

# GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Supplies needed: cookie sheets, paring knives, cutting boards, two ziploc bags, rolling pins

## Gingerbread

- 1 1/4 cups packed dark-brown sugar
- 3/4 cup unsulfured molasses
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 6 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Combine brown sugar, molasses, butter, spices, and salt in a medium saucepan over low heat, stirring with a wooden spoon, until sugar is dissolved, about 10 minutes. Stir in the milk and remove the mixture from the heat.

Pour the mixture into a large mixing bowl and add the baking powder and flour. With an electric mixer, and beginning on low speed and increasing to medium, beat until well combined. Divide dough in even fourths and shape into disks. Wrap in plastic, and refrigerate overnight. Dough can be frozen up to 1 month and thaw in the refrigerator before using.



When you are ready to bake the gingerbread, preheat the oven to 350 degrees and roll out each dough disk on a lightly floured surface. The dough will be somewhat tough so you will really have to put some elbow grease into making it thin. Keep rolling in a back and forth motion, turning the disk of dough and flouring the pin and surface in between. Roll until the dough is about 1/8 of an inch thick. If the dough becomes warm from handling place it back into the refrigerator before cutting the stencils to cool the dough.

Using the pre-traced stencils, which you can download [here](#), lay the stencil on top of the rolled out dough and cut the dough with a paring knife. Place the dough on a parchment lined baking sheet and bake for about 15 minutes or until browned, rotating the sheet halfway. Let it cool completely.

## Royal Icing

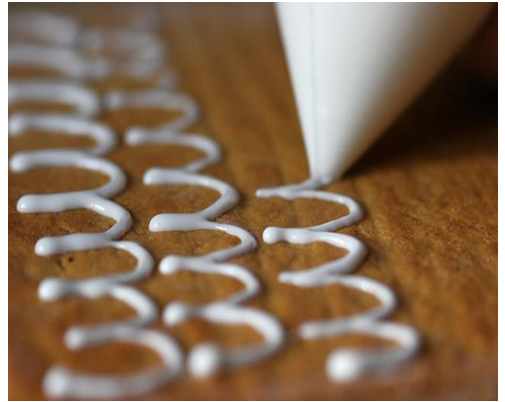
- 2 cup of powdered sugar, sifted
- 1 large egg white

Beat the egg whites in a bowl until foamy. Add in the sugar and continue to beat until white and glossy.

To decorate your gingerbread, scoop the icing into a pastry bag with a small tip or a large ziplock bag. If using a ziplock bag, push all the icing to one corner and snip the corner at a diagonal creating a very small hole.

Start decorating by creating fish-scale U's on the two roofs. Trace the edges of the windows and doors with icing and add whatever additional details you'd like. We've added dots in addition to the lines, but this is the fun part of gingerbread houses, so use your imagination!

The icing should dry very hard and wait until it has completely dried before assembling the house.



## Caramel

The caramel acts as the glue that holds your house together. When you are ready to assemble the house, start making the caramel. Because this cools quickly and hardens you can't make this ahead of time.

- 1 1/2 cups of granulated sugar
- a small squeeze of lemon juice

Put the sugar in a saucepan and cook over high heat. Stir the mixture until it starts caramelizing and turns a deep amber (about 10 minutes). Remove off the heat and begin to use immediately.



## Assembling the Gingerbread House

Dip each adjoining side of the walls of the house in caramel and hold together for a few seconds. The caramel will harden holding the pieces together. Once all 4 walls are held together, you can attach the roof by using a spoon or small brush to trace the V-shape and attach the roof pieces.

Assemble the chimney together and brush the bottom with caramel and attach to one side of the roof.



## Finishing Touches

Now that your house is assembled you can put on the finishing touches that truly transforms this gingerbread house into a winter wonderland. Organize your candy in a muffin tin. Using your icing as a glue, add your decorations, and have fun!

