



Cooking with Claire @TVInfants

How many ideas can we come up with?

Ginger Bread Recipe:

Ingredients:

250g unsalted butter
200g dark muscovado sugar
7tbsps golden syrup
600g plain flour
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
4 tsp ground ginger

Icing:

2 egg whites
500g icing sugar

Add colour if required.

Please note – if you find a template this mix will make a small gingerbread house with a little left over for trees! Be brave.



Basic Biscuit Recipe you can spice up as you wish!

100g (4oz) butter, softened
50g (2oz) caster sugar
150g (5oz) Plain flour (I'd replace 25g of the flour with Corn flour for an extra crumbly texture)

Preheat the oven to 180°C /fan 160°C/ gas 4. Lightly butter the baking trays.



Method:

Heat the oven to 200c/fan 180 and Gas 6. Lightly grease the baking tray/sheet.

Melt the butter, sugar and golden syrup in a pan.

In a bowl mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda and ground ginger then stir in the butter to make a stiff dough. If it won't quite come together add a tiny splash of water (TINY, you can't take it out once it's in).

If you let it cool a little it will spread less in the oven but you can use if straight away. It will be messy. Use flour.

Roll out the dough to about the thickness of a £1 coin (it can be a little thicker depends how you like your ginger bread, up to 2 £1 coins, no thicker).

Cut out the desired shapes, if you are using them for a tree or hanging decoration make a small hole in for the ribbon or sting now, you will not be able to do it once cooked.

Place on a baking sheet a few at a time, leaving room for slight spread – bake in the oven for about 12 mins, but keep an eye on them.. They will be soft when you take them out of the oven but should crisp up once they are cooled.

Cool completely before icing and decorating as you wish. Look online for ideas.

Method:

Measure the butter into a bowl and beat to soften.

Gradually beat in the sugar and then the flour.

Bring the mixture together with your hands to form a dough.

Form the dough into 16 balls about the size of a walnut and place spaced well apart on the prepared baking trays.

Dip a fork in a little water and use this to flatten the biscuits.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15/20 minutes until a very pale golden.

Lift off the baking tray and leave to cool completely on a wire rack.

For chocolate biscuits – remove 2 tbsp of flour and replace with cocoa powder.

Add lemon or orange zest.

Add desiccated coconut or raisins, add chocolate chips or chopped glace cherries.

Once on the baking tray make a well, add a blob of your favourite jam, a chunk of chocolate.

Make two different **dough's** roll them out place on top of each other and "swiss roll" them (pinwheel biscuits, see front cover).



Biscuit tips, things I've learnt along the way:

For really crumbly biscuits – replace some of the flour with corn flour – it makes them really delicious. Try it with and without, see what you like.



They will always be soft on leaving the oven – don't bake them till crunchy – they will burn – once cooled most biscuits will crisp up unless they are supposed to be a soft chewy cookie.

Be careful using a very wet or non-drying icing as it can biscuits go soggy very quickly.

Experiment with different flavours – some will work, some won't, the more you try the more you will find what you like. The same with icing – a good stiff butter icing is great, but only use when you are ready to eat, otherwise use the egg white based icing in the recipe above. It will dry quite solid. For a real treat – sandwich together with ice cream or serve a warm cookie with ice cream.



Store them in an airtight container as soon as they are cool to preserve their crisp, crunchy, crumbly deliciousness.

Always make more than you need, especially if they are for a gift:



- Some will break
- Some will burn
- Some will spread a funny shape
- Some will get eaten by family and friends
- Some will get eaten by the cook!

Get everyone involved – make a basic dough and let them roll in their own ingredients, choose their own shape and decorate as they see fit.

