. Using her finger, she wipes off batter from his face and tastes it. "Oh, cho-co-late!" says Frankie happily.



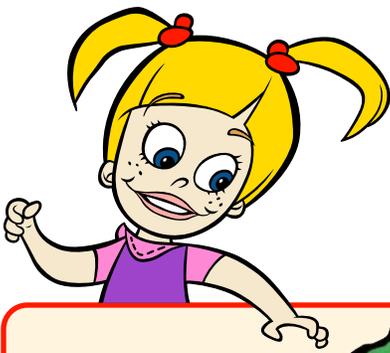
Other bakers are rolling dough on a clean, well-floured surface. Cookie shapes are being cut out of the dough. A baker named Manny is decorating cookies with different sugars and frostings. "That's my favorite part," says Frankie. "When I decorate, I like to do stars, hearts, little people, and animals in different colors." "Remember to wait for baking treats to cool down before you frost them," warns Mr. Garcia. "Ta da! See, I did it!" announces Frankie at her perfectly decorated heart-shaped cookie.

At the end of the tour, Frankie leans forward to smell the finished baked-goods. "M-m-m, these fresh treats smell like Christmas! There's ooey, gooey cinnamon rolls, sparkly sugar cookies, Mexican Wedding cookies with finely chopped nuts, Gingerbread houses, Yule logs, pillowy soft breads, and much more," shouts Frankie.



"This sure was one de-li-ci-ous tour," says Frankie cheerfully. "I can hardly wait to get home. Mom, when can we bake holiday tasty treats?"

Look for Frankie's Sugar Cookie Recipe in the Kid Stuff section at www.FrankiesPals.com



Frankie's Sugar Cookies



INGREDIENTS:

2 ³/₄ cups all-purpose flour
1 ¹/₂ cups white sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup butter, softened
Makes 48 servings

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 375° F (190° C).
In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients.
3. Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls OR roll out cookie dough and cut out cookie shapes. Place onto ungreased cookie sheets. Leave 1 inch of space between the cookies.
4. Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before placing them on wire racks to cool.
5. Eat plain or decorate.

COOKIE DECORATING IDEAS

Decorating cookies is a wonderful way to spend time with your child or grandchild.

Use edible sprinkles, glitter, sparkling sugar, color spray, markers, icing writers and sugar decorations.



PARENT TIPS

1. For superior flavor, use the freshest ingredients available.
2. Measure, don't guess in baking. Accuracy really counts.
3. Have your ingredients prepped and ready before getting started.
4. To keep crisp cookies crisp, store them, when cooled, in a tin or can with a loose cover.
5. To keep soft cookies soft, store them in an airtight container with apple or bread slices, changing frequently. They help mellow and moisten the cookies.



Look for Frankie & Her Little Pals books in English and Spanish!
www.FrankiesPals.com