



There's a Chef in My Kitchen, LLC

Gingered-Chocolate Gingerbread

Makes 1 large sheet pan (minimum size 15 1/2" x 10") to serve approximately 12 to 16
Or 1 standard (10 to 12 cup) bundt pan to serve approximately 12

This is a very adult version of your classic gingerbread. Moist, dense, full of gingery spicy flavor, and chocolate. It is easy to make but really does require the convection function of your oven to be employed to get the center of the batter to bake through without over baking the edges. It should be obvious, but worth repeating: the better the quality of the chocolate, the better the result. And, if you can't find Lyle's Golden syrup, do not despair, just replace the amount with more molasses but you will turn up the spiced flavor a bit. Don't be afraid to have fun with the spice combination, upping the amount of your favorite or trying differing amounts and combinations. Ultimately, it is the combination of spices, molasses, and vanilla that deliver the crisp snap of ginger to the palate.



Imani Coral Serving Platter and Annie Glass
Nut Bowl courtesy of www.ProperSetting.com

Ingredients

1 cup dark or stout ale
1/2 cup mild molasses (not blackstrap)
1/2 cup Lyle's Golden Syrup
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
4 ounces semi sweet chocolate, melted
1/4 cup crystallized ginger
1 teaspoon cake flour
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/8 teaspoon cayenne
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste (substitute 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract)
1 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
3/4 cup vegetable oil

Dutch-processed cocoa for dusting

Crème Fraîche with Apple Cider Syrup* Swirl for topping

*Apple Cider Syrup Recipe follows

courtesy of: www.TheresAChefinMyKitchen.com

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Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously spray a large non-stick sheet pan with a flour-based non-stick spray; dust with flour and tap out excess. *Note: regardless of the non-stick surface of the sheet pan you are well advised to use both the flour based spray and a dusting of flour.*

In a large heavy sauce pan combine the ale and molasses. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Remove from the heat and carefully whisk in baking soda. Set aside to cool to room temperature. *Note: when you add the baking soda the mixture will bubble up; a large sauce pan is essential to prevent spills.*

Combine the crystallized ginger and the cake flour in the bowl of a mini food processor and process until finely chopped. Reserve.

In a large bowl sift the flour, baking powder, and spices. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, combine the eggs, vanilla, and sugars until creamy. With the mixer running on low speed, add the oil, and then the molasses mixture. Add the flour mixture and whisk until just combined.

Pour about one-third of the batter into the melted chocolate and stir to combine. Add the processed ginger and fold in.

Pour the plain batter into the prepared pan. Evenly space about 6 heaping spoonfuls (using the full complement of the chocolate mixture) of the chocolate mixture on top of the plain batter. Pull a small spatula through the batter to marble the chocolate and plain batters.

Place the pan in the oven and bake for 15 minutes. Change the setting of the oven to convection bake and continue baking about 15 minutes longer, until a tester comes out just barely clean (a few crumbs sticking is okay). Cool cake in pan on a rack for 5 minutes. Carefully turn out cake onto a rack and cool completely.

Service

There are two service options: a light dusting with cocoa powder or a dollop of crème fraîche. For the cocoa place about 1 tablespoon of the Dutch processed cocoa in a tea strainer and gently sift over cut pieces of cake. For the crème fraîche: place crème fraîche in a bowl about 20 minutes before serving. Just before service, whisk crème fraîche until ribbons fall from the whisk. With a tablespoon, swirl in apple cider syrup* through the crème fraîche. Serve a dollop of the crème fraîche with each piece of cake.

Chef's note

A 15 ½" x 10" sheet pan is as small as I dare go with this cake. At this size sheet pan you will have a noticeable drop in the center of the pan when the cake cools. Take advantage of this by cutting serving pieces that use the firmer crustier edges and the softer interior. Or, use the interior for your service and chop up the firmer edges and use with ice cream as an alternative dessert.

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The cake is easier to cut when well chilled, however the best flavor profile is revealed when the cake is at room temperature and actually about 2 – 3 days old!! Therefore, I recommend chilling the cake and cutting it in advance of service. You will find that wiping the knife between each slice helps in producing a beautiful presentation. If you run the knife under warm water to aid in removing the crumbs that adhere to the blade, be sure to chill the knife under cold water before attempting another slice.

***Apple Cider Syrup Recipe:** Place 1 cup apple cider (or juice) in a small heavy saucepan over medium heat. Simmer until the liquid is reduced to a syrup-like liquid (about ¼ cup). Cool before using in crème fraîche. If you reduce the liquid too far and the liquid tightens upon cooling, reheat gently over low flame and whisk enough water in to thin the syrup.

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