



December 2022, St. Nicholas Day

St. Nick's Soft Gingerbread Cookies

I love to travel. I've visited many countries across the world and their different traditions never fail to fascinate me. St. Nicholas (or Sinterklask in Dutch) was known for his generosity for helping people in need and he became the patron saint of children. Over time, he has evolved to become Santa Claus, or Father Christmas. These traditional spiced biscuits were offered to old St. Nick and sometimes hidden in a boot.

Usain Bolt

Makes: **30 cookies**
Prep time: **20 minutes plus cooling, chilling and setting**
Cook time: **10 – 12 minutes**

Ingredients

- 125g butter
- 3 tbsp runny honey
- 2 tbsp black treacle
- 120g soft dark muscovado sugar
- 300g plain flour
- 50g ground almonds
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1 ½ tsp ginger
- ½ tsp ground white pepper
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1 egg

For the chocolate glaze

- 150g dark chocolate (chopped into small pieces)

For the sugar glaze

- 100g icing sugar



Contains nuts, gluten, dairy. Not suitable for vegans

This recipe is intended for entertainment purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk. Before trying this recipe, please check to be sure that you're not allergic to any of the ingredients.

St Nick's Soft Gingerbread Cookies



Put the **butter, honey, treacle** and **muscovado sugar** into a medium pan and gently melt over a low heat, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool.



Sift the **flour, ground almonds, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, spices** and **orange zest** into a bowl. Mix the egg into the butter mixture, then pour into the dry ingredients. Stir with a wooden spoon until it forms a soft, slightly sticky dough.



Tip the dough onto a piece of baking paper and flatten into a disc. Wrap and chill for a minimum of 30 minutes. It can be left overnight in the fridge if preferred.



Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan / gas mark 5. Divide into 30 pieces weighing approximately 25g each, roll into balls and place onto baking sheets, spaced slightly apart to allow for spreading. Flatten slightly, and cook for 10–12 minutes until golden and just set. They should be domed with a slightly cracked surface. Allow to cool then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.



To decorate, bring a small amount of water in a pan to a simmer. Put the **chocolate** in a heatproof bowl that will sit snugly over the pan. Turn the heat to low, and allow the chocolate to melt, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, sieve the **icing sugar** and add 1 tbsp of **water** to make a glaze for the biscuits. Gradually add a little more if necessary to make a coating consistency.



To decorate, cover half the quantity of biscuits in chocolate. Hold the biscuit by its edges and dip the top surface into the bowl of melted chocolate. Coat the top, then allow any excess to drip off. Repeat, then cover the remaining biscuits with the sugar glaze in the same way. Place the biscuits back onto the wire rack, and leave until set. Once set store the biscuits in an airtight tin for up to 5 days.

Chef Usain's Winning Tips

You could try making different shaped cookies by placing the dough between two sheets of greaseproof paper and rolling to approximately 5mm thick. Use a cutter of your choice.

To pipe icing patterns onto the biscuits add 2 tsp of water to 100g icing sugar to make a slightly thicker piping consistency. Get creative!

Lightly grease your tablespoon with oil before measuring out the honey and treacle — you will find it slips off the spoon making measuring so much easier.



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