

Santas

These jolly fellas bring good cheer and hearty ho-ho-hos.

YOU'LL NEED

48 uncoated cake balls (please see separate recipe)

3 deep, microwave-safe plastic bowls

64 oz (1.8 kg) white candy coating

2 to 3 oz (55 to 85 g) pink candy coating

1 to 2 oz (30 to 55 g) chocolate candy coating

48 lollipop sticks

Styrofoam block

16 oz (455 g) red candy coating

Toothpicks

48 white Sixlets

48 pink confetti sprinkles

96 white candy-coated sunflower seeds

Sanding sugar

Black edible-ink pen

Peach edible-ink pen

TO DECORATE

1. Have the cake balls chilled and in the refrigerator.

2. In one of the microwave-safe bowls, melt together 48 oz (1.4 kg) of the white candy coating with the pink and chocolate candy coating, following the instructions on the package. Add more or less of each color to achieve a darker or lighter shade for Santa's face. The coating should be about 3 in (7.5 cm) deep for easier dipping.

3. When you are ready to dip, remove a few cake balls at a time from the refrigerator, keeping the rest chilled.

4. One at a time, dip about 1/2 in (12 mm) of the tip of a lollipop stick into the melted candy coating and insert the dipped end straight into a cake ball, pushing it no more than halfway through. Dip the cake pop into the melted coating. Gently lift the pop out of the coating and tap off any excess: Hold it over the bowl in your left hand, and tap your left wrist gently with your right hand. If you use the hand holding the cake pop to shake off excess coating, the force of the movement will be too strong and could cause the cake ball to loosen or fly off the lollipop stick. Tapping the wrist holding the cake pop absorbs some of the impact. The excess coating will fall off, but you will need to rotate the lollipop stick so the coating doesn't build up on one

side, making it too heavy on that side. If too much coating starts to build up at the base of the stick, simply use your finger to wipe it off, spinning the lollipop stick at the same time. This can happen if the coating is too thin or too hot. It's not as hard as it sounds; it just takes a little practice. Stand the pop firmly in a hole in the Styrofoam block. Repeat with the remaining cake balls. Let dry.

5. Meanwhile, melt the red candy coating in a microwave-safe bowl. When dry, dip each pop in the red coating about one-third of the way up the sides, at a slight angle. Return to the Styrofoam block and let dry completely.

6. Melt the remaining white candy coating in another microwave-safe bowl. Using a toothpick, dot some of the melted white coating on one side of each cake pop in position for the ball of Santa's hat, and attach a white Sixlet to each.

7. Using the toothpick, apply more white coating for each Santa's beard. Place a pink confetti sprinkle for a mouth on each. Continue layering white coating on the pop for a nice full beard. Once it starts to set, it's easy to continue adding layers. Let dry completely in the Styrofoam block.

8. Dot on more melted white coating above the confetti sprinkles and attach 2 white sunflower seeds to each in position for the mustache and let dry.

9. Apply more white coating at the base of the hat and sprinkle sanding sugar on top while the coating is still wet. (Sprinkle over a bowl so you can catch the sugar and reuse it.) Use some of the remaining tinted white coating to dot on a cute nose using a toothpick. Using the black edible-ink pen, draw eyes on the Santas. Draw cheeks with the peach edible-ink pen. Dab the cheeks so they look blended.

10. Return each Santa to the Styrofoam block as you finish. Let the cake pops dry completely.