

MINI GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Makes about 8-10 miniature houses

Ingredients:

Cookies:

2 ½ cups	All-purpose flour
1 ½ tsp	Cinnamon
2 tsp	Ginger
½ tsp	Allspice
½ tsp	Salt
½ tsp	Baking Soda
½ cup	Unsalted butter, melted
¾ cup	Brown sugar
1	Egg
⅓ cup	Molasses



Royal Icing:

2 cup	Icing sugar
4 tsp	Meringue powder
1/2 tsp	Cream of tartar
3 tbsp	Water

Decorating:

Assorted candy (i.e. Smarties, candy canes, gummies, peppermint candy, chocolate chips)

Directions:

Cookies:

- ❖ Sift the flour, spices, salt and baking soda together into a large bowl.
- ❖ In a medium bowl, beat the butter and sugar together using a wooden spoon for about 2 minutes. Beat in the egg, and then the molasses.
- ❖ Make a well in the middle of the dry mixture, and pour the wet mixture into it. Stir until most of liquid is absorbed. Using your hands, gently knead until the dough is an even colour.
- ❖ Divide the dough into 4 portions and flatten each slightly. Wrap each portion separately with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes until firm.
- ❖ Remove the dough from the refrigerator 5 to 10 minutes before rolling. Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly spray or oil a baking sheet. Unwrap one disc of dough and place it between 2 sheets of waxed paper. Roll dough out fairly thin, to a maximum thickness of ¼ inch.
- ❖ Place the pieces of your template on the dough and use a knife to cut around them. Each house will require 6 cookie pieces: 2 front/back pieces, 2 sides, and 2 roof pieces.
- ❖ Place cookies on a baking sheet about 1 inch apart. Bake at 350° F for 7 to 10 minutes.

Icing:

- ❖ Whisk together the meringue powder, cream of tartar, and water until smooth.
- ❖ Add the icing sugar, and using an electric mixer, beat on low speed for 10 minutes.

House Assembly:

- ❖ Use a knife to trim any crooked edges of the baked cookies.
- ❖ Apply royal icing to the edges of the side walls and press them into the front and back walls to form the base of the house. Allow the base to dry before attaching the roof.
- ❖ Apply royal icing along the left and right of the back of the roof pieces and attach to the base. Adjust the roof pieces if necessary so that they meet at the top. Remove any excess icing overflow. Allow to dry for about 5 minutes before decorating.

Decorating Ideas:

To decorate your house, you'll need a wide variety of candy. Attach all the candy using small amounts of royal icing as "glue." Here are a few ideas:

- ❖ To create shingles, spread royal icing across one side of the roof. While still wet, press round candies (such as Smarties) into the icing in rows. You can use one colour or alternate colours, and you can line the candies up neatly, or layer them like real shingles.
- ❖ Use the curved edge of a candy cane for the door.
- ❖ Use round peppermint candies or round gummies for circular windows.
- ❖ Use coloured chocolate chips as Christmas lights along the edges of the roof
- ❖ Decorate your gingerbread house on a piece of corrugated cardboard or on a tray, and create an entire gingerbread "scene" by placing gingerbread men cookies around the house. You can attach the gingerbread men to the base with royal icing.

Baking Tips:

- ❖ You can make the dough ahead of time and keep it in the fridge for up to 1 week, or in the freezer for up to 1 month. Overwrap the dough with foil if you will be freezing it.
- ❖ Use the recipe to make several gingerbread houses, and use the remaining dough to create regular gingerbread cutout cookies.
- ❖ Double the royal icing recipe if you plan on using a large amount of royal icing for decorating.