

GINGERBREAD HOUSE RECIPE

Ingredients for gingerbread

- 1 Tablespoon butter, softened
- 6 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 6 Tablespoons double-acting baking powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup honey
- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon finely grated lemon peel
- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk

NOTES: This recipe makes enough dough for one 11 x 17 inch gingerbread cake. You will need multiple cakes for larger houses. You may bake the cakes in batches cutting them as soon as they are baked. The dough becomes firmer and easier to handle as they age, so it is possible to do the baking over a period of several days. Or you may double or triple this recipe and make the cakes in one or two batches, in that event, you will need a very large mixing bowl and extra pans.

Although all ingredients used in this recipe are edible, this gingerbread is recommended for construction purposes only.

Have cardboard templets for the house cut and ready for use.

Directions

With a pastry brush or paper towel, lightly coat an 11 x 17 inch jelly-roll pan with 1 tablespoon of soft butter. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of flour into the pan, and tip it from side to side to coat it evenly. Then turn it over and knock out the excess. Set the pan aside.

Sift 6 cups of flour, baking powder, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom and salt together into a large mixing bowl and set them aside.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. In a heavy 4 –5 quart saucepan, bring the honey, sugar and butter to a boil over high heat, stirring with a large spoon until the sugar is dissolved and the butter melted. Remove the pan from the heat, mix in the lemon juice and lemon peel, and cool to room temperature. Beat in 2 cups of the flour-and –spice mixture, add the egg and egg yolk, and then beat in the remaining 4 cups of flour-and-spice mixture. Flour your hands lightly and knead until the dough is smooth pliable and still slightly sticky. If it is too moist to handle, beat in more flour by the tablespoon.

Place the dough in the jell-roll pan, and with a lightly floured rolling pin, press and roll it out as evenly as possible, forcing it into the corners with your fingers. Bake for 345 minutes, or until the cake is firm and the top brown. Let the cake cool in the pan for 4 to 5 minutes, then using the templates as your guide, cut it into the requisite shapes with a pastry wheel or small knife. Do not be tempted to cut the house pieces freehand; they must fit together precisely to make a stable structure. Set the pieces aside on wax paper until they cool completely. Bake and cut the remaining cakes in the same fashion.

Icing Ingredients & Directions for decorating

2 egg whites

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups confectioners' sugar

Candies and cookies for decorating the house

In a large bowl, beat the egg whites with a whisk or a rotary or electric beater until they are frothy and slightly thickened. Sift the confectioner's sugar into the whites $\frac{1}{2}$ cup at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition. Continue to beat for about 5 minutes or until a stiff icing is formed. Fill a pastry bag fitted with a round decorative tip with a cup of the icing.

While the pieces of gingerbread are still spread out flat, decorate the front, back and sides of the house to suit your own fancy. When the icing is completely dry, assemble the base and walls of the house using the icing as cement to hold the pieces together. Let the walls stand undisturbed until the icing is completely set. With the remaining icing, cement the roof pieces in place, and after the icing is set, decorate the roof. Make more icing if necessary.

Construction Gingerbread for Gingerbread Houses

PREP 30 mins

BAKE 10 to 12 mins

TOTAL 1 hr 45 mins

YIELD enough dough
for a 10" x 7" house
(approx.), plus
decorations

Ingredients

Dough

- 6 tablespoons (85g) butter
- 3/4 cup (170g) buttermilk
- 1 cup (227g) brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup (170g) molasses
- 1 large egg
- 5 cups (602g) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Construction icing

- 3 large egg whites*
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 4 cups (454g) unsifted confectioners' sugar
- Food coloring, optional
- peppermint oil, lemon extract, vanilla extract, or the flavor of your choice, optional, to taste

*Or substitute 1/4 cup meringue powder combined with 1/2 cup cold water.

Instructions

- ① **To make the dough:** In a large saucepan, heat the buttermilk and butter until the butter is just melted; remove from the heat.
- ② Add the brown sugar and molasses, then beat in the egg.
- ③ Whisk the baking soda, spices, and salt with 1 cup of the flour.
- ④ Add this to the wet mixture and mix until incorporated.
- ⑤ Add flour 1 cup at a time until you have a smooth, stiff dough. It should be stiff enough to be flexible, and neither crumbly nor sticky.
- ⑥ Divide the dough in half, flatten each half, and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- ⑦ Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- ⑧ Using a quarter of the dough at a time (return the unused portion to the refrigerator), roll the dough 1/8" thick on a piece of parchment.
- ⑨ Cut your construction pieces as needed, pulling away the scraps to be re-rolled. Transfer the dough, parchment and all, to a baking sheet.
- ⑩ Bake the dough for 10 to 12 minutes, until set and very lightly browned at the edges.
- ⑪ Remove from the oven and trim any rough edges while the pieces are still warm. Cool completely before using for construction.
- ⑫ **To make the royal icing:** In a large bowl, whip the egg whites with the cream of tartar until foamy.
- ⑬ Sprinkle in the sugar gradually, whipping all the while. The more you whip the icing, the stiffer it'll be and the faster it'll harden up.
- ⑭ Cover the bowl of icing, taking out only as much as you'll need immediately. The easiest way to store the icing for long periods of time is in a plastic pastry bag, or zip-top food storage bag.