

## HOUSE ON THE HILL

## PERFECTION SPRINGERLE COOKIES

**PLEASE NOTE: DO NOT EAT RAW DOUGH. BAKER'S AMMONIA NEEDS TO BE BAKED OUT.**



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1/2 teaspoon baker's ammonia (Hartshorn) or baking powder
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 6 large eggs, room temperature
- 6 cups powdered sugar (1 1/2 #)
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened but not melted
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon of anise oil (if substituting fruit flavored oils, use 3-4 teaspoons)
- 2 lb. box sifted cake flour (Swansdown or Softasilk)
- Grated rind of orange or lemon – optional (enhances flavor of the traditional anise or the citrus flavors)
- More flour as needed

Dissolve hartshorn in milk and set aside. Beat eggs till thick and lemon-colored (10-20 minutes). Slowly beat in the powdered sugar, then the softened butter. Add the hartshorn and milk, salt, preferred flavoring, and grated rind of lemon or orange, if desired. Gradually beat in as much flour as you can with the mixer, then stir in the remainder of the 2 lbs. of flour to make stiff dough. Turn onto floured surface and knead in enough flour to make a good print without sticking.

It is not required, but I find the dough easier to work with when I refrigerate it for 8 hours before printing the cookies. (Refrigerating the dough is particularly helpful in humid conditions.) Seal the dough tightly in zippered plastic bags and in a sealed container so the dough does not dry out. The liquid ingredients absorb into the flour making it less sticky. You can refrigerate the dough for up to 3 days.

On a floured surface, roll dough into a flat pancake approximately 1/2 inch thick. Roll thinner or thicker based on the depth of the carving in the cookie press you are using. Shallow carvings will need to be thinner while deeper carvings will need to be thicker. Flour your cookie mold for each and every pressing. Press the mold firmly and straight down into the dough, then lift, cut and place the formed cookie onto a flat surface to dry. (I like to put the formed cookies directly onto a parchment lined cookie sheet, but you may put them on a countertop or tabletop covered with flour sack cloths if you do not have enough cookie sheets.)

Do not cover the cookies while they dry. The goal of drying is to set the design. Let the cookies dry at least 12 hours, but you will lose clearness of design. Best is a 24 hour drying period before baking to get a clean print after baking. Larger cookies and warm humid weather may require longer drying times. Cookies that are not dried long enough will not retain the beautiful designs, but will taste fine.

Bake on greased or baker's parchment-lined cookie sheets at 255° to 325° till barely golden on the bottom, 10-15 minutes or more, depending on size of cookie. See Baking Times chart below for suggested baking times and temperatures.

Store in airtight containers or in zipper bags in the freezer. Cookies stored in tins in a cool dry conditions are best in my opinion. Tins seal but allow a slight amount of air circulation. Springerle keep for months, and anise flavor Springerle improve with age. Orange and lemon and almond flavors have a fully developed flavor when they are baked and cooled. Yield 3 to 12 dozen. Yields vary greatly depending on the cookie presses you use.

## **BAKING TIMES**

Generally, the larger the cookie, the lower the temperature, the longer the baking time. The smaller the cookie, the lower the temperature. But here are some considerations and guidelines for various sizes.

Ovens vary; some run hot or cold and others have “hot spots”. As a rule, electric ovens have more even heat and are drier, but this is not always the case. Thus, electric ovens may bake the cookies more quickly. Be sure to let the oven get back to the same temperature after opening the oven door and open and close the oven door as quickly as possible. Use the middle rack in most instances – the heat tends to be more even there.

Be sure to bake only the same size cookie on a single baking sheet.

The first time you bake a new size cookie, bake a single test cookie. Repeat until you get it right. Better to waste a few cookies than a whole tray. You want the top of the cookie to be very white and the bottom to be slightly golden. Break the baked test cookie in half and make sure that the cake-like texture is fully formed and that no doughiness remains; this is especially important when you use hartshorn (you want to completely bake out the ammonia.)

If you roll cookies very thinly, reduce the temperatures and baking times. If you have thicker cookies, you may need to add 1 to 3 minutes to the baking times.

## **EXAMPLES OF BAKING TIMES**

Below are some examples of some Springerle sizes and suggested temperatures and baking times. These guidelines assume a cookie thickness of 3/8 to 5/8 inches:

### **BASIC SIZE**

Approx 1.5 to 2 by 2 to 2.5 inches – a very common size found in multiple image presses.

Examples are M7615 Cassie’s Garden and M4028 Mixed Motifs.

Bake at 300 to 325 degrees F for 10 to 12 minutes.

### **SMALL SIZE**

Approx 1 x 1 to 1.5 inches. Example is M5736 Petting Zoo.

Bake at 225 degrees F for 10 to 12 minutes.

When baking very small Springerle, think about popcorn; you want the heat to penetrate very quickly to the center of the popcorn kernel to “pop” or burst the kernel. You do NOT want that to happen to your Springerle, so lower the temperature for slower rising.

## Medium Size

Approx 2 to 3 by 2 to 3 inches – a common size of single image cookie molds. Examples are M5383 Winter Sleigh Scene and M7444 Jane's Bouquet.

Bake at 300-325 degrees F for 12 to 14 minutes.

## LARGE SIZE

Approx 3 x 5 inches and larger.

Bake at 290-300 degrees F for 14 to 16 minutes.

Just increase time on even larger cookies. Do not go above 300 degrees as you will not be able to control the browning as well. Larger cookies-think lower and slower.