



Instructions for Baking & Decorating Cookie Tree Kit



PLEASE READ THROUGH INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN. IN ADDITION TO THE ITEMS INCLUDED IN KIT, you will need:

- Two 14 x 20 in. cookie sheets
- Two 17 1/4 x 11 1/2 in. non-stick cookie pans (for preparing gelatin)
- 10 in. Cake Circles wrapped with Fancy-Foil Wrap
- Wilton Meringue Powder (used for royal icing)
- Rolling pin
- For Holiday Lights Cookie Tree: Grandma's Gingerbread Recipe (see inside, 2 batches needed), Kelly Green and Lemon Yellow Icing Colors, Royal Icing Recipe (see inside), yellow mini jawbreakers, candy-coated chocolate dots
- For White Christmas Cookie Tree: Large Batch Roll-Out Cookie Recipe (see inside), Quick-Pour Cookie Icing Recipe (see inside), Royal or Buttercream Icing Recipe (see inside), 1/4 in. wide red ribbon
- For Crispy Cereal Star Tree: Rainbow Nonpareils Sprinkle Decorations, your favorite crisped rice cereal treat recipe (2 recipes needed), waxed paper, non-stick cooking spray
- For Jolly Gelatin Tree: Gelatin Stars and Creamy Gelatin Stars Recipes (see inside), non-stick cooking spray

Making Cookie Stars

You will need 2 recipes of Large Batch Roll-Out Cookie Dough or Grandma's Gingerbread to make your cookie tree.

Roll dough on floured surface to 1/4 in. thick. Make sure all dough is rolled out to the same thickness so your cookie tree stacks up perfectly. Cut out 2 cookies in each star size. Remove excess dough from around star before placing it on cookie sheet. If stars are difficult to remove from cutting surface, dip spatula in flour. For larger stars, roll out dough on cookie sheet and cut star shape right on the sheet. Remove excess dough. Place dampened paper towel under cookie sheet to prevent slippage as you roll out dough. Group stars of similar size on the same cookie sheet so they will finish baking in the same length of time.

Large Batch Roll-Out Cookie Recipe

1 1/4 cups butter	5 cups flour
2 cups granulated sugar	2 teaspoons baking powder
2 large eggs	1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon Wilton Almond Flavor or Vanilla Extract	1/2 cup milk

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cream butter and sugar together with an electric mixer, then add eggs and flavoring, beat until fluffy. Sift dry ingredients together and add alternately to creamed mixture with milk. If mixture is too sticky, add flour, a little at a time, until dough is easy to handle. Divide dough into two balls. Roll out each on a lightly floured cookie sheet to 1/4-in. thick. Cut out stars; remove excess dough. Bake on middle rack of oven; small and medium sized stars for 6-7 minutes, larger stars for 10-15 minutes or until light brown. Remove cookies from sheet immediately onto wire racks to cool.

If you don't plan to ice cookies for one or two days, store in a covered container (not airtight).

Grandma's Gingerbread Recipe

5 to 5 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon baking soda	1 cup shortening
1 teaspoon salt	1 cup granulated sugar
2 teaspoons ginger	1 1/4 cups unsulphured molasses*
2 teaspoons cinnamon	2 eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon nutmeg	

Preheat oven to 375°F. Thoroughly mix flour, soda, salt and spices. Melt shortening in large saucepan. Cool slightly. Add sugar, molasses and eggs; mix well. Add four cups dry ingredients and mix well.

Turn mixture onto lightly floured surface. Knead in remaining dry ingredients by hand. Add a little more flour if necessary to make firm dough. Roll out on a lightly floured surface to 1/4 in. thickness for cutout cookies. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet. Small and medium -sized cookies for 6-10 minutes, large cookies for 10-15 minutes. One recipe of this gingerbread dough will yield 40 average-size cookies. Note: If you're not going to use your gingerbread dough right away, wrap it in plastic and refrigerate. Refrigerated dough will keep for a week, but be sure to remove it 3 hours prior to rolling so it softens and is workable.

*You may substitute molasses with 1 1/4 cups light corn syrup for Blonde Gingerbread.

Preparing the Cookie Stars

One of our designs uses stars covered with Quick-Pour Cookie Icing. This is the perfect icing to delicately coat cookie stars. It dries to a smooth, shiny surface and tastes good, too.

Quick-Pour Cookie Icing Recipe

5 cups sifted confectioner's sugar
1/4 cup milk
1/4 cup light corn syrup

Place sugar and milk in bowl. Stir until mixed thoroughly. Add corn syrup and mix well. For filling in areas, use thinned icing (add small amounts of light corn syrup until desired consistency is reached).

Note: You will need two recipes of Cookie Icing to cover all the cookies necessary to make one cookie tree. Place star cookies on a cooling rack over a drip pan. Pour the cookie icing, starting in center of cookie, then work toward edges with spatula and cover sides. Let dry completely, approximately 1 hour. Excess icing can be reheated and poured again. Or try this method; pour icing into a large shallow bowl. Dip top of cookie into icing. Rotate cookie to coat evenly. Spatula may be needed to smooth icing on top and sides. Place cookie right side up on a wire rack over a drip pan to dry completely.

Stacking The Cookie Stars

To create a natural looking tree, first position larger star cookies atop one another, alternating points. Continue to build upward, adding medium and small cookies in the same manner. Check the tree as you build to see that it is straight. Pipe a

small amount of icing in the center of each star as you stack to keep your tree aligned. One of the smallest stars can be reserved for the top of the cookie tree. If you discover that your tree is shaping up without including all the smaller size stars, that's fine. Use only as many cookies as you need to make the tree look good.

Make a decorative base for your tree by covering Wilton 10 in. Cake Circles or cardboard rounds with Fanci-Foil Wrap or foil wrapping paper. Secure paper to cardboard with tape.

Decorating With Icing

Some cookie tree designs are decorated with Royal or Buttercream Icing. Hard-drying Royal Icing is long-lasting, and is perfect for cookie tree centerpieces that will be kept longer and enjoyed later. Flavorful Buttercream Icing is a great choice for trees that will be fun-to-eat treats soon after assembling.

Coloring Your Icing

Add holiday hues to your cookie tree using Wilton Icing Colors. Concentrated in a rich, creamy base, they give the deepest, most vivid color without changing icing consistency. Use a toothpick to swirl icing color into icing, then mix well. Add icing color gradually until you get the icing color you desire.

Royal Icing

When working with Royal Icing, make sure bowl and utensils are grease-free, since any trace of grease will cause it to break down. Royal Icing dries quickly, so keep bowl covered with a damp cloth at all times.

3 level Tablespoons Wilton Meringue Powder
4 cups sifted confectioner's sugar (approx. 1 lb.)
6 Tablespoons water**

Beat all ingredients at low speed for 7 to 10 minutes (10 to 12 minutes at high speed for portable mixer) until icing forms peaks. This icing can be stored in an airtight container and rewhipped before using. YIELD: 3 cups.

To give Royal Icing decorations a shiny, snow-like effect, add 1 Tablespoon corn syrup to 1 cup Royal Icing. This also helps the icing adhere to the cookies.

**For stiffer icing or when a heavy-duty mixer is used, omit 1 Tablespoon water.

Buttercream Icing

1/2 cup solid vegetable shortening	4 cups sifted confectioner's sugar (approx. 1 lb.)
1/2 cup butter or margarine*	2 Tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon Wilton Clear Vanilla Extract	

Cream butter and shortening with electric mixer. Add vanilla. Gradually add sugar, one cup at a time, beating well on medium speed. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often. When all sugar has been mixed in, icing will appear dry. Add milk and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy. Keep icing covered with a damp cloth until ready to use. For best results, keep icing bowl in refrigerator when not in use. Refrigerated in an airtight container, this icing can be stored 2 weeks. Rewhip before using. YIELD: 3 cups.

*Substitute all-vegetable shortening and 1/2 teaspoon Butter Extract for pure white icing and stiffer consistency.

Gelatin Stars

4 (3 oz.) packages lime gelatin
2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
5 cups boiling water

Mix together lime and unflavored gelatin in a large bowl. Add boiling water to gelatin. Dissolve completely. Pour mixture into 17 1/4 x 11 1/2 in. non-stick cookie pan, sprayed with non-stick vegetable oil cooking spray. Let set at room temperature for about 30 minutes; move pans to refrigerator to set until firm, about 3 hours.

Creamy Gelatin Stars

4 (3 oz.) packages lime gelatin	1 1/2 cups milk
2 envelopes unflavored gelatin	1 (6 oz.) package vanilla flavor instant pudding and pie filling
3 3/4 cups boiling water	

Mix together lime and unflavored gelatin in a large bowl. Add boiling water to gelatin. Dissolve completely; let cool to room temperature.

Pour milk into a small bowl. Add pudding mix. Beat with wire whisk until well blended, 1 to 2 minutes. Quickly pour into gelatin. Stir with wire whisk until well blended. Pour mixture into 17 1/4 x 11 1/2 in. non-stick cookie pan, sprayed with non-stick vegetable oil cooking spray. Let set at room temperature for about 30 minutes; move pans to refrigerator to set until firm, about 3 hours.

To Outline

Use round tip. Hold bag at 45° angle and touch tip to cookie. Squeeze at starting point so that icing sticks to surface. Now raise tip slightly and as you squeeze, guide tip slightly above surface. To end outline, stop squeezing, touch tip to cake and pull away. If icing ripples, you are squeezing the bag too hard. If outlines break, you are moving the bag too quickly or icing is too thick. Practice for even pressure control and movement so that outlines are smooth and continuous.



To Make Dots

Use round tip. Hold decorating bag straight up and down, with tip 1/8 in. above cookie. Squeeze to form a dot. Keep tip in icing until dot is the desired size. Stop pressure and pull tip away.



To Decorate Holiday Lights Cookie Tree

You will need:

- 20 baked star cookies (2 of each size), made from Grandma's Gingerbread Dough (2 recipes needed)
- Round Tip
- Kelly Green and Lemon Yellow Icing Color
- 1 recipe Royal Icing
- Spatula
- Yellow mini jawbreakers
- Candy-coated chocolate dots

Ice star cookies smooth with spatula – smallest top star in yellow, remaining stars in green. Let dry. Stack cookies securing together with dots of icing, if necessary. Attach candy-coated chocolate dots to points of stars. Using round tip and royal icing thinned with a little corn syrup, decorate snow, pulling down sides as you squeeze to form peaks. Attach yellow mini jawbreakers to edge of star and attach to top of tree with icing.



To Decorate White Christmas Cookie Tree

You will need:

- 20 baked star cookies (2 of each size) made from Large Batch Roll-Out Cookie Dough (2 recipes needed)
- Round Tip
- Disposable Decorating Bag
- 2 recipes Quick-Pour Cookie Icing
- 1 recipe Royal or Buttercream Icing
- 1/4 in. wide ribbon

Ice cookies with Quick-Pour Cookie Icing, let dry. Using round tip and Royal or Buttercream Icing, pipe outlines and dots on star points. Stack cookies, securing together with dots of icing, if necessary. Make ribbon bow and position on top, securing with dot of icing.



To Decorate Crispy Cereal Star Tree

You will need:

- 16-20 cereal stars (2 of each size) made from your favorite crisped rice cereal treat recipe (2 recipes needed)
- Rainbow Nonpareils Sprinkle Decorations
- Waxed paper
- Vegetable oil pan spray
- Cookie sheet

Prepare your favorite crisped rice cereal treat recipe; mix in Rainbow Nonpareil Sprinkle Decorations. Mold the number of stars you need in each size: Line cookie sheet with waxed paper, spray cutters with vegetable oil pan spray, press cereal mixture in cutters. Unmold immediately and let set. Reserve one of the smallest stars for the top. Stack stars, add more Rainbow Nonpareils Sprinkle Decorations, if desired. Position star on top.



To Decorate Jolly Gelatin Tree

You will need:

- Gelatin Stars and Creamy Gelatin Stars Recipes
- Non-stick vegetable oil cooking spray

Prepare gelatin recipes following instructions. When set, dip pans into warm water for approximately 15 seconds for easy removal. Using the 5 smallest star cutters, cut one regular gelatin and one creamy gelatin in each size for each tree needed. Stack largest to smallest on a serving dish.

