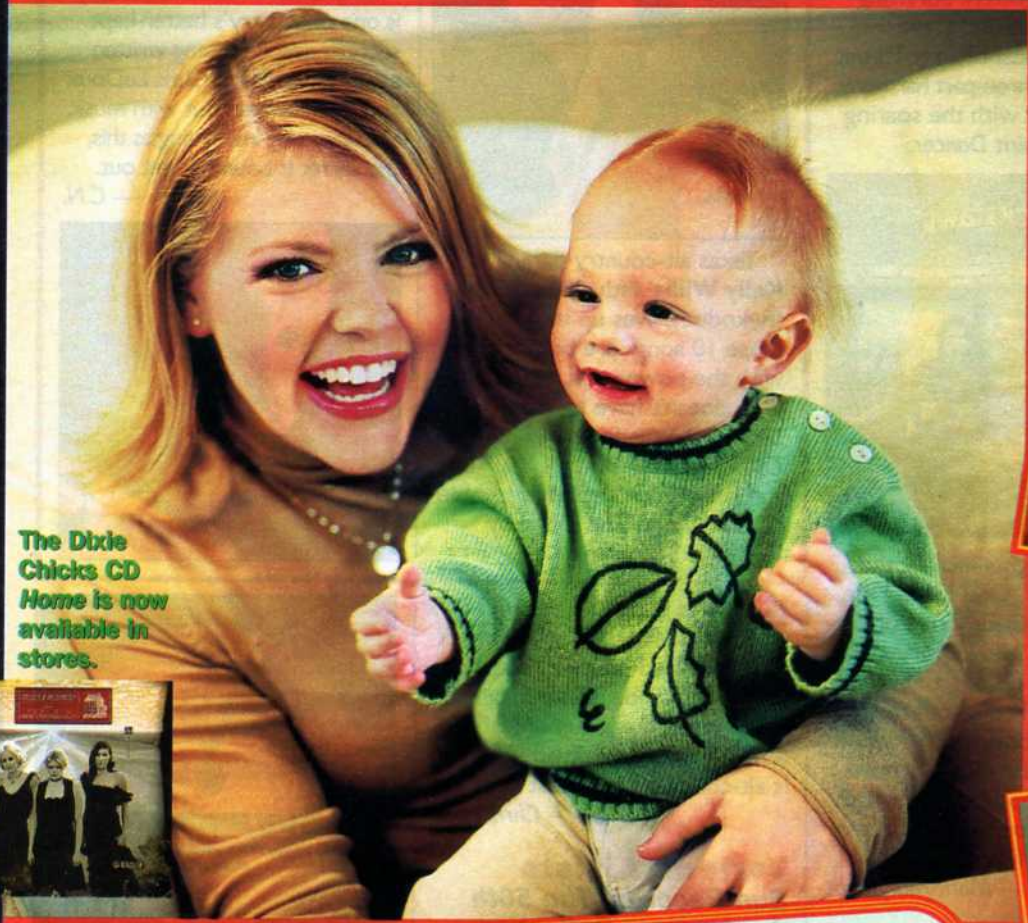


Natalie's Navidad



The Dixie Chicks CD *Home* is now available in stores.



Dixie Chick Natalie Maines shares her cherished family holiday treats



A very pre-stardom Natalie eagerly awaits Christmas gifts with sisters Laura and Kim. Hopefully, Natalie's visit to Santa (below) paid off.



CANDY CANE COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 egg slightly beaten
- 1 tsp. almond extract
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 ½ cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. red coloring



- ½ cup finely crushed peppermint candy
- ½ cup sugar

PREPARATION

Combine first 8 ingredients in large bowl. Mix well. Divide dough in half. Add food coloring to one portion, mixing well. Note: it helps to refrigerate dough before rolling. On a lightly floured surface, roll a teaspoonful of each dough (plain and colored) into a 4-inch-long rope. Place ropes side by side, and carefully twist together. Curve one end down to resemble a cane. Repeat with remaining dough. Place cookies on ungreased cookie sheets and bake at 375° for 9 minutes. Combine candy and sugar, mixing well. Remove cookies while warm from sheet and immediately coat with candy mixture.



There's no mistaking Christmastime in the Maines home – the stockings are hung, the presents are wrapped. But for Natalie, it's not really Christmas till the cookies are baked. "My mom, sister and I have made Candy Cane Cookies for as long as I can remember," declares the Chicks' lead singer. "It wouldn't be Christmas without them! They're not only delicious, they look beautiful on the holiday table."

Natalie's family also spreads holiday cheer by hosting a Christmas Eve open house for family and friends, featuring favorite holiday dishes like Chili Dip and Peanut Brittle.

This is the first of a special 3-part series – look for more holiday recipes from the Dixie Chicks in the Dec. 10 and Dec. 24 issues of *Country Weekly!*

All servingware and accessories available at Target.®

MICROWAVE PEANUT BRITTLE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup raw peanuts
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup Karo
- dash of salt
- 1 tbsp. margarine
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tbsp. vanilla



PREPARATION

In glass bowl, stir together peanuts, sugar, Karo and salt. Cook on high for 4 minutes. Stir and cook 3 more minutes. Add margarine and cook 2 more minutes. Take out of microwave and beat in baking soda and vanilla by hand. Pour immediately onto greased cookie sheet. Cool and break into pieces.



CHILI DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. regular bulk sausage
- 1 lb. grated Velveeta cheese
- 1 24-ounce can chili without beans
- tortilla chips



PREPARATION

Brown sausage. Pour off excess drippings. Add cheese and chili. Simmer over low heat. Serve hot from chafing dish.



FIRST NOEL

Dixie Chick Emily Robison prepares a holiday feast for her newly extended family

With the arrival of their newborn son, Charles Augustus, who the couple calls "Gus," this Christmas will be especially joyful for Emily and her husband, singer Charlie Robison. Baby Gus will be surrounded by doting family and friends, along with a bountiful holiday feast featuring a turkey prepared in a rather unusual way.

"I don't know where the tradition comes from," says Emily, "but my parents had pork and sauerkraut alongside the turkey, which has always been my favorite holiday meal."

After the main dishes are devoured, Emily can't wait to sample the Christmas Wreaths, a tasty treat made from marshmallows and corn flakes. Both she and sister (and fellow Chick) Martie claim them as their favorite holiday desserts.

— M.B. Roberts

BROCCOLI CHEESE CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cups uncooked rice
- 2¼ cups water
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 head of fresh broccoli, chopped
- 6-ounce roll of jalapeño cheese
- 4" block of Velveeta cheese
- 1 can mushroom soup
- dash of garlic salt
- 2 tbsp. of picante sauce



PREPARATION

Add rice and salt to water and steam until cooked (makes 3 cups cooked). Steam broccoli until barely tender and set aside. Melt jalapeño and Velveeta cheese. Stir in mushroom soup until completely blended. Add garlic salt and picante sauce (if desired). Fold broccoli and rice into hot cheese mixture. Pour into Pyrex dish and bake until hot and bubbly – approximately 30 minutes. Note: eliminate the rice and this makes a delicious hot dip!



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This is the third of a special 3-part series – look for more holiday recipes from the Dixie Chicks in the Nov. 26 and Dec. 10 issues of *Country Weekly!*



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Emily (above) anxiously awaited the arrival of baby Gus, who was born Nov. 11. She and husband Charlie (left) now have a new stocking to hang for Christmas at their home in Texas.

COURTESY: EMILY ROBISON

JAMES HINCHINFRONT PAGE PUBLICITY

CHRISTMAS WREATHS

INGREDIENTS

- 7 cups corn flakes
- 30 large marshmallows
- 4 tbsp. butter
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- green food coloring
- cinnamon red hots



PREPARATION

Melt butter and add marshmallows. Add vanilla and green food coloring until green. Stir in corn flakes and remove from heat. Butter hands, spread waxed paper and drop mixture by tablespoons on waxed paper. Make an indentation in the center. Another person should arrange cinnamon candies in a ring on the hot mixture. It should look like a wreath. Work quickly or the mixture will set up. Makes 30-36 wreaths.



PORK AND SAUERKRAUT

INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 lbs. lean, country spare ribs
- salt & pepper
- 1 large can or jar sauerkraut



Season ribs with salt and pepper and put them in the bottom of a crock pot. Pour sauerkraut and the juice from the can or jar over the pork. Plug in crock pot. (Hint: put it outside or your house may smell like sauerkraut for weeks!) Start on high heat. When mixture becomes hot and bubbly reduce to low. Check occasionally to make sure there is enough liquid in the pot. Add water if necessary. Cook at least four hours. Remove the bones and serve in a large dish.



Food

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Sweet Treats

Dixie Chick
Martie Maguire serves up holiday sugar, spice and everything nice!

When Martie thinks of Christmas she thinks of home – a cozy fire, a warm sweater and the chance to cuddle up to her new hubby, Gareth Maguire. But first things first. Before any cozying-up can get underway, there's baking to be done. The Chicks' sizzlin' fiddle player insists on something sweet.

"A yearly tradition in our home was making the sugar cookies, where the whole family got involved," recalls Martie. "We kids got to decorate the cookies any way we liked, which was great fun. It always turned into a massive art project!"

But a Chick can't live on cookies alone. Martie likes to start her holiday feast with a family favorite – tasty Chicken Artichoke Bake.

JAMES HANCOCK/FRONT PAGE PUBLICITY

SUGAR COOKIE CHRISTMAS CUT-OUTS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/3 cup shortening
- 1 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp. + 2 tsp. milk
- 4 cups sifted, all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt

PREPARATION

Thoroughly cream shortening, sugar and vanilla. Add egg. Beat until light and fluffy. Stir in milk. Sift together dry ingredients; blend into creamed mixture. Divide dough in quarters. Chill one hour.

On lightly floured surface, roll to 1/8" thickness. Cut in Christmas shapes with cutters. Bake on greased cookie sheet at 375° for 6–8 minutes. Cool slightly; remove from pan. We usually frost cookies with a thin powdered sugar icing and sprinkle with colored sugar and multicolored sprinkles. The dough may be refrigerated for several days and used as needed.



ICING

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup sifted powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- milk or orange juice

PREPARATION

In a small mixing bowl, combine powdered sugar and vanilla. Stir in 1 tbsp. milk or orange juice. Stir in additional milk or orange juice, 1 tsp. at a time, till icing is smooth and of drizzling consistency. You can flavor this icing with fruit juice or liqueur to match the flavor of the cake, cookies or nut bread. Makes about 1/2 cup.



