

## Granny and Nana's Peppernuts Cookies

Best-Loved Cookies | December 2008



*Originally, these family hand-me-down cookies were baked as bite-size pieces to dunk in coffee, but Elaine likes to roll and cut them into a variety of shapes. Our contest judges were smitten with the hearty anise-molasses flavor.*

PREP: 1 HOUR CHILL: 1 HOUR BAKE: 9 MINUTES/BATCH OVEN: 375°

- 5 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 1/2 CUP ANISE SEED (1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> OZ.), FINELY GROUND\*
- 1 TSP. SALT
- 1 TSP. BAKING SODA
- 1 TSP. GROUND CARDAMOM
- 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> CUPS SUGAR
- 1 CUP BUTTER
- 1/2 CUP DARK-COLORED CORN SYRUP
- 1/2 CUP MOLASSES
- 2 EGGS, LIGHTLY BEATEN

TOPPINGS, SUCH AS A SIFTING OF POWDERED SUGAR AND GROUND CINNAMON (GINGERBREAD MAN), CHOCOLATE CAVIAR OR SPRINKLES (REINDEER), 1 RECIPE POWDERED SUGAR ICING (ANGEL AND TREE), EDIBLE GLITTER AND NONPAREILS (ANGEL), AND COLORED SUGAR (TREE)

In a very large bowl combine flour, ground anise seed, salt, baking soda, and cardamom. Set aside. In a medium saucepan heat sugar, butter, corn syrup, and molasses over medium heat until boiling, stirring occasionally. Add all at once to flour mixture. Stir until well combined.

Stir in eggs until well combined. Divide dough in half. Wrap each portion in plastic wrap; chill 1 to 2 hours or until firm enough to handle.

On a lightly floured surface roll half of the dough at a time to 1/4-inch thickness. Use 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>- to 3-inch cookie cutters to cut out desired shapes. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on greased cookie sheets. Sprinkle with chocolate caviar or sprinkles, if using.

Bake in a 375° oven for 9 to 11 minutes or until cookies are puffed and edges are firm. Let cool on cookie sheets for 1 minute. Transfer to wire racks to cool. Decorate as desired with *Powdered Sugar Icing* and toppings. Makes about 7 dozen 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>- to 3-inch cookies.

\*TIP: Use a coffee or spice grinder to finely grind the anise seed.

**TO STORE:** Store unfrosted cookies in a covered container at room temperature for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 3 months. Cookies may soften slightly after freezing. Thaw before serving.

**POWDERED SUGAR ICING:** In a small bowl combine 2 cups powdered sugar, 1/2 teaspoon vanilla, and 2 tablespoons milk. Stir in additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, until icing reaches piping and/or spreading consistency. Tint as desired with food coloring.

Per cookie: 75 cal., 2 g fat (1 g sat. fat), 11 mg chol., 64 mg sodium, 13 g carbo., 0 g dietary fiber, 1 g protein.

"This recipe has been in my family for generations. It came from Germany, written in German."

—Elaine Schroeder Ponton  
Holtville, CA