

HOW TO BAKE YOUR OWN GINGERBREAD HOUSE

Ingredients

250g unsalted butter
200g dark Muscovado sugar
7tbsp golden syrup
600g plain flour
2tsp bicarbonate of soda
4tsp ground ginger

Items to decorate house:

200g bag of flaked almonds
2 egg whites
500g icing sugar, plus extra to dust
125g pack of mini chocolate fingers
Chocolate Mini Roll or Flake
Selection of Pick & Mix sweets

If making Gingerbread Trees:

Silver balls

Method

1. Pre-heat oven: 200°C, 180°C Fan or Gas Mark 6.

Melt the butter, sugar and syrup in a thick bottomed pan.

2. Mix flour, bicarbonate of soda and ginger into a large bowl, then stir in the butter mixture to make a stiff dough. If it won't come together, add a splash of water.
3. Cut out your template – download an example from www.derbytheatre.co.uk/gingerbreadhouse
4. Put a sheet of baking paper on your work surface and roll about one quarter of the dough to the thickness of two £1 coins.
5. Cut out one of the sections, then slide the Gingerbread, still on its baking paper, onto a baking sheet.

Repeat with the remaining dough, re-rolling the trimmings, until you have two side walls, a front and back wall and two roof panels. Any leftover dough can be cut into Gingerbread Trees.

6. Pick out the most intact flaked almonds and gently poke them into the roof sections pointy-end first, to look like roof tiles. Bake all of the sections for 12 minutes or until firm and just a little darker at the edges. Leave to cool for a few minutes to firm up, then trim around the templates again to give clean, sharp edges. Leave to cool completely.

7. Put the egg whites in a large bowl and sift in the icing sugar, then stir to make a thick, smooth icing.

Spoon into a piping bag with a medium nozzle. Pipe generous snakes of icing along the wall edges, one by one, to join the walls together.

Use a small bowl to support the walls from the inside, then allow to dry, ideally for a few hours.

8. Once dry, remove the supports and fix the roof panels on. The angle is steep so you may need to hold these on firmly for a few minutes until the icing starts to dry.

Dry completely, ideally overnight.

To decorate, pipe icing along the walls to create the front door and windows.

9. Using the icing, stick sweets around the door and on the front of house.
10. To make icicles, start with the nozzle at a 90 degree angle to the roof and squeeze out a pea-sized blob of icing. Keeping the pressure on, pull the nozzle down and then off the wall pulling away, leaving a pointy trail.
11. Repeat all around the front of the house. Cut the chocolate Mini-Roll or Flake on an angle, then use icing to attach to the roof to make a chimney.
12. If you've made Gingerbread Trees, decorate these now too, topping each with a silver ball.
13. Dust the roof with icing sugar for a snowy effect. Lay a winding path of sweets, and fix Gingerbread Trees around the house using blobs of icing.

The Gingerbread House will be edible for a week.

Recipe by Iona Henry –
Catering Manager

