

Gingerbread House

by Kirsten Tibballs

Intermediate | Makes 1

GINGERBREAD

870g plain flour

250g caster sugar

30g gingerbread spice

410g honey

60g unsalted butter, softened

15g bicarbonate of soda

130g hot water

Plain flour for dusting

1. In a bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, mix the flour, sugar, gingerbread spice, honey and butter until you achieve a fine powder and there are no lumps of butter.
2. Dissolve the bicarbonate of soda in the hot water and add it to the mixture. Continue to mix until all the ingredients are incorporated and it comes together as a dough.
3. Press the dough into a flat disc, 1cm thick and cover in plastic wrap. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
4. Remove the dough from the fridge and cut it in half.
5. Lightly dust the bench surface with flour and place one half of the dough on top. Dust the top of the dough and roll it at different angles to approximately 4mm in thickness.
6. Use a stencil and knife to cut the gingerbread pieces for your house. Cut the roof first and place onto a tray lined with a Silpat mat or baking paper.
7. Roll the scraps to 2mm in thickness to cut the ornaments, ensuring you do not overmix as this will develop the gluten. Cut out the decorations in assorted sizes in a variety of shapes (star, heart, snow flake etc). You should have 25-30 pieces in total.
8. Place them onto a separate lined tray. Due to the difference in thickness, the decorations and house pieces need to be baked separately.

Note: Gingerbread Spice = coriander powder, cinnamon powder, clove powder, star anise powder (1:1)

ROYAL ICING

125g egg whites

375g pure icing sugar or icing mixture, sieved

1. Sieve the icing sugar.
2. Place the egg whites into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and add the sieved icing sugar. Start the mixer on a slow speed and increase to aerate the mixture.
3. Check the mixture periodically until you achieve a consistency that collapses but still has some body. If needed, adjust the icing by adding more egg white or icing sugar until you have a firm piping consistency.
4. Royal icing sets very hard very quickly, so keep the bowl covered with a damp cloth while you are piping the decorations, ensuring it doesn't touch the icing.
5. Place the icing into a paper piping cone or use a zip lock bag and cut off a small tip.
6. Pipe assorted patterns of the prepared royal icing on top of the biscuits and allow to set for 20-30 minutes.
7. Reserve the remaining icing for assembly.

ASSEMBLY

Royal icing (above)

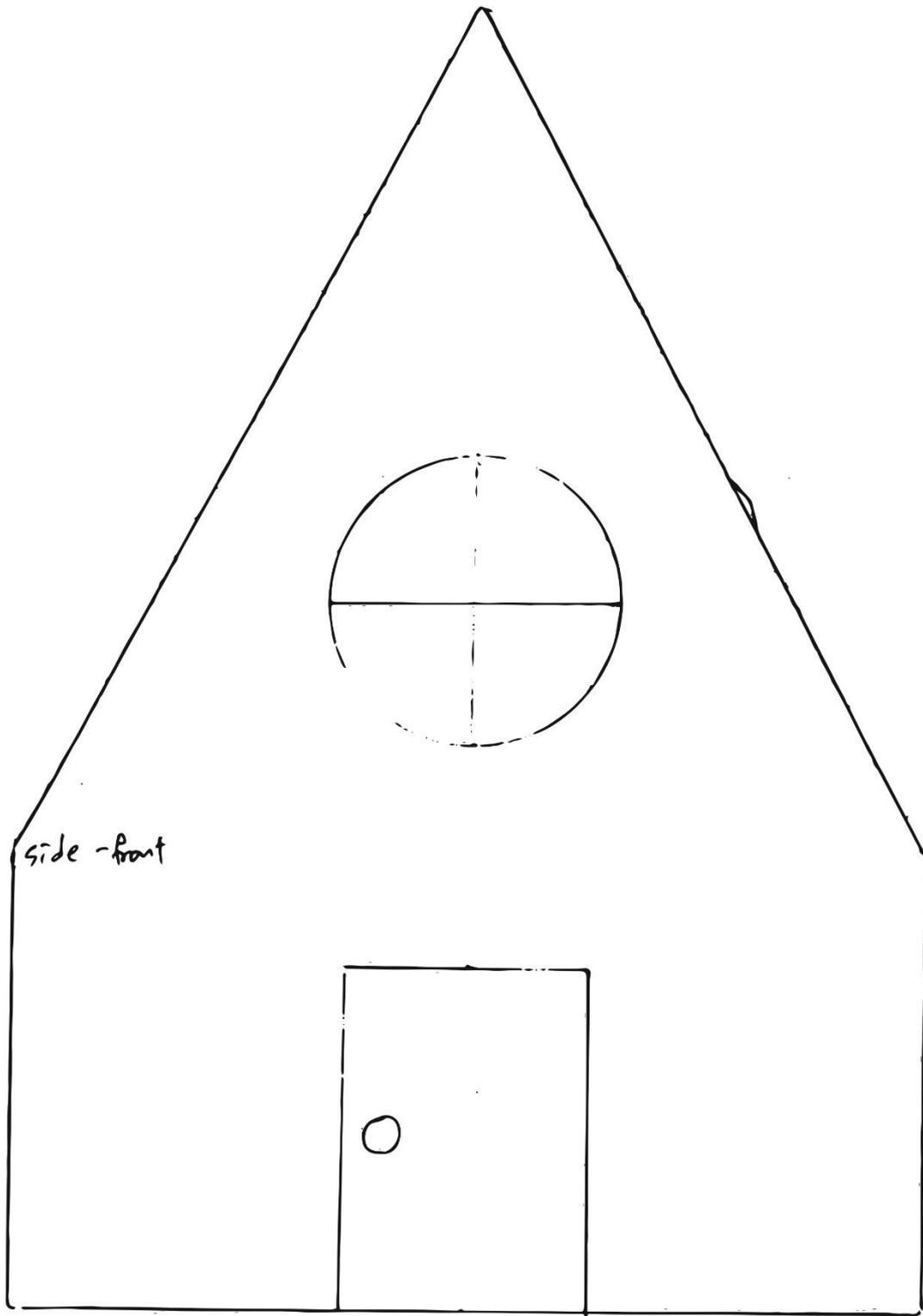
225g pure icing sugar

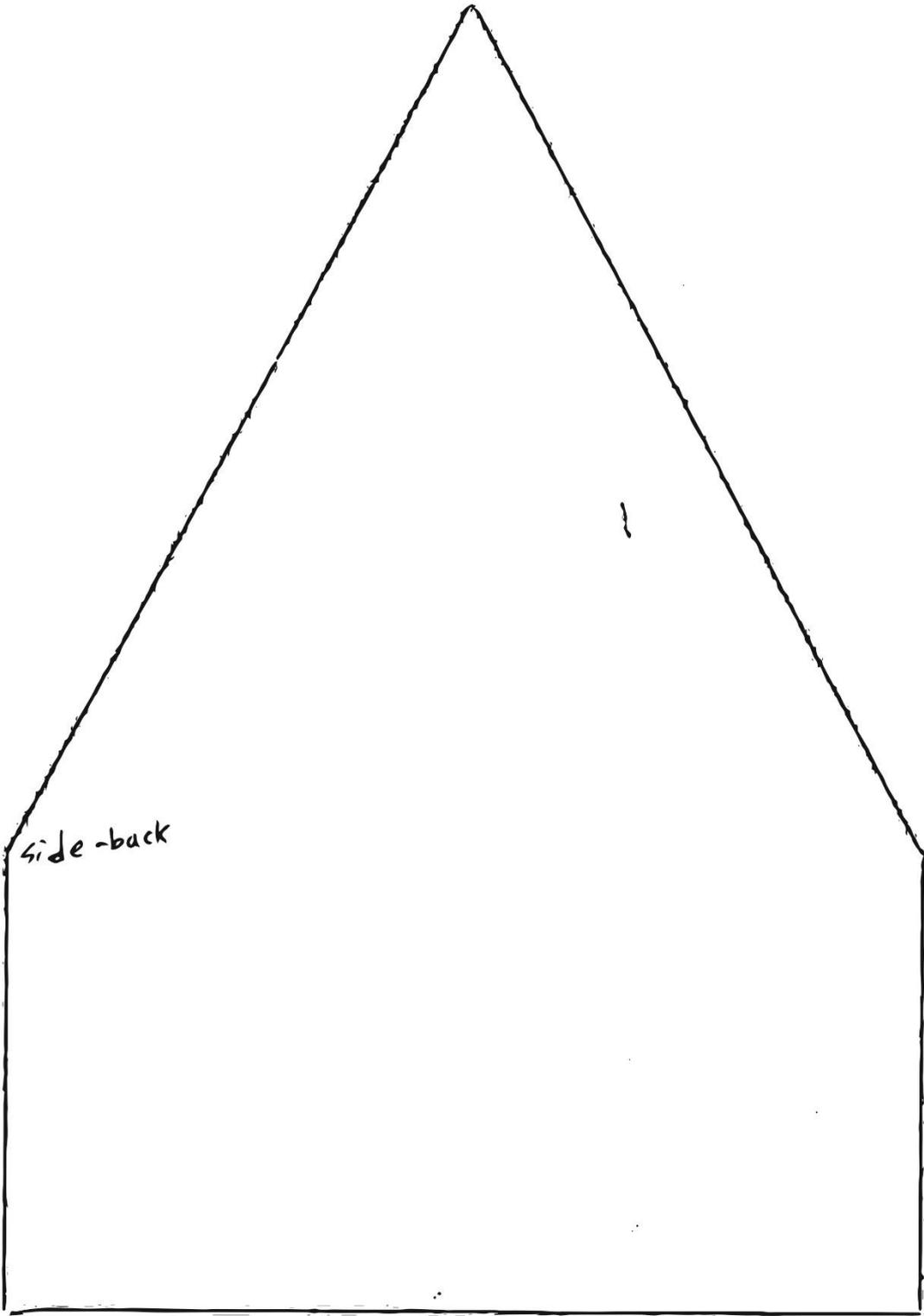
Icing sugar, for dusting

1. Add the icing sugar to the remaining royal icing and mix together in a stand mixer. When you have finished mixing it must stick and not fall off the whisk. Ensure the gingerbread pieces are quite brittle before assembling the house.
2. Transfer the icing to a disposable piping bag fitted with an 8mm piping nozzle.
3. Line up the pieces of the house as you go before sticking them down. Stick the back of the house down first by applying icing with the piping bag, ensuring you leave a 1cm gap from the edge. Stick one of the sides on with icing, followed by the front and the final side.
4. Ensure the house is sturdy and stick the roof on top.
5. Stick the door to the front of the house and decorate with a few ornaments. Do not place all the ornaments onto the house at once or it will collapse. After you apply a few, allow to set for 15-20 minutes before applying anymore.
6. Decorate the house with icing.
7. Allow to set in one place for a couple of hours. The house lasts a couple of weeks and is best kept airtight in cellophane.

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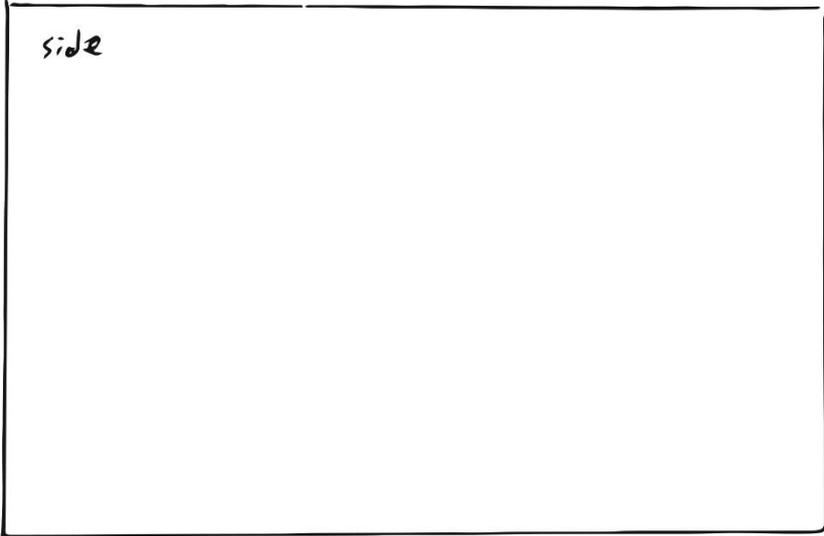
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side-back

Roof x 2



Base