

"Uncle" Frank's Gingerbread Recipe

1 1/3 cups honey
 3 1/3 cups sugar
 1/2 cup butter or margarine
 2/3 cup lemon juice
 2 beaten eggs
 2 beaten egg yolks
 12 cups all-purpose flour
 1/3 cup baking powder
 2 tsp ground ginger
 2 tsp ground cinnamon
 2 tsp ground cloves
 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
 1 tsp salt

In a very large pot, mix the honey, sugar and butter or margarine. Stir over medium heat until the butter melts. Remove from heat. Add lemon juice, eggs and yolks. Stir together 1 cup of the flour, the baking powder, spices, and salt. Add to honey mixture. Stir in as much of the remaining flour as you can with a wooden spoon.

Knead in remaining flour on a floured surface until it forms a smooth ball. Cover.

Pre-heat oven to 350°

Step-by-step directions for building the house:

1. Begin rolling out pieces of dough to about 1/4" thickness. Cut 4 pieces of gingerbread, 7x10" (2 for the sidewalls, 2 for the roof) and 2 pieces 7x11" for the ends of the house. Mark off 7" on each 11" end panel for shaping the pointed gable. Then cut from this mark to the center of the top of the gingerbread.

2. Bake on non-stick or greased cookie sheet in 350° oven for 20 minutes or until browned. Cool and store. Assemble when ready, starting with a large platter or piece of heavy cardboard covered in aluminum foil.

3. Fill a pastry bag with canned white frosting. Don't worry about detail decorating yet. Using a large flat tip, make a line of frosting where you want to place 2 sides of the house on the base. Also, frost one of the adjoining sides of gingerbread. Repeat with the remaining 2 sides. Then, frost the remaining ends and allow all 4 sides to sit for at least 3 hours.

4. Take the 2 roof pieces and gently put them in place. Use more frosting to "glue" them to the 4 sidepieces and each other. Allow the house to sit for at least another 3 hours. Now you can take a

scalloped or other decorative tip and put the finishing touches on your seams, and the gingerbread house is ready to decorate.

5. Place candy and other decorations on the house while icing is slightly tacky but not yet hard.

Frank Isganitis builds his villages at the LimeRock Inn in Rockland, ME. His gingerbread will be on display during the Festival of Lights. www.HistoricInnsOfRockland.com