

HOUSE ON THE HILL

MOLDED GINGERBREAD COOKIES

This is a softer sweeter gingerbread cookie that will require drying time, unlike the traditional sturdy gingerbread. You can easily adjust the spices. For instance, if you are not a fan of cloves, leave them out. Crazy about ginger? Then add an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 teaspoon.

Remember that if you use all molasses (instead of molasses and dark corn syrup) to add 4 Tablespoons extra flour as the all molasses version is stickier.

Choose a boldly carved mold. Many of the larger molds were originally used for gingerbread or honey cakes.

PUT INTO LARGE MIXING BOWL AND WHISK TOGETHER:

3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups unbleached all purpose flour*

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cloves

2 teaspoons ground ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon nutmeg

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

MEASURE INTO A LARGE MEASURING CUP AND MIX THOROUGHLY:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses **

½ cup dark corn syrup

2 tablespoons water only if needed

Now combine the flour mixture and the liquid mixture together either by hand or in a heavy standard mixer using the flat blade (not the whisk). Mix until the dough holds together, adding 1 or 2 tablespoons of water only if necessary to bind the dough. Knead the dough into a solid mass and place into a tightly sealed zipper bag. Let the dough rest for 1 hour or refrigerate overnight. I prefer to refrigerate overnight as it makes the dough easier to work with.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough with a plain rolling pin about ½ to 5/8 inch thick, depending on the depth of your cookie mold. Using a pastry brush, flour the surface of your cookie mold. Press firmly onto the flat surface of the dough and then lift the mold straight up. Re-flour the mold for every pressing.

For especially large molds, you may want to roll a piece of dough, cut it to the size of the mold and place that piece on top of the mold. Then press firmly into the deepest parts of the carving and then flatten the back by rolling a plain pin over the back of the dough or flipping the mold and dough together and give it a gentle press.

Cut and place the cookies on a parchment lined cookie sheet. Let cookies dry for at least 12 hours. Up to 24 hours is good to help set the pattern.

Bake at 300 degrees for 12 minutes. Large cookies will need 14-15 minutes.

Let cookies cool completely before storing in airtight containers. My preference is rectangular cookie tins.

*If dough is too sticky, knead in small small amounts of flour until it is not sticky to the touch.

** You may use 1 cup molasses and no dark corn syrup if you prefer. You will need to add 4 Tablespoons of Flour since the molasses is very sticky.