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GINGERBREAD COOKIES WITH HONEY



Most people associate the origins of Gingerbread to Germany and the tales of Hansel and Gretel by the Grimm Brothers. But did you know that historians have been able to trace some sort of gingerbread dough recipes all the way to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians. Gingerbread became very popular in the 16th century in Europe when spices and sugar became more easily available. Those imported ingredients were very expensive and often reserved to special occasions baking and nothing became more special than the Holiday season. Many believe that this is where the tradition of baking Gingerbread cookies at Christmas time takes its roots.

We love Gingerbread cookies and our favorite recipe uses honey instead of molasses, making it healthier and slightly sweeter, but also lighter. We love colors at Chefmaster, including the original dark warm color of Gingerbread. We are adding the color back into this dough, not with food coloring or caramel color, but with decadent unsweetened cocoa powder. With just the right ratio of spices and sweetness to please the entire family, this recipe might soon become your favorite

This gingerbread dough needs to be refrigerated for at least 3 to 4 hours before rolling it. But it also freezes very well. So plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time to make your dough, roll, cut and bake your cookies before planning this fun holiday cookie decorating session you have in mind.

Ingredients:

- 5 ½ cups All-Purpose Flour (plus more to flour rolling pin and work surface)
- 1½ cup Golden Honey
- 1 cup Brown Sugar
- · 4 oz (1 stick) Unsalted Butter, cubed and softened
- 3 Large Eggs
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz Unsweetened Dutch Cocoa Powder • 2 Tbsp Baking Powder
- 4 tsp Ground Cinnamon
- 4 tsp Ground Ginger2 tsp All-Spice
- 2 tsp Nutmeg
- · 1 pinch Salt

Tools & Utensils:

Measuring Cups & Spoons Medium Sauce Pan

Stand Mixer with a dough hook attachment*

Large flat Spatula Rolling Pin

Silicon Mat

Baking Sheets

Parchment Paper

Cookie Cutters Cooling Racks

*Note: Gingerbread dough has a lot of gluten and will become dense and sticky. If you do not have a dough hook, you can use a whisk or spatula to start mixing and continue mixing and kneading in the bowl with your hands once the dough becomes too dense.

Preparation:

- 1. Prepare and measure all your ingredients.
- 2. Make your gingerbread dough:
 - Put your honey, brown sugar and butter in a medium saucepan. Heat on





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medium-low heat while stirring gently, just until the mixture is wellcombined and smooth. Immediately remove from heat and let cool approx. 5 minutes.

- Do not stir too fast otherwise you risk to add air into your mixture. Your mixture shouldn't simmer.
- · In the bowl of your stand mixer, combine all your dry ingredients (flour, cocoa powder, spices, baking powder and salt). Stir on low until well combined.
- Slowly pour the warm honey mixture into the bowl stirring on medium-low until smooth and well combined.

 Add eggs one at a time, waiting for the previous egg to be fully
- incorporated before adding the next one.
- Continue stirring on medium-low until the dough is smooth.
 Scrape the dough and remove from the mixer.
- Separate dough into 2 equal parts.
- · Flatten each part with your hands to form a disk approx. 2 inches high.
- Tightly wrap each dough disk with plastic film and refrigerate for 3 to 4 hours minimum. You can also freeze your dough up to 3 months. Just let it thaw overnight in the fridge before using it.
- 3. Roll, cut and bake your cookies:
 - Preheat oven to 350°F.
 - Line your baking sheets with parchment paper.
 - Lightly flour your silicon rolling mat and rolling pin.

 - Place on disk on the silicon rolling mat.
 Use your rolling pin to roll the dough about 1/5 inch thick (approx. 5mm).
 - $\circ~\mbox{Dip}$ your cookies cutters in flour before cutting your cookies. This will
 - prevent the dough from sticking to them.

 Cut your cookies and careful place them on your baking sheets.
 - $\, \blacksquare \,$ Using a large flat spatula will help when transferring larger cookies or delicate shapes into the baking sheets.
 - You can gently knead and roll the left-over scraps of dough to cut cookies out of them and not waste dough. If the scraps stayed out for too long and the dough is soft just leave them for 10-15 minutes in the fridge to harden before rolling.
 - · Place each baking sheet in the refrigerator as you finish filling them for a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes.
- 4. Bake 5 to 7 minutes.
- 5. Remove from oven and let the cookies rest for approx. 10 minutes before transferring them onto cooling racks.
- 6. Let your cookies cooled completely.
- 7. Dust with coating sugar or decorate with icing as desired.

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