



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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Want to save money? Try gifts from your commissary

*By Kay Blakley,
DeCA home economist*

FORT LEE, Va. – Stretch your holiday budget this year by transforming affordable ingredients from your local commissary into memorable gifts for special friends and family on your holiday list. They'll be thinking sweet thoughts of you with each luscious bite.

For someone who loves fruit preserves, think about a gift of pear honey. All it takes is a few ripe pears, a can of crushed pineapple, a bit of sugar and about 30 minutes of your time to produce one of the best fruit spreads you've ever tasted.

Have you ever made peanut brittle? It's easy to make and fun to watch some serious foaming action when baking soda is added to the hot candy syrup. Pack it into small coffee cans, recycled as gift containers.

Press your slow cooker into service to produce a batch of sugared pecans or walnuts, or bake an extra loaf of your favorite pumpkin or banana bread and wrap it in a nice new kitchen towel as a thoughtful gift.

A very practical but totally delicious idea is a jar of homemade turkey noodle soup mix. It's the season for having plenty of leftover turkey on hand, so this gift is likely to be put to good use right away.

Be extra careful not to forget the "cookie monsters" on your Christmas list. Who knows, they might even become part of the cookies and milk left for Santa's all-important visit. Choose from any of the cookie recipes below then prepare a batch for giving. Or, if you think the gift recipient would prefer to do the baking themselves, simply combine the pre-measured spices,

seasonings and other dry ingredients in a Mason jar. Tie with a strip of ribbon and attach a recipe card with further mixing and baking instructions.

Recipes for all these suggestions and more are featured for you on Kay's Kitchen. Visit http://www.commissaries.com/kays_kitchen/healthy_cooking/articles/kays_11_28_11.cfm for the lineup. Enjoy and happy holidays from those of us at your commissary!

-DeCA-

About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings amounting to thousands of dollars annually. For current savings figures for various groups – single member up to a family of seven – visit <http://www.commissaries.com>. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*