

Black Walnut Trees – Rhoten Nisten Trail

Black walnut trees grow well on rich bottomlands in moist, fertile coves and on lower slopes throughout the state. These trees normally reach 50-90 feet in height and 2 – 3 feet in diameter. They mature in about 150 years although some can live as long as 250 years.

The trees produce a chemical called juglone which is toxic to certain plant species. That is why the vegetation growing under black walnut trees is different than what grows around other trees. The heartwood of black walnut trees, with its rich chocolate brown color, is one of the most valuable native woods due to its superior quality and value. It is heavy, strong, doesn't shrink or splinter and warps very little when dried. Because of these qualities, black walnut is used in fine furniture, cabinetwork, and gunstocks.

Early colonists exported this wood to England as early as 1610. Throughout the early 1800s, it became so heavily used for furniture making that the trees became scarce. Around 1970, the use of black walnut once again became popular and today it is making a comeback by competing with black cherry and white oak as one of the fine North American hardwoods.

The nut from the black walnut tree, a favorite of squirrels, has a stronger flavor than an English walnut and is good for baking, in ice cream or used as a topping. The ground up shells can be used by manufacturers to deburr precision gears. Ground shell products are also used to clean jet engines, as additives to drilling mud for oil drilling operations, as filler in dynamite, as a nonslip agent in automobile tires, as an air-pressured propellant to strip paints, as a filter agent for scrubbers in smokestacks, and as a flour-like carrying agent in various insecticides.

FYI: Two pounds of unshelled natural black walnuts will yield about a cupful of nut meats.

This site, a part of the "Geocaching for History" program, was researched and placed on the

Ararat River Greenway by the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History in partnership with Kids in Parks-Track Trails System – Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina Foundation and the North Carolina Humanities Council. The goal of this program is to encourage physical activity and exploration of the history of our community.

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Black Walnut Tree



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Black Walnuts



Black Walnut Wood



Black Walnut Cookie Recipe

Black Walnut Cookies



There are not many cookie recipes made just for black walnuts and, contrary to what you might think, black walnuts do not taste the same as regular walnuts. This recipe makes use of the unique flavor of the black walnut. The cookie is easy to assemble and bake. It can be soft or crunchy depending on how long you make it and the length of time you bake it. It has a wonderful flavor that is different from other cookies on any cookie platter. The difference between this and a regular walnut cookie is an adult pleasure rather than a cookie for the kids. Grab a cup of coffee and indulge!

Ingredients:

1 Teaspoon Vanilla	1 Teaspoon Salt coarse
2 Teaspoons Baking Powder	2 Eggs beaten
¼ Cup Milk	1 Cup Black Walnuts chopped
1 Cup shortening	½ Cup Dark Corn Syrup
2 ½ Cups Flour Sifted	¾ Cup Sugar granulated or brown

Directions:

1. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Cream shortening.
2. Add sugar gradually and cream until light and fluffy.
3. Add corn syrup; blend thoroughly.
4. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
5. Stir in vanilla and nuts.
6. Add sifted dry ingredients, alternately with milk. Drop by teaspoonsful on greased cookie sheet. Bake in moderate oven (375 degrees) for 12-15 minutes.

Nutritional Facts

Servings Per Recipe: 60

