

## Elfie's Visits Alaska



### **Aurora Snow Balls**

*Cookies that capture people's hearts with their delicious taste and whimsical appearance*

1 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1/3 cup granulated sugar  
1 Tablespoon water  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1 cup pecans, chopped  
1 cup sifted powdered sugar  
Natural food colors – green' red

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In mixing bowl, beat butter on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add the granulated sugar; beat until combine, scraping bowl. Beat in water and vanilla until combined.
- Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in the remaining flour and chopped pecans.
- Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheet.

- Bake for 20 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned. Cool on rack. In each of 2 small bowls, comb in ½ cup of the sifted powdered sugar and green and red food colors. Gently roll and shake cooled cookies in desired powdered sugar mixture. Makes about 3 dozen cookies

**Recipe Inspired by:** Better Homes and Gardens, November, 1998

**About the Recipe:** These snow ball cookies create a magical blend of colors from light mint green and blushing pink to creamy white, capturing people’s hearts with their delicious taste, unique appearance, and memories of those snow ball fights and making angels in the freshly fallen snow. These round, powdered sugar-coated snowball cookies bring forth that sense of remembering, especially during the holiday season. They are a standout on dessert platters, leaving that cozy feeling of gathering with family and friends. Have some fun and add a touch of whimsy to your festive table this year.

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## **Sledding North for an Alaskan Adventure**

I traded palm trees and balmy breezes for the wild heart of Alaska. Snow-custed mountains rose around me, Denali looming like a white giant on the horizon. I scanned the spruce trees for moose, foxes, maybe even a lynx, until I rolled into tiny Talkeetna; just in time to catch Tony Rough’n’Tough finishing a dog-sled run with his team of panting, happy huskies.

Tony stomped into the lodge, snowballs clinging to his beard and parka like he’d been pelted by a mischievous blizzard. He made a beeline for the kitchen, poured himself a steaming mug of cocoa, and pulled out a mixing bowl. Curiosity got the better of me; I peeked around the pantry door as he whipped butter, sugar, and vanilla into dough, rolled it into perfect little spheres, and baked them golden brown. When they came out, he showered them with drifts of colored powdered sugar until each cookie looked exactly like a miniature aurora-kissed snowball.

He set the tray on the table, called the dogs in for ear scratches and belly rubs, and took a long sip of cocoa. One bite of cookie, and his frost-reddened cheeks broke into a huge grin.

Somewhere far above the Arctic Circle, I swear I heard sleigh bells. Turns out Santa doesn’t have to travel far for the best treats in the North. Tony’s already got the recipe, the dogs, and the magic right here in Talkeetna!