

MORAVIAN GINGER COOKIES

1/3 cup molasses
1/4 cup shortening
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour(*)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon each cinnamon, ginger, and cloves
Dash each nutmeg and allspice
Easy Creamy Icing (below)

Mix thoroughly molasses, shortening, and sugar. Blend in remaining ingredients except icing. Cover; chill at least 4 hours.

Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Roll dough 1/8 inch thick or, if desired, paper thin on lightly floured cloth-covered board. Cut into desired shapes. Place 1/2 inch apart on ungreased baking sheet. Bake 8 minutes or until set.

Immediately remove from baking sheet; cool. Frost with Easy Creamy Icing. Makes about 3 dozen 2-inch cookies (about 5 dozen if rolled paper-thin.)

(*) If using self-rising flour, omit salt, baking soda, and baking powder.

EASY CREAMY ICING FOR MORAVIAN GINGER COOKIES

Mix 1 cup confectioner's sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon vanilla and about 1-1/2 tablespoons light cream until smooth and of spreading consistency. Tint with food color if desired.

GINGERSNAPS

A pungent gingersnap - crispy on the edges but soft in the center.

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup brown sugar (packed)
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour (*)
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
Granulated sugar

Mix thoroughly shortening, brown sugar, egg, and molasses. Blend in remaining ingredients except granulated sugar. Cover; chill 1 hour.

Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Shape dough by rounded teaspoonfuls into balls. Dip tops in granulated sugar. Place balls sugared side up 3 inches apart on lightly greased baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or just until set. Immediately remove from baking sheet.

Makes 4 dozen cookies.

(*) If using self-rising flour, decrease baking soda to 1 teaspoon and omit salt

firm muscle ;-)].)

Preheat the oven to 325 deg F. and line thick baking sheets with parchment paper. [Personally, I use those "cool-bake" sheets and some Pam as parchment paper is expensive and hard to come by.]

Shape the dough into a neat rectangle [Yeah... right], place on a well-floured board, and roll out until 1/4 inch thick. [Try to be careful not to get the flour dusted on the top of the dough as the cookies are not quite as pretty then.] Cut into shapes, place shapes on the baking sheets, and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until firm to the touch. Let cool on racks.

Mix the confectioners' sugar and egg white; divide among small bowls and tint each a different color. Spread or pipe onto the cooled cookies and allow to set. [Note: If piping icing on, it will have to be a thicker consistency. When coating the whole cookie, it can be a bit thinner, though not too thin. I "dip" the cookie face into the bowl of icing, then take a butter knife and "smooth" the icing. This will get rid of any air bubbles in the icing. I place the cookies on a baking rack over some wax paper until the icing hardens. If doing more than one color on the same cookie, let the underneath coat dry completely before using other colors to decorate. The colors will be less likely to run this way. A few final notes from my experience: (1) Thicken icing by adding more confectioners' sugar; thin by using more egg white. (2) If you want nice looking white icing you MUST get some of the icing white stuff that Wilton or another bakery supply company puts out. It just isn't very pretty without it. (3) Classic cut-out shapes work really well for these cookies -- hearts, diamonds, teapots, stars. Makes for very old-fashioned-looking stuff. Piping on white icing like lace around the edges is very pretty. Add a few squiggles or dots elsewhere on the cookies. (4) These cookies taste GREAT on top of everything else! -- CMT]

More cookie recipes coming.

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