

Gingerbread Cookies

3.5 cups flour | 1 tsp baking soda | 1 tsp cinnamon | 3 tsp ginger | 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice | 1/2 tsp salt | 1/4 -1/2 tsp freshly milled pepper | 3/4 cup butter, room temp | 1 cup packed brown sugar | 1 egg | 3/4 cup grandma's molasses | royal icing recipe of choice for decorating

Sift the flour, baking soda, and spices through a wire sieve into a medium bowl and set aside. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar on high until light and fluffy. Add egg and beat until incorporated. Add molasses and beat until incorporated. Gradually add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and mix until combined. Dough shouldn't be sticky but held together (pulling away from bowl). If too sticky, add 1/4 cup flour until dough pulls away from bowl. Divide dough into two thick disks and wrap in wax paper followed by plastic cling wrap. Refrigerate until chilled (at least 3 hours) or can be left in fridge for 3 days before using. Remove from fridge and let warm at room temp (~10 min). Lightly flour the top and bottom of dough and rolling pin. Roll out using the same wax paper it was wrapped in to about 1/8 - 1/4 inch in thickness. Tip: Thicker dough equals softer cookies vice versa thinner dough equals crunchier cookie. Place on parchment lined baking sheet approximately 1 inch apart to avoid merging together. Bake at 375 for 8 minutes in the middle rack of oven. Let cool completely on wire racks before decorating. Store in air-tight containers up to one week.