VALENTINE RED VELVET COOKIES WITH WHITE CHOCOLATE

A plate of red and white cookies

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***Valentine Red Velvet Cookies with White Chocolate****are the perfect way to celebrate the season of love. Whether you're enjoying them with your special valentine or sharing them with friends and family, these cookies are sure to bring smiles and warm hearts. Get ready to spread the love with my twist on scrumptious Red Velvet Cake and Red Velvet Cookies! With a kiss of cocoa powder and a touch of buttermilk, drizzled with silky Ghirardelli White Chocolate and sprinkled with colorful heart-shaped sprinkles, you will fall in love with these perfectly thick and chewy cookies! Happy baking and Happy Valentine's Day!*

**INGREDIENTS**:

**RED VELVET COOKIES**:

½ cup (8 Tablespoons; 113g) unsalted butter (softened to room temperature)

1 large egg (room temperature)

1 Tablespoon buttermilk (room temperature)

1-2/3 cups (210g) all-purpose flour

¼ cup (21g) unsweetened natural cocoa powder (not Dutch processed)

2 Tablespoons (16g) cornstarch

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup (165g) light or dark brown sugar

¼ cup (50g) granulated sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

3/4 teaspoon Americolor Super Red gel red food coloring (or alternative)

2 cups (11.5 oz/326g) Ghirardelli white chocolate chips (divided)

**TOPPING**:

1 bag (10 oz.) Ghirardelli White Vanilla Flavored Melting Wafers

¼ cup (2 oz.) holiday sprinkles

**HOW I MAKE THESE**:

1. Set butter, egg and buttermilk out to come to room temperature (this helps them incorporate into the cookie dough better).
2. **PREPARE COOKIE DOUGH**: In a medium bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, cornstarch, baking soda and salt and whisk together until well combined; set aside.
3. Using a hand mixer or a stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar together on medium speed until creamy, about 3 minutes.
4. Add the egg and mix on medium until combined, about 1 minute.
5. Add buttermilk, pure vanilla extract and food coloring and mix on medium until well blended, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl as needed.
6. Scrape down the sides and add in the flour mixture, ½ at a time, mixing just until blended; add remaining flour mixture and again mix just until blended. This cookie dough will be soft and sticky!
7. If you want a more vibrant red hue, add in more gel food coloring, a little at a time.
8. Add the white chocolate chips and blend on low speed until just combined.
9. Cover and chill the dough in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour (and up to 3 days). I recommend just 1 to 2 hours, for the perfect cookie spread. If chilling for longer than 2 hours, allow dough to sit at room temperature for at least 1 hour before rolling and baking because the dough will be quite hard.
10. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper; set aside.
11. Scoop with a medium cookie scoop (about 1.5 Tablespoons or 30-35g) of dough each. Arrange on the baking sheet about 3 inches apart.
12. Bake for 11–12 minutes or until the edges appear set. Centers will look very soft. Every oven is a little bit different, so watch your first batch when baking and time accordingly. **DO NOT OVERBAKE**, as these will lose their softness.
13. If the cookies didn’t spread, simply press down on the warm cookies with the back of a spoon to slightly flatten.
14. If desired, after removing from oven lightly press a few white chocolate chips onto the tops of the warm cookies.
15. Cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheets. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
16. **PREPARE WHITE CHOCOLATE DRIZZLE**: In a medium microwave-safe bowl, melt the white chocolate wafers according to package directions, stirring every 30 seconds until melted and smooth.
17. Immediately dip cooled cookies into melted white chocolate (or drizzle with melted white chocolate) and place on a parchment-paper lined baking sheet; sprinkle immediately with your favorite holiday sprinkles. Allow to cool at room temperature until the chocolate sets.
18. Store cookies in an airtight container for 3-4 days – if they last that long!

**YIELD**: 24 cookies

**RECIPE NOTES**:

**WEIGH INGREDIENTS CAREFULLY FOR BEST RESULTS:** If I can only share one baking secret with you, always use a DIGITAL KITCHEN SCALE. You *can* use measuring cups and spoons for most recipes, but using a digital scale makes for the more consistent and efficient baking. Take this from someone that bakes A LOT!

**RED VELVET COLOR**: For true Red Velvet, you’ll want to tint the cookie dough red. I use and recommend Americolor Super Red gel food color; if you use liquid food color you’ll need much more of it for the color to be truly red. If you’re looking for a natural alternative, use 2 teaspoons of beet powder - the red color stands out more in cookie dough than in cake batter (and doesn't taste like beets). If you prefer to skip the food coloring, the cookies will have a light brown color – but taste the same.

**DON’T OVERBAKE**: For soft and chewy cookies, remove the cookies from the oven when the edges are set but the centers look *slightly*underdone. Don’t worry! They will continue to bake and set-up as they cool on the cookie sheets – giving you a perfectly soft and chewy texture!

**TO KEEP THESE COOKIES FRESH:** These cookies will stay soft, chewy and fresh for up to 3 days in an air-tight container kept in the refrigerator. Fully decorated cookies (dipped or drizzled with melted white chocolate) can also be refrigerated until ready to serve.

**MAKE AHEAD TIP:**  You can bake these cookies and freeze ahead of time – simply defrost before you plan on serving.  Baked and frosted cookies freeze well in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

**BEFORE FREEZING:** With decorated cookies, it’s important to **chill** the cookie prior to placing them into a container so that the frosting remains intact.Place all frosted cookies on a parchment paper lined baking sheet and pop it in the fridge. Once the white chocolate is set and hard (usually an hour), the cookies can be frozen in airtight containers with parchment paper between layers.

**HOW TO THAW FROSTED COOKIES:** For frosted cookies, thaw them in the fridge and **NOT** at room temp. To keep your cookies from getting soggy and white chocolate from losing shape and texture, remove from the freezer and place the unopened container in the refrigerator overnight to thaw before serving.

**CAN I MAKE** **GLUTEN-FREE VALENTINE RED VELVET COOKIES WITH WHITE CHOCOLATE?** You can easily make this recipe gluten-free by substituting your favorite 1:1 gluten free flour for the all-purpose flour - I use and recommend *King Arthur, Measure for Measure Flour* and *Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour*.

**RECIPE VARIATIONS**:

**RED VELVET CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES:** Substitute your favorite chocolate chip (dark chocolate, semi-sweet or milk chocolate) for the white chocolate chips.

**RED VELVET CHOCOLATE COOKIES**: Substitute melted Ghirardelli dark or milk chocolate melting wafers for dipping or drizzling the white chocolate wafers.

**RED VELVET CRINKLE COOKIES:**If you’d like red velvet crinkle cookies, skip the chocolate chips in the dough. Refrigerate the cookie dough for at least 2 hours. Roll the dough into 1.5 Tablespoon-size balls (about 30 to 35g each), then roll each into confectioners sugar twice before placing on baking pans. Bake time is the same.

**GLUTEN-FREE VALENTINE RED VELVET COOKIES**: Substitute your favorite 1:1 gluten free flour for the all-purpose flour - I use and recommend *King Arthur, Measure for Measure Flour* and *Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour*.

**CHRISTMAS RED VELVET COOKIES**: Substitute your favorite Christmas holiday sprinkles for Valentine sprinkles.

**PATRIOTIC RED VELVET COOKIES**: Drizzle or dip with a selection of red, white and blue melted candy melts, and sprinkle with red, white & blue star sprinkles!

*Original recipe created by Snowflakes & Coffeecakes; published February 2024.*

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