

Gingerbread Tree

On SCOPE's Christmas Special, Julia made a festive gingerbread tree!
Here's how you can do it at home:



What you need:

- Cooking utensils
- 150g butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup of golden syrup
- 3 cups plain flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Cling wrap
- Star-shaped cookie cutters
- Baking paper
- Star-shaped cookie cutters (you will need 5 different sizes)
- Icing sugar

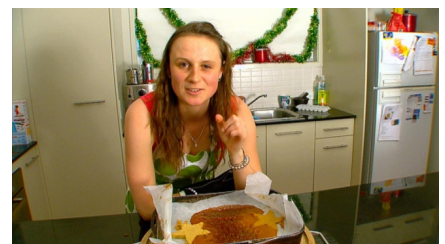
What to do:

1. Beat the butter and sugar until the mix is nice and fluffy.
2. Add the egg and golden syrup.
3. Sift and add the flour, baking powder, ginger cinnamon and nutmeg.
4. Mix the ingredients into a dough.
5. Wrap the dough in cling wrap.
6. Place the dough in the fridge for about an hour.

In the fridge the dough will cool and become firm, making it easier to cut into shapes.

Next, it is time to collect as many star-shaped cookie-cutters as you can. You will need 5 different sizes.

7. For the star-shaped cookie cutter sizes that you do not have, transfer the corresponding star templates (at the bottom of the page) onto baking paper.
8. After an hour, roll out the dough, between pieces of baking paper, so it is about 5mm thick.
9. Using the cookie cutters and/or templates, cut 4 copies of each of the 4 larger stars.



10. Then make as many small stars as you can with the rest of the dough.
11. Place them all onto a baking tray.
12. Bake them in the oven for about 8 minutes.

Next it's time to make the icing.

13. Separate 2 eggs into the white and the yolk.
14. To make the icing, beat the egg whites with the icing sugar.

Now it's time to create the tree!

15. Start by stacking the biggest stars on a plate (with the star points pointing in different directions). Separate each star with a small star. Glue each star in place with the icing.
16. Continue stacking the stars, from largest to smallest, until you run out of stars.
17. Decorate the tree with the extra icing, as well as a sprinkle of icing sugar.

Your Christmas gingerbread tree is now finished!

18. Try baking the gingerbread stars without one ingredient in the mix, to find out what each ingredient actually does!

What's happening?

Ginger is the rhizome of the ginger plant. The rhizome is the horizontal stem of a plant. It is often used as a spice in cooking but can also be used for medicinal purposes. In fact, it was one of our earliest medicines, used to treat things like stomach diseases!

Each ingredient is important to the gingerbread recipe. Without the flour the gingerbread mixture is very gooey and mainly made up of sugar and butter, so when you put it in the oven, the mixture simply caramalises. Without the butter, the mixture is very crumbly, because the butter adds moisture to the mix. And without the ginger, well, it just wouldn't be gingerbread anymore!

