

Gingersnaps

Pepparkakor



 Makes about 150

 Very Easy
 Easy ✓
 Moderate

 Preparation: 50 minutes*
Cooking: 40 minutes
TOTAL: 90 minutes
*Plus over night standing

 A classic Swedish cookie, popular at Christmas

Gingersnaps are baked throughout the year, but they are especially popular at Christmas when they are cut into attractive shapes and sometimes decorated with icing (frosting). Originally *pepparkakor* were spiced with pepper and so they were far spicier than they are today. They were also considered to be medicinal, curing sicknesses including cholera, reliving depression, being a sexual stimulant and improving moods by making the eater gentler and kinder! No wonder they became so popular! John Duxbury

Tips

- The biscuits can be stored for up to 4 weeks in an air-tight container.
- The dough will also keep well for weeks in the fridge.
- Roll out the dough straight onto greaseproof paper to get the dough extra thin.
- Packed in cellophane bags and tied with ribbon they make excellent Christmas stocking fillers.

Ingredients

½ tbsp	cardamom pods
150 g (1¼ sticks)	butter or margarine
250 g (1 cup)	sugar (white, brown or a mixture)
50 g (2½ tbsp)	golden syrup (light corn syrup)
20 g (1 tbsp)	treacle (dark corn syrup)
1 tbsp	ground ginger
1 tbsp	ground cinnamon
½ tbsp	ground cloves
½ tbsp	bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
100 ml (6½ tbsp)	water
450 g (3½ cups)	plain (all-purpose) flour

Method

1. Lightly crush the cardamom pods so that the seeds can be emptied out. Grind the seeds in a pestle and mortar for a couple of minutes.
2. Mix the butter, sugar, syrup and treacle in a saucepan. Heat gently until the butter melts, stirring continuously.
3. Add the spices and mix thoroughly.
4. Add the bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) and stir again.
5. Add the water and stir once more.
6. Add most of the flour and stir thoroughly until it is completely mixed in.
7. Empty the mixture into a bowl. When cool cover with cling film (food wrap) and then leave the dough to rest in the fridge overnight.
8. Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F, gas 6, fan 180°C).
9. Take a small portion of the dough for a test bake. Knead it and then roll it out thinly on a lightly floured surface or on greaseproof paper. Cut it into shapes using a biscuit (cookie) cutter. Transfer to a cold baking trays (cookie sheets), greased if not using greaseproof paper. Bake for 5-8 minutes until golden brown. Keep an eye on them as they burn very easily, but they should be crisp.
10. If the test batch spreads out and the biscuits lose their shape, add some more flour and do another test bake.
11. If the test batch is good, bake the rest in batches until all the dough is cooked. Leave to cool on the baking sheets as they break easily when hot.