

Tiny Gingerbread Houses



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Makes 15 houses or 45 cookies

Prep time: 3h 20min + dough chilling time

Cook time: 10min

Total time: 4h + drying time

Difficulty: Intermediate

Category: Cookies

These tiny gingerbread houses will sit on the edge of your mug, which is a great way to serve tea (or mulled wine) and cookies during the holidays. The idea and template for the houses was taken from Not Martha. You can download the PDF pattern for the house pieces [here](#). The template includes two door pieces you can choose from, one approximately 1 cm wide and one about 1.3 cm wide. I found that the wider door fitted most of my mugs. I suggest you cut both door pieces out of cardstock and try them on your mugs. The one that slides easily onto the edge of your mug and has a little wiggle room is the width you want for your door. This recipe will make about 15 tiny houses, but you can easily make less houses and use the rest of the dough to make gingerbread cookies. The dough is very versatile. You can also make one big gingerbread house, but you will have to double the recipe for the dough. The amount of royal icing in this recipe should be more than enough for you to decorate and glue a big house, so you don't have to make a bigger batch.

For the gingerbread:

Ingredients

300g flour
3 tbsp sugar
3 tbsp brown sugar
pinch of salt
1 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1/4 tsp ground ginger
100g butter, at room temperature
2 tbsp honey
1 egg

Directions

In a large bowl, mix together dry ingredients. Add butter cut into small pieces and work it into the dry ingredients using your fingertips. When the mixture resembles bread crumbs, add honey and egg and knead with your hands until you get a smooth dough. If the dough sticks to your hands, add a bit more flour. If it's too dry, add a few drops of cold water until you get a smooth dough.

Divide the dough in half, wrap each piece in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight. Preheat your oven to 180°C. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Take the dough out of the refrigerator about 30 minutes before rolling it. On a lightly floured surface, roll

out one half of the dough to a 2-3 mm thickness. The cookies will puff up in the oven so try to roll the dough as thinly as you can. Using a template, cut the pieces from the dough using a small pizza cutter or a pairing knife. Instead of picking up the small pieces, peel the excess dough from around the house pieces. Run a thin palette knife under each piece and carefully transfer to a baking sheet so that they don't distort. Gather the excess dough together, roll it out again and cut the pieces from it. Repeat with the other half of the dough.

Put the baking sheets into the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes before baking. This will keep the gingerbread from spreading too much. Bake for 8-10 minutes. As soon as the cookies start to get some color around the edges, take them out of the oven and trim any pieces that have puffed or spread too much while they're still hot. Cool the cookies completely before assembling the houses.

For the royal icing:

Ingredients

1 large egg white
220-330g powdered sugar
1 tsp white vinegar

Directions

Beat the egg white in the bowl of your standing mixer just until it starts to froth. Turn the speed to low and gradually add powdered sugar and vinegar until you get a thick and smooth icing. How much sugar you will need depends on the size of your egg white. If the icing seems to thick to pipe, add a little bit of cold water to thin it out. If it seems too runny, add more powdered sugar until you get the desired consistency. For the purpose of gluing the houses together and decorating them, you will need quite a thick batch of icing. Transfer the icing to a piping bag and start to assemble the gingerbread houses.

Assembly

Ingredients

edible sugar decorations (snowflakes, hearts...)
powdered sugar

Directions

I recommend that you decorate the roofs (and walls, if you wish) before assembling the houses. Once you're done with the decorations, let the pieces dry for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight. Now you're ready for the assembly.

Group the matching gingerbread house pieces together. You should have two walls, two roofs and two pieces with doors. Make sure that both of the doors are the same width, otherwise the house won't sit on the rim of your mug. Start gluing the pieces together. Take one piece with a door slot and pipe a thin vertical line of royal icing on both edges (on the inner side). Take the walls and glue them onto the royal icing, making sure they are at a 90° angle. Now, take the other piece with the door, pipe royal icing on both edges (like you did with the first one) and set it against the walls. Hold it together tightly for a few seconds and then let it dry for 5 minutes before you add the roof. Make sure that the wall pieces are to be sandwiched on the inside of the door pieces, that way the roof fits on properly. Now pipe some royal icing all around the the top of the house and carefully set both roof pieces on it. Hold it in place for a few seconds and then pipe some snow on the rooftop and around it to create the illusion of snow. Set the house aside to dry. Continue with the rest of the pieces.

The houses will probably be dry in a couple of hours (depending on the humidity), but I recommend that you let them dry overnight. Once dry, store them in an airtight container and serve with warm milk, tea or mulled wine. You could dust them with some powdered sugar to create the illusion of fresh snow.