

Gingerbread Cookie Dough (adapted from recipe in Peggy Porschen's 'Pretty Party Cakes')

Ingredients

Hot mix ingredients;

180g dark brown muscovado sugar
4 tbsp clear honey
2 tbsp black treacle
2 tbsp orange juice
2 tbsp ground cinnamon
2 tbsp ground ginger
1 tsp allspice
1 tsp ground nutmeg
seeds from 1 vanilla pod
pinch of salt

Other ingredients;

200g unsalted butter, cut into cubes
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
450g plain flour
100g dark chocolate chips (optional)

Method

1. Put all the hot mix ingredients into a large saucepan and bring to the boil while stirring
2. Remove the pan from the heat and gradually add cubes of butter. Stir in gently.
3. Once all the butter is combined add the bicarbonate of sugar and whisk briefly until combined.
4. Pour the bowl of a stand mixer and leave to cool.
5. Prepare your mixer with the paddle attachment.
6. Once cool, sieve in the flour and mix on a low speed until the mixture just forms a dough.

For ice cream;

7a. If you are going to use the dough in ice cream then set aside half the dough and add chocolate chips (if using). Roll into balls about 1cm across and refrigerate until the ice cream is ready.

For cookies

7b. Wrap all (or half if making the ice cream) the dough well in cling film and chill in the fridge for at least two hours. It keeps well in the fridge for a couple of days or freezes well if you don't want to use it soon. Just move it into the fridge the day before you want to use it.

8. Place the dough between two pieces of cling film and roll it to roughly 5mm thick.
9. Prepare a baking tray with baking paper and cut shapes out of the dough using cookie cutters. It is best to keep similar sized shapes on a single tray. If there is a slight variation place the smaller shapes in the middle of the tray. If there is a lot of variation then use multiple baking trays.
10. Chill the cookie dough again for at least half an hour.
11. Preheat the oven to 200 C and bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes until they are slightly browned. They will firm up as they cool so don't think they should be really hard when just baked.
12. Leave until slightly firmer then use a palette knife to move onto a wire rack and leave until cold. They will last up to a month if kept in a cool dry place.