

# Hermits (Three Versions)

## Version 1 - Drop Hermits (Inferred)

### *Ingredients*

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup raisins, chopped
- 1 tsp baking soda
- Pinch salt dissolved in 3 Tbsp milk
- Spices to taste (see Editor's Notes)
- 2-2 1/2 cups flour (see Editor's Notes)

### *Instructions*

1. Cream sugar and shortening together until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in eggs one at a time.
3. Stir in chopped raisins.
4. Dissolve baking soda and salt in 3 Tbsp milk; add to mixture.
5. Add spices and flour gradually until a soft drop cookie dough forms.
6. Drop by spoonfuls onto a greased baking sheet.
7. Bake at 375°F for 10-12 minutes until set and lightly browned at edges.
8. Cool on pan for a few minutes before removing.

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## Version 2 - Sour Milk Drop Hermits (Inferred)

\*(Incomplete - see Editor's Notes)\*

### *Ingredients*

- 1 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup sour milk
- 1/3 cup raisins, chopped
- Spices to taste (see Editor's Notes)
- Flour to make a soft drop dough (approximately 2 cups - see Editor's Notes)

### *Instructions*

1. Cream sugar and shortening together until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in egg.

3. Stir in sour milk and chopped raisins.
4. Add spices and flour gradually until a soft drop cookie dough forms.
5. Drop by spoonfuls onto a greased baking sheet.
6. Bake at 375°F for 10-12 minutes until set and lightly browned at edges.
7. Cool on pan for a few minutes before removing.

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### **Version 3 - Rolled Hermits (Traditional) (Inferred)**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup butter, lard, or half butter and half lard
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup currants, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sour milk
- Pinch salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Flour to roll stiff (approximately 4-5 cups - see Editor's Notes)

#### ***Instructions***

1. Cream sugar and butter or lard together until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in eggs one at a time.
3. Stir in raisins, currants, and sour milk.
4. Add salt, baking soda, cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon; mix well.
5. Add flour gradually until dough is stiff enough to roll without sticking.
6. On a floured board, roll dough to approximately 1/4" thickness.
7. Cut into rectangles or squares.
8. Place on a greased baking sheet.
9. Bake at 375°F for 10-12 minutes until set and lightly browned at edges.

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### **Editor's Notes**

**\*\*What are Hermits?\*\***

Hermits are a classic American spiced drop or rolled cookie dating to at least the 1870s, particularly associated with New England. Dense, chewy, and heavily spiced with dried fruit, they were prized for keeping well in a tin for several weeks - a practical virtue for farmhouse baking.

**\*\*Baking instructions missing from all versions:\*\***

All three versions end at the mixing stage; baking was assumed knowledge. Baking details inferred from standard period Hermit recipes.

**\*\*"All kinds of spice" (Version 1):\*\***

Deliberately vague - Version 3 gives the likely intended blend: cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Recommended starting point: 1/2-1 tsp each. Allspice and ginger are also period-appropriate additions.

**\*\*Flour missing from Versions 1 and 2:\*\***

Neither version specifies flour quantity. Estimated from fat/sugar/egg ratios: approximately 2-2 1/2 cups for Versions 1 and 2 (drop cookies); approximately 4-5 cups for Version 3 (rolled cookie).

**\*\*Version 2 is a fragment:\*\***

Original card instructions end after "Cream sugar and shortening together" - all subsequent steps inferred from Versions 1 and 3. Spices and flour entirely absent from original. Flag as significantly incomplete.

**\*\*"Sour milk" (Versions 2 and 3):\*\***

Period term for naturally soured whole milk, similar to buttermilk. Modern substitution: add 1 Tbsp white vinegar or lemon juice per cup of whole milk and let stand 5 minutes.

**\*\*Version 3 has duplicate nutmeg:\*\***

Original card lists nutmeg twice (likely a transcription error on the card itself). One tsp nutmeg intended.

**\*\*Drop vs. rolled:\*\***

Versions 1 and 2 are soft drop cookies; Version 3 is the older, more traditional rolled-and-cut style. The three versions together suggest the recipe evolved in this household from rolled to drop over time, or reflect different sources.

**\*\*Three versions on one card:\*\***

Unusual and archivally significant - suggests the contributor was actively comparing or consolidating recipes rather than copying a single trusted source.

## Hermits

$1\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup shortening cream  
together

2 eggs

1 cup of chopped raisins

1 teaspoon soda

little salt dissolved  
in 3 tablespoons of milk  
all kinds of spice.

## Hermits

1 cup sugar

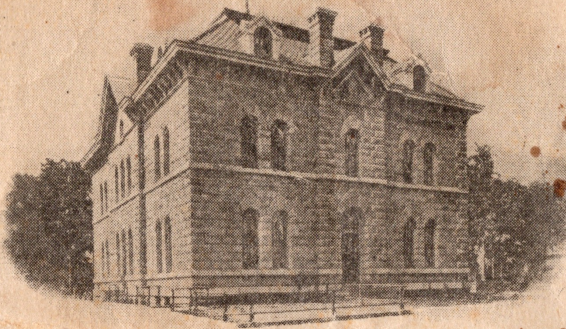
$\frac{2}{3}$  cup shortening cream  
together

1 egg.

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup of sour milk

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped raisins

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1 teaspoon soda  
1 teaspoon nutmeg  
cinnamon  
cloves

little salt.

Hermits.

2 cups sugar.

1 cup butter or lard or half  
and half and cream together

1 cup raisins, 1 cup currants

chopped 2 eggs 1 half cup  
of sour milk, salt, teaspoon

soda teaspoon cloves, nutmeg  
cinnamon, flour to roll stiff