

thick molasses spice cookies

makes 22 to 24 cookies

2⅓ cups (305 grams)
all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons ground ginger

¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

¼ teaspoon ground allspice

½ teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

**¾ cup (12 tablespoons,
6 ounces, or 170 grams)** unsalted
butter, melted, cooled slightly

½ cup (150 grams) molasses
(see note)

⅓ cup (145 grams) packed
dark-brown sugar

1 large egg yolk

3 tablespoons (45 grams) finely
chopped crystallized ginger

6 tablespoons (75 grams)
granulated or turbinado sugar,
for rolling

These cookies are my winter obsession. I had been on the hunt for a thick, soft-but-not-too cakey, deeply spiced, and a little kinky dark-molasses cookie for as long as I could remember. I tried dozens over the years, but none were exactly right. Over the pandemic winter that left us devoid of parties and all the usual holiday cheer, I decided that I would at least get this one perfect. (I also ran my local store out of molasses and ground ginger, and begged my friends to swing by so I could fling samples off the balcony down to them—don't worry, we're not high up—because we were, at one point, blockaded by cookies.) Do you know what it's like for your apartment to smell like a gingerbread house blew up in it every day for the whole month of December? It was, despite the larger circumstances, a very good time, and at the end, I had these: my forever molasses cookies, and soon, perhaps, yours, too.

Heat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

Whisk the flour, spices, baking soda, salt, and pepper in a large bowl until fully mixed. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients. Pour in the melted butter, molasses, brown sugar, yolk, and candied ginger. Whisk these together in the center a couple times (until the egg yolk is dispersed); then switch to a spoon or rubber spatula to continue mixing. The dough will be very thick!

Scoop the dough into balls—I either use a medium cookie scoop (1½ tablespoons) or take just shy of 2 tablespoons of dough for each. Roll each in your hands briefly to shape it into a ball, then into the granulated or turbinado sugar for coating.

Space the cookies evenly on the parchment-lined baking sheet (they barely spread), and bake for 10 to 12 minutes. You want what looks like a *quite* underbaked cookie. It will feel totally soft on top; you will be sure it's raw. But if you lift a cookie, you'll see that it's one shade darker underneath. They're done. Remove the pan from the oven, and let the cookies →

note You can use either unsulphured or blackstrap molasses here; I've tested it with both. If you can't get molasses where you are, use treacle. As for the egg yolk, I tested this recipe several times with a whole egg and with just a yolk and vastly prefer the yolk-only version: it's less crunchy and better holds the pillowy shape that I like in a molasses cookie.

thick molasses spice cookies (*continued*)

cool for 5 minutes before transferring them to a cooling rack. The cookies set as they cool. If you cut into one in the first 15 minutes, you'll yell, "Deb! These are *raw* in the middle! How could you?" But after that, you will have a more cookielike, perfect texture—crisp outside and tender inside.

do ahead You can chill the dough in the fridge for an hour or even several days before baking it, but let it warm up a bit at room temperature before scooping (trust me, I broke two cookie scoops learning this the hard way). Store the cookies in an airtight container to retain their softness. They keep for up to 2 weeks at room temperature, but their texture is best in the first week.