

Bee's McMillan Coffee Morning German Christmas Download

Three Ultimate German Christmas Baking Recipes

Two Famous German Christmas Poems

One Beautiful Video with German Christmas Songs

&

Lot's of memories





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Welcome, to Bee's "McMillan Coffee Morning German Christmas Download".

Welcome, to Bee's "McMillan Coffee Morning German Christmas Download". Thanks very much for donating to McMillan [here on my Coffee Morning Page](#) (If you are from another country than the UK, please donate to a cancer charity in your country. It doesn't work on my page even though I thought it would. I am so sorry.). Of course only if you haven't done so already :-). But thanks all the same!!!!

Having Cancer is a scary experience. Your life suddenly is filled with appointments and treatments suggestions that you need to decide about. You have no idea what all these treatments mean and if they are really good for you or not. It is confusing. And you feel alone.

That is why [McMillan](#) is so essential. They offer not only the information you need. They also provide people you can talk to and a forum to share what's going on. And all this isn't only for you but also for your family and friends to find help and support. That is so important for everybody who is affected by Cancer.

McMillan has helped me a lot to understand what I am going through but also to know more about my treatment. The hospital where I am treated uses only McMillan information on everything from Chemotherapy to benefits if you can't work. Their critical work deserves support, and so I have started to fundraise for them.

And just in case you think Cancer does not concern you:

According to Cancer Research: "There were 17 million new cases of cancer (all cancers combined excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) worldwide in 2018: 8.8 million (52%) in males and 8.2 million (48%) in females..." ([Cancer Research on Worldwide Data](#)). The projection is that cancer rates will have increased by 62% worldwide in 2040. So please, if you haven't already donated to any Cancer charity anywhere do so now. Thanks!

When I was pondering what I could add as a little surprise for my "McMillan Coffee Morning" post on "[The Bee Writes](#)" I thought about a recipe booklet. However, I couldn't quite decide which recipes I wanted to use, and I didn't have much time to create it because I decided just last week to take part in "McMillan's Coffee Morning".

So I thought about Christmas and how it is such a massive thing in my German home country. One thought led to the other, and so here it is:

"Bee's [McMillan Coffee Morning](#) German Christmas Download"

I hope you enjoy what I share with you and may it inspire you to make something special this year at Christmas despite or because of the virus!



3 Ultimate German Christmas Baking Recipes

Ok, I have to admit I am not a huge Christmas fan anymore. I used to love the excitement, the decorating, baking and preparing for the "big day" but then I started working in a supermarket. If you never had the honour to do so, you cannot imagine the stress that goes into the Christmas trading time. It is the most crucial time for a supermarket where the most money is made. If the Christmas trade fails, the whole business fails basically. When I left my job, I was "Christmas-Traumatized" and my opinion now about this holiday is: "It's all about the money!"

Now that's a downer! And I wanted to give you a joyful surprise... ;-)

My grandmother came from the Ore Mountains.

But hey the last ten years isn't all my life. And not all my Christmas life either. My family partly comes from the South of Germany and partly from the East. The area where my granny came from is a mountainous region called "Erzgebirge" or Ore Mountains which has an old toy and Christmas decoration-making tradition. While it was difficult when I was young to visit my relatives over there in the former communist GDR, it wasn't impossible. We went there several times and saw some of the beautiful museums in the region. Please have a look at "Dan Flying Solo's" post about the area [here](#) to find out more.

The region is close to Dresden which might ring a bell. It was pretty much destroyed in WWII. Its famous church the "Frauenkirche" [was reduced to rubble but was rebuilt](#) after The Wall came down. But it's also known for a Christmas Bread that played a massive part in our Christmas festivities: The Dresdner Christstollen.

Now, if you are from the UK, you might have had some Stollen from the supermarket. If you had it from Lidl or Aldi, it comes pretty close to how a Stollen should look and taste like. A Stollen from any other supermarket: Forget it! A Stollen is made from rather heavy yeast dough with lots of dried fruit and orange and citrus peel. It is not a soft light affair. Far from it. In fact, my relatives used to make it in November and then let it rest until the middle of December so the soaked dried fruit could make the bread moist and delicious.

Every year at Christmas we got a huge parcel from "drueben" meaning "over there". That's what we used to say instead of "from the GDR". Of course, our relatives could not get many presents as "capitalist consumerism" was frowned upon. But they always made sure we got a huge Stollen and other delicious bits. And they had lovely children's books. We always got something different. My great aunt went to the local bakery and borrowed one of their nearly two-meter long baking trays. Then she made her Stollen and brought it back to the bakery



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for baking. As far as I remember that used to be "normal" in the GDR. Of course, we didn't get all the two meters of Stollen. But at least half a meter made it our way every year.

Christstollen Recipe

Guess what? I have a recipe for you that comes very close to how my relatives Stollen tasted like. It is from an old recipe book of my husbands. It's called "The Cook's Guide to Bread" by Christine Ingram and Jennie Shapter and was published in 1999. He made it for me a couple of times and transported me back to my childhood.

So here you go. Number one of three essential German Christmas recipes:

Stollen Ingredients

75g/3oz/1/2 cup sultanas
50g/2oz/1/4 cup currants
45ml/3 tbsp rum
375g/13oz/3 1/4 cups unbleached white bread flour
2.5 ml/1/2 tsp salt
50g/2oz/1/4 cup caster sugar
1.5ml/1/4 tsp ground cardamom
40g/1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
40g/1 1/2oz fresh yeast
120ml/4fl oz/1/2 cup lukewarm milk
50g/2oz/1/4 cup butter, melted
1 egg, lightly beaten
50g/2oz/1/3 cup mixed chopped peel
50g/2oz/1/3 cup blanched whole almonds, chopped
melted butter, for brushing
icing sugar, for dusting

For the almond filling

115g/4oz/1 cup ground almonds
50g/2oz/1/4 cup caster sugar
50g/2oz/1/2 cup icing sugar
2.5ml/1/2 tsp lemon juice
1/2 egg, lightly beaten

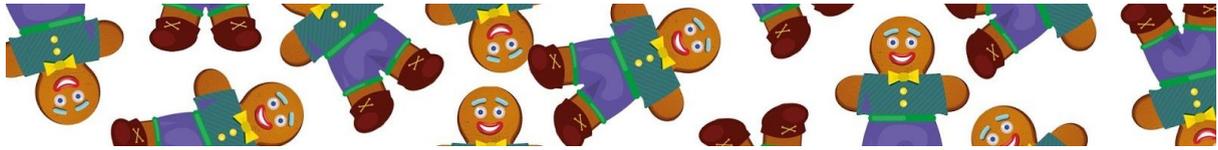
Makes 1 large loaf



Method (Stollen)

1. Lightly grease a baking sheet. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas4. Put the sultanas and currants in a heatproof bowl and warm for 3-4 minutes. Pour over the rum and set aside.
2. Sift the flour and salt together into a large bowl. Stir in the sugar and spices.
3. Mix the yeast with the milk until creamy. Pour into the flour and mix a little of the flour from around the edge into the milk mixture to make a thick batter. Sprinkle some of the remaining flour over the top of the batter, then cover with clear film and leave in a warm place for 30 minutes.
4. Add the melted butter and egg and mix to a soft dough. Turn out the dough on to a lightly floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with lightly oiled clear film and leave to rise, in a warm place, for 2-3 hours, or until doubled in bulk.
5. Mix the ground almonds and sugars together for the filling. Add the lemon juice and sufficient egg to knead to a smooth paste. Shape into a 20cm/8inch long sausage, cover and set aside.
6. Turn out the dough on to a lightly floured surface and knead back.
7. Pat out the dough into a rectangle about 2.5cm/1in thick and sprinkle over the sultanas, currants, mixed chopped peel and almonds. Fold and knead the dough to incorporate the fruit and nuts.
8. Roll out the dough into an oval about 30x23cm/12x9in. Roll the centre slightly thinner than the edges. Place the almond filling along the centre and fold over the dough to enclose it, making sure that the top of the dough doesn't completely cover the base. The top edge should be slightly in from the bottom edge. Press down to seal.
9. Place the loaf on the prepared baking sheet, cover with lightly oiled clear film and leave to rise, in a warm place, for 45-60 minutes, or until doubled in size.
10. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200c/400f/Gas6. Bake the loaf for about 30 minutes, or until it sounds hollow when tapped on the base. Brush the top with melted butter and transfer to a wired rack to cool. Dust with icing sugar just before serving.

[Here is a video](#) with a slightly different recipe by Stephany Jaworski from Joyofbaking.com which gives you an idea of how to form the Stollen.



Little Bee sat on the kitchen top while mum baked.

I wish I had a photo of that. One of my most treasured memories of my mother, who passed away from breast cancer when I was 12, is sitting on the kitchen top while she was baking. My mum always involved me in baking, no matter how young I was. At first, she just did her thing and then let me lick the bowl. Delicious :-). Later she taught me some basics. I also learned from my grandmother and in school. Aged 13 or so I started baking by myself. That is when I learned how to make a mean [Linzer Torte](#).

What was my favourite Christmas cookie when I was young?

Spitzbuben/ Naughty Boys

This is a recipe from the South of Germany, ([Swabia](#)) where I grew up. "Spitzbuben" are jam sandwiched in two basic biscuits. Here is the recipe that I work with currently. No idea where I got it from

Spitzbuben Ingredients

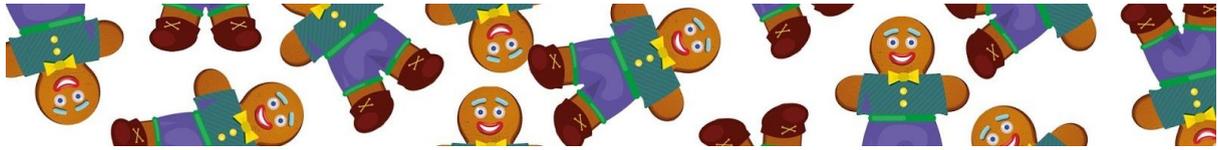
300g/10.5oz/2 1/3 cups All-purpose flour
200g/7oz/1 cup butter
150g/5.3oz/1 7/50 cups icing sugar
1 tbsp vanilla sugar or vanilla extract

Raspberry/Strawberry jam
lemon juice

icing sugar for dusting

Method (Spitzbuben)

1. Add butter and icing sugar to mixing bowl and mix until soft.
2. Add vanilla sugar or extract and mix in.
3. Add flour and mix until ball forms.
4. Wrap in cling film and let rest in the fridge for at least 1/2 an hour
5. Prepare a baking tray with baking parchment or baking paper
6. Preheat oven at 200C/400F/Gas6
7. Take the dough out of fridge and roll half of the dough out thinly.
8. Cut out circles (original) or any form you like
9. Put cut out dough onto the tray and bake for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned outside.
10. Add to a cooling tray.
11. Repeat stages 7-10 with rest of dough



12. Mix jam with a little lemon juice
13. Spread on half of the biscuits
14. Top with other half of biscuits
15. Dust with icing sugar on both sides
16. Enjoy!!!!

And while we're at it ;-) what is my second favourite Christmas cookie?

Zimtsterne.

Ah, imagine ground almonds, cinnamon and a sugary coating. What's not to love? Unfortunately, the recipe is a little fiddly, so I haven't made any for years. But I do miss them. Will have to see if I can make them with date sugar too as I won't be eating any refined sugar anymore to reduce my cancer risk.

I have "stolen" this recipe from "[The Spruce Eats](#)" a brilliant blog about baking and cooking. They have a cool newsletter and incredible recipes so please head over and maybe sign up. Thanks.

Zimtsterne Ingredients

- 4 large egg whites (at room temperature)
- 3 1/2 cups/390 g confectioners' sugar
- 4 cups/400 g raw [almond meal](#)
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- Optional: 1 ounce Kirschwasser

Method (Zimtsterne)

SHOW IMAGES

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. In a large bowl or stand mixer, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form.
3. Add the confectioners' sugar 1/2 cup at a time, beating for 1 minute between each addition. Continue beating for 5 minutes after the last addition. The mixture should be very stiff, like the icing used to hold a gingerbread house together.
4. Remove 1/2 cup of this meringue mixture and set aside for icing.
5. Fold the raw almond meal and cinnamon into the larger portion of meringue. Add the Kirschwasser, if you are using it, and incorporate.
6. Chill the dough for about 1 hour.
7. Using ample confectioners' sugar on your baking board or clean countertop, pat the dough into a square and roll out to 1/2-inch thick (or 1 centimeter).



8. Cut out stars with a cookie cutter that has been dusted with confectioners' sugar. Dust the cookie cutter between each cut.

Tip

- Cutting out the stars is a sticky process. Wash off and thoroughly dry the cookie cutter as often as necessary to achieve sharp star points.
1. Place stars on a nonstick cookie sheet or a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.
 2. Brush or spread the reserved meringue icing on each star, working it out to all the points.
 3. Let the stars dry overnight (about 24 hours, if you can). An oven is a good place if you don't forget they are there and heat for something else.
 4. The next day, heat the oven to 325 F. Bake each tray for 10 to 15 minutes. This is to dry out the cookies a little more and bake the egg whites. Try to remove the cookies before the icing turns brown, although a little brown tint can look nice.
 5. Remove the cookies from the baking sheet and let them cool completely on a wire rack before storing in a covered container in a dry place at room temperature.
 6. Enjoy with tea or coffee, or place them in pretty, beribboned bags to be given away as a little gift.

Tip

- You can make the almond meal yourself in a blender or buy it in the baking aisle of many grocery stores or natural food stores. Some Zimtsterne recipes ask for blanched, ground almonds. These are perfectly fine to use but the extra step of removing the skin is quite a bit more work and does not affect the final product much.

Please find a slightly different recipe [here on YouTube by CookSwiss](#). It also shows how to make them.



Two Famous German Christmas Poems

My grandmother had a thing for poetry. She used to recite poems that she had learned by heart in school. One of my German teachers was rather old-fashioned. He always told us that learning poetry by heart is an excellent way to keep your mind from getting lazy and unlearning essential skills. So while all the other children never had to learn a poem by heart, we still did. I can still recite the first few parts of Schiller's "[The Pledge](#)".

It was customary to read or recite some of the beautiful Christmas poems that Germany has to offer. Luckily for us Thought.Co translated some of them [here](#). Yes, I know I am cheating here big time but hey: I only had a couple of days to prepare for this. I promise next time I'll do better ;-)

These two are the one's that our family loved the best:

"Vom Christkind/ From the Christ Child" by Anne Ritter

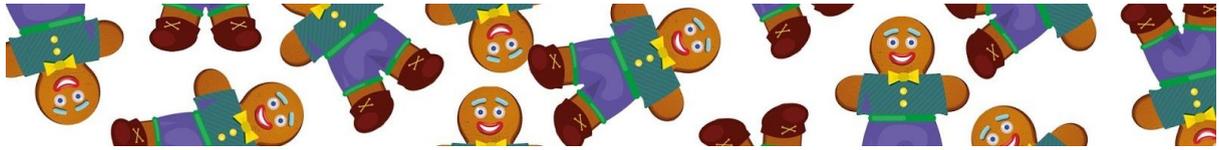
Anne Ritter (1865–1921) was born Anne Nuhn in Coburg, Bavaria. Her family moved to New York City while she was still young, but she returned to Europe to attend boarding schools. Married to Rudolf Ritter in 1884, Ritter settled in Germany.

Ritter is known for her lyrical poetry and "Vom Christkind" is one of her best-known works. It is often referenced using the first line as the title, commonly translated as "I think I saw the Christ Child." It is a very popular German poem that's often recited at Christmas time.

Denkt euch, ich habe das Christkind gesehen!
Es kam aus dem Walde, das Mützchen voll Schnee, mit rotgefrorenem Näschen.
Die kleinen Hände taten ihm weh,
denn es trug einen Sack, der war gar schwer,
schleppte und polterte hinter ihm her.
Was drin war, möchtet ihr wissen?
Ihr Naseweise, ihr Schelmenpack-
denkt ihr, er wäre offen, der Sack?
Zugebunden, bis oben hin!
Doch war gewiss etwas Schönes drin!
Es roch so nach Äpfeln und Nüssen!

English Translation of "From the Christ Child"

*Can you believe it! I have seen the Christ child.
He came out of the forest, his hat full of snow,
With a red frosted nose.*



*His little hands were sore,
Because he carried a heavy sack,
That he dragged and lugged behind him,
What was inside, you want to know?
So you think the sack was open
you cheeky, mischievous bunch?
It was bound, tied at the top
But there was surely something good inside
It smelled so much like apples and nuts.*

Source: Thought.Co

Father Christmas isn't so much a feature in German Christmasses. Maybe he is now, but he never used to be. Christmas was more connected with Jesus's birth, so in many areas of Germany, the Christ child brings the presents and not Father Christmas.

Saint Nicolas

There is however a connection with father Christmas too but earlier in the Advent time. And that is Saint Nicolas day. In the evening of December 5th German children put out their boots on the front of the porch and in the morning they find it full of fruit and sweets. However, there is a dark side too. When I was young, we were told that we only get fruit and sweets if we were nice. If we were naughty, we would receive a "Knutte" which is a broom or branch to punish children with. "Knecht Ruprecht" brings the broom, and Saint Nicolas brings the sweet stuff. DeliriumReal does a little run down of the traditions [here](#).

There is one poem that usually accompanies the celebrations, and that is "Von Draussen vom Walde da komm ich her" by Theodore Storm.

David Millard did a brilliant translation of it on [Choral Music](#):



Von drauß' vom Walde komm ich her/From afar, from the forest I come here by Theodore Storm

Original text and translations

German text

*Von drauß' vom Walde komm ich her;
Ich muss euch sagen, es weihnachtet sehr!
Allüberall auf den Tannenspitzen
Sah ich goldene Lichtlein sitzen;
Und droben aus dem Himmelstor
Sah mit großen Augen das Christkind hervor;*

*Und wie ich so stolcht' durch den finstern Tann,
Da rief's mich mit heller Stimme an:
"Knecht Ruprecht", rief es, "alter Gesell,
Hebe die Beine und spute dich schnell!
Die Kerzen fangen zu brennen an,
Das Himmelstor ist aufgetan,
Alt' und Junge sollen nun
Von der Jagd des Lebens einmal ruhn;
Und morgen flieg ich hinab zur Erden,
Denn es soll wieder Weihnachten werden!"*

*Ich sprach: "O lieber Herre Christ,
Meine Reise fast zu Ende ist;
Ich soll nur noch in diese Stadt,
Wo's eitel gute Kinder hat."*

*"Hast denn das Säcklein auch bei dir?"
Ich sprach: "Das Säcklein, das ist hier:
Denn Äpfel, Nuss und Mandelkern
Essen fromme Kinder gern."*

*"Hast denn die Rute auch bei dir?"
Ich sprach: "Die Rute, die ist hier;
Doch für die Kinder nur, die schlechten,
Die trifft sie auf den Teil, den rechten."*

*Christkindlein sprach:" So ist es recht;
So geh mit Gott, mein treuer Knecht!"*

Von drauß' vom Walde komm ich her;



*Ich muss euch sagen, es weihnachtet sehr!
Nun sprecht, wie ich's hierinnen find!
Sind's gute Kind, sind's böse Kind?*

Theodor Storm (1817–1888)

English translation by David Millard

*From afar, from the forest I come here;
I must tell you, it is truly Christmastide!
Everywhere, on the tops of the fir trees
I saw little golden lights were placed
and above them from the Gate of Heaven
I saw with wide eyes the Christ Child before me.*

*And as I wandered through the shady trees,
He called out to me with a clear voice:
“Knecht Ruprecht!”, he called, “Old Companion,
Pick up your legs and hurry along!
The candles are starting to burn,
The Gate of Heaven has been opened;
Old and young must now
rest awhile from the pursuits of life,
and tomorrow I will fly down to earth;
then it truly shall be Christmas!”*

*I said: “O dear Lord Christ,
my journey is nearly at an end;
I need only visit this city
where there are only good children.”*

*“Have you your little bag with you, then?”
I said: “The little bag is here;
its apples, nuts and almonds
the pious children will gladly eat.”*

*“Have you the birch-rod also with you?”
I said: “The birch-rod, it is here;
and so, as for the bad children,
they will receive their fair share of strokes!”*

*The Christ Child says: “That’s as it should be;
go with God my faithful servant!”*

From afar, from the forest I come here;



*I must tell you, it truly is Christmastide!
Now tell me, what will I find herein—
a good child, or a wicked child?*

Translation by David Millard

Well, I just figured out why I love poetry ;-)

One Beautiful Video with German Christmas Songs

And what is Christmas without music? Nothing. Nothing at all, I would say. Some of the most famous Christmas songs were created in Germany. But you can guess many Germans nowadays instead go for the more modern American songs.

When I was young, we did the old ones, though. My mum could play the harmonium, and she did every Christmas. We stood around the instrument and sang. There was always a Christmas tree with real candles and the presents underneath. German children are lucky. They get their presents on the 24th in the evening. So Christmas morning you can sleep in because you were allowed to stay up late the night before and play or read or do whatever you feel like doing.

We usually had a late but big breakfast. In the afternoon we went for a walk and then the big Christmas dinner happened later in the afternoon. We usually had goose or turkey, but in the North of Germany, you often have carp instead. Ah, I digressed a little, didn't I?

So here is the link to the Christmas Song video: [The Most Beautiful German Christmas Songs by Christmas World on YouTube](#). This is also the sort of music that would play in our house all Christmas long. We would also listen to Bach's "[Weihnachts Oratorium](#)".

Please enjoy Christmas despite everything!

Well, I think deep down in me there is still that little girl that loved Christmas. The German traditions are beautiful, and maybe my soon-to-be 50-year-old cynical self can retrieve some of this happiness this year.

I hope you enjoyed my little trip down memory lane. You do not need to bake the treats only at Christmas. I have made "Naughty Boys" all year round as my daughter from another mother just loves them.

Thanks for downloading and donating. You rock, and I appreciate you and yours!!!!