



BAKING FROM BOOKS

SATURDAYS, DEC. 3RD & 17TH
9:00 AM ON YOUTUBE
[YOUTUBE.COM/C/DAVPUBLIB](https://www.youtube.com/c/DAVPUBLIB)

Baking Booklist

Murder on the Orient Express – M CHRIS AGA @ Main, Eastern

No Exit – FIC ADAMS TAY @ Eastern, Fairmount

Recipe Notes

To make better gingerbread houses:

Add extra water, because the dough can be very dry

CHILLING TIME IS ESSENTIAL – make sure to use the whole time.

Smaller is better, do NOT go big on the house or stability will be an issue.

Use melted sugar to glue pieces together

(see <http://tastycheapskate.blogspot.com/2011/12/melted-sugar-gingerbread-houses-no.html>)

Baking Tips & Tricks

1. Read the recipe first – all the way through
2. Write out a baking schedule of everything that needs to happen and when (especially when creating, maintaining, or using sourdough starter)
3. Get out everything you're going to need and get it in front of you
4. The age of your ingredients matters – if baking soda is too old your bake won't rise
5. You can buy a one-pound bag of instant yeast and store it in the freezer
6. "room temperature" means 'tepid' or 'lukewarm', NOT the temperature of your room
7. Get the consistency and temperature right (room temperature vs chilled vs. melted)
8. Measure carefully – dry ingredients get scooped and then leveled off, liquid in glass cup
 - a. (Weigh ingredients if possible on a kitchen scale, because it'll be more accurate)
9. Clean up as you go and keep your workspace tidy
10. Nonstick cooking spray will give you a nice even coat in all pan crevices
11. Preheat, the longer the better, and be ready to adjust baking time and rotate your pans
12. Get an oven thermometer and place it inside so you always know the real temperature
13. If you have a convection oven, reduce the temperature by 25 degrees and time by 1-5 min.
14. Keep the oven door closed, or open it only briefly
15. Chill your dough and don't skip it – let it sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes after

Other Resources

King Arthur Baking Company website, featuring video tutorials and baking guides

<https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/learn>

Taste of Home magazine's recipe section featuring blogs and recipes on all things baking

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/cooking-style/baking/>

Easy Crème Brûlée

by Danielle

Ingredients

- 6 large egg yolks
- 1/3 cup (70 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 cups (480 ml) heavy whipping cream
- 1 and 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons (25 grams) granulated sugar (for the topping)



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (163°C). Place a large pot of water on the stove to boil.
2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and sugar until well blended and it just starts to lighten in color. Set aside.
3. Pour the heavy whipping cream in a medium-sized saucepan and heat over medium heat. Stir occasionally until the cream is warm and bubbling around the edges. Remove the cream from the heat and stir in the vanilla extract.
4. Slowly pour about 1/2 cup of the warm heavy whipping cream into the egg and sugar mixture making sure to whisk well as you're pouring it in. Then, slowly pour in the remaining cream and continue whisking until fully combined. If there's a thin layer of foam on top of the mixture, you can skim this off with a spoon at this point.
5. Strain the mixture through a fine mesh strainer, then evenly distribute between four 6-ounce ramekins.
6. Pour the boiling water into an 8-inch square baking pan (or larger pan if you prefer) about 1/3 of the way full. Carefully place the ramekins in the baking dish. The water should come about halfway up the sides of the ramekins. If needed, add a little more boiling water to the pan.
7. Carefully place the baking pan in the oven. Bake at 325°F (163°C) for 35 to 45 minutes or until the edges are set and the center is slightly jiggly. Remove from the oven and carefully remove the ramekins from the pan using tongs or pot holders and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Once cooled, cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.
8. Once chilled, blot the tops of each custard with a paper towel to remove any excess moisture. Sprinkle 1 and 1/2 teaspoons of sugar on top of each custard, shake it around into one even layer, then use a small kitchen torch to carefully caramelize the sugar. Allow the sugar to harden for 1 to 2 minutes, then serve and enjoy, or refrigerate for a few hours until ready to serve.

Notes:

Broiler instructions: If you do not have a small kitchen torch, you may broil these in the oven to caramelize the sugar on top. Once the custard is chilled, set your oven to broil and place the ramekins on a baking sheet. Place the baking sheet in the oven and broil for about 5 to 6 minutes or until the sugar is caramelized. Carefully remove from the oven and allow to cool. The custard will be warm if you broil these in the oven, so I do suggest refrigerating them for 30 minutes to an hour to chill the custard again.

Recipe: <https://www.livewellbakeoften.com/easy-creme-brulee/>

Gingerbread House (or truck stop)

by Beatrice Ojakangas

Ingredients

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature

1/2 cup dark brown sugar

1/4 cup light molasses or dark corn syrup

1 tablespoon cinnamon

1 tablespoon ground ginger

1 1/2 teaspoons ground cloves

1 teaspoon baking soda

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons water

Directions

Gingerbread House:

1. In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar, molasses, cinnamon, ginger, cloves and baking soda together until the mixture is smooth. Blend in the flour and water to make a stiff dough. Chill at least 30 minutes or until firm.
2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
3. Cut out the following paper patterns for the gingerbread house template: Two rectangles, 3 by 5 inches, to make the front and back of the house. Two rectangles, 3 by 5 1/2 inches for the roof. Two pieces for the ends of the house, 3 inches wide at the base, 3 inches to the roof line, and slanted to a peak 5 1/2 inches from the bottom. Four smaller rectangles, 1 1/2 by 1 inch for the roof and sides of the entryway. And one piece, 2 inches wide at the base, 1 1/2 inches to the roof line, and slanted to a peak 2 1/2 inches from the bottom for the front of the entryway.
4. Roll gingerbread dough out to edges on a large, rimless cookie sheet. Place paper patterns onto the rolled-out dough. With a sharp, straight edged knife, cut around each of the pieces, but leave pieces in place.
5. Bake at 375 degrees F for about 15 minutes until dough feels firm.
6. Place patterns on top of the gingerbread again and trim shapes, cutting edges with a straight-edged sharp knife. Leave to cool on baking sheet.
7. Place royal icing into pastry bag with a writing tip and press out to decorate individual parts of house, piping on decorations, windows, door, etc., as desired. Let dry until hardened.
8. Glue sides, front and back of house together at corners using royal icing. Place an object against the pieces to prop up until icing is dry (it only takes a few minutes).
9. Glue the two roof pieces to the pitched roofline of the house. Then, similarly, glue the sides and roof of the entryway together with icing. Attach the entryway to the front of the house.
10. Continue decorating the house, gluing on gumdrops, licorice and peppermint, as desired.



For assemblage and decoration:

Melted white chocolate or Royal Icing

Gumdrops, licorice and peppermint, as desired

Royal Icing (mix all until smooth & thin):

1 pound (3-3/4 cups) powdered sugar, sifted

1 to 2 large egg whites

1 teaspoon almond extract, vanilla or lemon juice