

Gingerbread Trees Recipe

What you need

- 125 g unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (90 g) of brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) of golden syrup
- 1 egg
- 3 cups (450 g) of plain flour
- 3 teaspoons of ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda
- Food colouring in green and one other colour of choice
- M&Ms.

Royal Icing

- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (300 g) of icing sugar
- 2 egg whites
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of lemon juice.



What to do

1. Beat the butter and sugar in a bowl with an electric mixer until pale and creamy. Add the golden syrup and egg and beat well until combined.
2. Sift the flour, spices, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda over the butter mixture. Use a wooden spoon to stir all the ingredients together to form a dough. Pick up the dough in your hands and shape it into a disc. Wrap it in plastic wrap and chill in a refrigerator for two hours.
3. Preheat the oven to 175°C. Line two baking trays with baking paper. Tear off two large pieces of baking paper. Place one on your work surface. Divide the dough in half and shape into discs. Put one disc in the middle of the paper and cover with the other sheet of paper. Roll out the dough inside the paper to a large piece 5 mm thick.
4. Using the Christmas tree stencil or a Christmas tree cookie cutter, cut out trees and transfer them to the prepared trays. Using the spare dough and the other disc of dough, roll out and cut more Christmas trees.
5. Bake the trees in the oven for 12 minutes, until lightly golden. Leave to cool on the trays for five minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
6. To make Royal Icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites in an electric mixer until foamy. Add the lemon juice and the icing sugar a tablespoon at a time and continue to beat until soft peaks form.
7. Spoon about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the icing into a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and set aside. Add green food colouring a drop at a time to the remaining icing, stirring constantly. Working quickly, use a knife to spread green icing over the surface of each tree. Set the trees aside for one hour for the icing to set.
8. Colour the small bowl of reserved icing with your second food colouring. Spoon it into a ziplock bag and seal shut. Snip a very small hole in the corner of the bag. Gently squeeze the icing towards the hole and slowly pipe a zigzag line down the trees to resemble strings of tinsel.
9. Dab a little icing onto one side of the M&Ms and stick them onto the trees as baubles.
10. If you have any extra plain white icing left over from Step 7, use another bag to pipe icing onto the tops and tips of the trees for snow.