



COOKIES FOR A CAUSE

Standing in her sunny kitchen Dr. Priscilla Benner moves effortlessly from oven to counter as she makes batch after batch of very special cookies. Although her home is just a few miles from the rolling blue mountains of northeast Pennsylvania, her heart is 1,800 miles away in Central America where her cookies are sent.

Made with protein-packed soy flour and a boost of vitamins, the cookies will be packed and shipped to malnourished children in Honduras. Priscilla developed the fortified cookie recipe two decades ago when she and her family founded Mujeres Amigas Miles Apart (Women Friends Miles Apart), or MAMA. Priscilla, along with other Mennonite women, linked up with a sister church group in Honduras to provide nutrition education and food. The cookies,

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BY ELLEN MICHAUD PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB CARDILLO

Dr. Priscilla Benner typically bakes 240 cookies in one day and packs them off to Honduras. There, the protein-packed cookies are called Super Galletas (cookies) because—when fortified with vitamins—they provide nutritional benefits to malnourished children and adults.

MAMA'S WISH LIST

Round up some moms and kids on a Saturday afternoon to assemble baby kits for newborns, which MAMA will ship to Honduras.

Each kit should contain:

- 4 cloth diapers
- 2 shirts
- 2 washcloths
- 2 gowns or sleepers
- 2 diaper pins
- sweater
- 2 receiving blankets (1 can be a knitted blanket)

Wrap the bundle in one of the blankets and secure with diaper pins. Pack the kits in a box, enclose a \$4.95 check for each kit to cover mailing costs. The organization also accepts cash donations. \$15 buys 100 lbs. of soybeans for the nutritional center in Honduras. Send kits or checks to The MAMA Project, P.O. Box 216, Pennsburg, PA 18073.

california almonds



SAVVY SNACKING

TAKE THE EDGE OFF OF HUNGER BY TAKING CALIFORNIA ALMONDS WHEREVER YOU GO

TAKE 'EM ON THE ROAD

Keep a bagful of roasted almonds in your car and no matter how long you're on the road, you'll always have a tasty snack to crunch on.

TAKE 'EM TO WORK

Stash some in your desk drawer and you'll always have a healthy snack to reach for.

TAKE 'EM TO SCHOOL

Pack 'em in your kid's lunchbox or backpack for the perfect way to satisfy those midday snack attacks.

TAKE 'EM TO THE GYM

Roasted almonds are a great way to get your fill of protein and energy before or after a good workout.

ROAST 'EM FOR EXTRA FLAVOR

Spread whole natural almonds on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave on high 4–5 minutes, stir halfway through, let cool before eating. Then you're good to go!

FOR MORE SAVVY ALMOND SNACKING TIPS, VISIT www.AlmondsAreIn.com

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loaded with vitamins to help prevent blindness and with fat and protein to battle malnutrition, are distributed in preschools and nutrition education centers operated by MAMA. One cookie per day provides most of the nutrients required for a 3-year-old child.

"Our work started back in the '80s, when poverty, war, and political unrest put Central America on the news every night," says Priscilla. "We learned about the suffering of hungry families, and let our hearts be touched."

The group was determined to help prevent childhood malnutrition by linking church women in the United States and Honduras. "Inexperienced in international development work, and with no money, we began to think of what we could do," Priscilla says.

That's when they decided to bake MAMA's Super Galletas (cookies) for the cause. "This is quite a project, and of course not very efficient, but it involves a lot of people lovingly doing their part to make a difference," Priscilla says. Much of the cookie baking is now done in Honduran bakeries, but MAMA coordinates nutrition and health efforts along with an education component. "Our work has touched the entire country in some ways—some local villages very intensely—and hundreds of children," Priscilla says.

More on the project can be found in Ellen Michaud's book, *The Healing Kitchen* (BenBella Books) slated for release in January.

MAMA'S SUPER COOKIES

To make a difference close to home, take cookies to local food banks or homeless shelters. Double the recipe to make 88 cookies. Priscilla adapted her recipe for home bakers by eliminating the special vitamin powder she adds for malnourished children.

PREP: 30 MINUTES BAKE: 8 MINUTES/BATCH OVEN: 350°F



3	cups soy flour
1½	cups whole wheat flour
1	tsp. baking soda
½	tsp. salt
½	tsp. ground cinnamon (optional)
1¼	cups canola oil
1	cup sugar
¼	cup molasses
3	eggs
2	tsp. vanilla
	Sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a bowl combine soy flour, whole wheat flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon, if using. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl beat together canola oil and the 1 cup sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed. Add molasses, eggs, and vanilla. Beat the mixture until smooth.
3. Add dry ingredients and mix thoroughly with a wooden spoon.
4. Drop by rounded teaspoons onto ungreased cookie sheets. Flatten with the bottom of a glass that has been dipped in sugar. Bake for 8 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.
5. Transfer cookies to wire racks to cool. Store cooled cookies in a covered container up to 3 days or place them in a sealed plastic freezer bag and freeze up to 6 months. Makes about 44 cookies.

EACH COOKIE: 124 cal., 8 g total fat (1 g sat. fat), 14 mg chol., 61 mg sodium, 11 g carbo., 1 g fiber, 3 g pro. Daily Values: 1% vit. A, 2% calcium, 4% iron. ©