

## *Gingerbread Cookies* RECIPE COURTESY OF TRISHA YEARWOOD

Yield: 5 dozen cookies or 4 ginger bread houses (with the attached pattern)

### Ingredients

#### *Cookies:*

1 cup vegetable shortening  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup molasses  
2 tablespoons cider vinegar  
1 large egg  
1 tablespoon ground ginger  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
4 to 5 cups sifted all-purpose flour, plus more for flouring

#### *Royal Icing:*

3 large egg whites, room temperature (or equivalent meringue powder)  
2 1/2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar  
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar  
Food color, for tinting, optional

### Directions

**For the cookies:** In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the shortening and granulated sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the molasses, vinegar and egg and beat on high speed to blend thoroughly.

Sift together the ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, salt and 4 cups of the flour in a separate bowl. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed shortening and sugar and mix to make a firm, manageable dough, adding more flour if needed. Wrap the dough in plastic and refrigerate until firm, about 3 hours.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly spray 2 baking sheets with cooking spray.

**\*\*Hint\*\*** Roll dough on floured parchment paper, then cut out shapes, remove the excess dough, and then slide parchment paper with cutouts onto baking sheet. Roll the dough to 1/8-inch thickness and cut it into desired shapes with a knife or cookie cutters. (You can reroll the scraps to make a few more cookies.) Place the cookies 1 inch apart on the prepared baking sheets and bake for 5 to 6 minutes. Cool the cookies for 2 minutes on the baking sheets before removing to a wire rack to cool completely. Repeat with the remaining dough.

**For the royal icing:** Beat the egg whites and 1/3 cup of the confectioners' sugar with a wire whisk or the whisk attachment of your mixer. Add another 1/3 cup sugar and the cream of tartar and beat 10 minutes longer. Add the remaining sugar and beat until the mixture is smooth and thick. The icing can be tinted as desired with food coloring.

Ice the cooled cookies with the royal icing as desired.

#### Cook's Note

Keep the bowl of icing and the decorator tips covered with a moist cloth to prevent the icing from hardening prematurely.