

# BOOK DESIGN NEWS

Summer 1996

VOLUME IV ISSUE III

"PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!"

CELEBRATING TWENTY-ONE YEARS IN BOOK DESIGN

## WHO & WHAT'S NEW

• *Iomega Zip Drive.* Earlier this year, I switched over to the Iomega 100MB Zip disks for data storage and transfer. I have found many printers, publishers, and designers falling in love with this portable, inexpensive, and versatile drive.

The installation is painless and the drive can be easily moved from one machine to another, providing quick and easy file transfers. *Check it out!*

• *My "New" Web Page.* If you've have not logged on to my web site in the last month, you are in for a surprise. My pages have a new look with a far more readable and enjoyable format (para indents!).

I hope to be adding to my "Recipes" and "Tips & Techniques," sections, reviving my "Pepsi" page, as well as introducing some new and fun features to the site.

Since early last year, my web site has served as an introduction to *John Reinhardt Book Design*. All my past newsletters are available there, as well as a partial list of some of the (more than 800) books I've done, and you can even get to know a little more about me. Wow!

Check it all out and let me tell you what you think.

## CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES & DESIGN

And you thought I only design *books!* I'm not only famous for my **Original Microwave Potato Chips\*** but I'm also known for my perfect execution of the chocolate chip cookie. I use the same recipe everyone else uses—the one that comes on the bag of Nestle's Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chip Morsels—but I am convinced the success of these cookies depend on the following two factors:

- The quality of the individual ingredients
- The manner in which these ingredients come together

The quality of your books depends on these two elements as well. Most publishers produce books in nearly the same manner. The difference between top-notch and so-so books lies in the quality of the people involved and the manner (attitude) in which the elements come together.

A terrifically written book that is poorly designed might not be as successful as a poorly written book that has an outstanding design. Remember, a good designer serves the book, not the other way around.

Any cookie can look good, but does it taste good? Do you ever notice something just isn't right about the cookie you are eating? Could it be the cookie designer used a teaspoon of "imitation" vanilla extract instead of "real" vanilla extract?

The point is that each "ingredient" of the production of a book should be treated with as much importance as any other step. The final product will only be as good as its weakest element. So think twice before you hand over your next manuscript to an "imitation" book designer.

Okay, so enough about book design, let's get on with the recipe. Here is my recipe for "the best" chocolate chip cookies. I'm serious about this, if you follow this recipe **exactly**, and I mean e-x-a-c-t-l-y, you will have some of the finest chocolate chip cookies cooling before your eyes.

Alllllrighty then. Pay close attention to the method and the order, as well as to the individual ingredients, and remember: *Exactly!* Here we go . . .

*continued back page . . .*

*continued from front page . . .*

**1. Turn your oven on and set the temperature to 375°.**

**2. In a small bowl, crack and spill:**

*2 large eggs (remove shells!)*

**3. In a bigger bowl, combine:**

*2¼ cups of Gold Medal "Better for Bread" Flour*

*1 teaspoon of Morton's salt*

*1 teaspoon of Arm & Hammer baking soda*

**4. In an ever bigger bowl, combine:**

*1 stick (cup) of Crisco's All-Vegetable Shortening  
(with butter or without, your choice!)*

*¾ cup Domino's light brown sugar*

*¾ cup Domino's granulated white sugar*

*1 teaspoon of McCormick's pure vanilla extract.*

**5. Waiting patiently for its turn:**

*2 cups Nestle's Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels*

Still with me? I use a hand mixer and slowly and thoroughly mix the flour mixture (#3). I then move over to the egg mixture (#2) and mix the eggs at high speed until they become one, big, yellow mess.

From the egg bowl it is on to the big bowl containing the sugar and shortening mixture (#4). I work this mixture thoroughly and find it to be one of the highlights of the process. I will stop mixing two or three times to scrape the mixture back down to the center of the bowl, finally leaving a pocket, or "well," in the center of the mixture. I then pour the egg mixture into this pocket. Mix it goooooo!

When I am satisfied that I have brought this mixture to be one, I add the flour mixture in three separate batches, mixing each batch completely.

When all of the above ingredients are completely and thoroughly mixed (Are you keeping track of how many times I use the word "thoroughly?" There may be a test.), I begin mixing in the Nestle's Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chip Morsels and continue to mix until I see that the entire mix takes on the appearance of one big cookie. Every chip should be covered by the mix.

**WARNING:** It is important to note at this time, that during the combining of ingredients, you may experience taste requests from passersby. This is normal and will undoubtedly become even more of a nuisance during future batches of these cookies. Because of this disturbance, I usually do my cookies alone. Regardless, you *must* heed this warning:

**Under absolutely no circumstances allow anyone to "taste" the mix until you have finished the entire mixing process. This will prevent any imbalance that will occur if tastes are taken during the mixing process. Be strong!**

Okay. Once you are satisfied with your mixture, and you've snuck a little taste for yourself, spoon small blobs onto a cookie sheet and bake at exactly 375° for 9 minutes. You'll need to monitor the baking because all ovens and cookie sheets are not the same, (you didn't know that?) and remove the cookies from the oven when they appear to be darkening slightly, ever so slightly.

When you remove the cookie tray from the oven (using a hot pad I hope!), set one end of the tray on the counter and allow the other end to drop to the counter "shocking" the cookies. This is critical in getting the correct appearance and shape of the cookies. Do this twice.

Allow the cookies to cool for a minute or two before removing them from the cookie sheet. I then place the cookies on a sheet of aluminum foil or waxed paper to cool completely.

There you have it: (Book) Designer Chocolate Chip Cookies. I usually get between 40–50 cookies per batch. Naturally, this will vary depending on the size of the "blobs" you place on the cookie sheet and the amount of dough you eat!

Because the cookie dough is soooooo good, I sometimes make a batch just to eat raw. I wrap the entire batch in plastic wrap and place it in the refrigerator, eating a "handful" at a time. I'm not sure exactly how long it will stay good because it disappears in less than two days in our house!

This recipe first appeared in the Fall '95 issue of my newsletter but, because of popular demand, I have rewritten this recipe for your reading, baking, and eating pleasure! *Enjoy!*

\* My world-famous potato chip recipe can be found in the Fall '93 issue of my newsletter or my web page at: <http://www.sover.net/~hammer>.