ST. LUCY (SANTA LUCIA) · DECEMBER 13

Pepparkakor for St. Lucy's Day

Prep 35 min **Cook** 30 min **Chill** 2 hr **Total** 3 hr 5 min **Makes** About 60 thin cookies **Level** Easy

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. The warm syrup of butter, sugar, and molasses can burn, so a grown-up does the stovetop work and the pouring. Metal cookie cutters can have a sharp edge: children press on the rolled top edge. For a Lucy crown, use battery candles, never real flames on a child's head.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten) and milk (butter). Made without egg or nuts. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup (115 g) butter
- ½ cup (100 g) sugar
- ⅓ cup (110 g) mild (light) molasses or golden syrup
- 3 tbsp water
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp ground cardamom (optional)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2½ cups (315 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling

METHOD

1. In a saucepan over low heat, warm the butter, sugar, and molasses, stirring, until the butter melts and the sugar dissolves. Do not let it boil.
2. Take the pan off the heat and stir in the water, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom. Pour into a large bowl and let it cool until just warm, about 15 minutes.
3. Whisk the baking soda and salt into the flour, then stir it into the syrup to make a smooth, soft dough. Flatten it into two disks, wrap them, and chill for at least 2 hours, or overnight. The dough firms up as it chills.
4. Heat the oven to 375°F (190°C) and line baking sheets with parchment. On a floured surface, roll one disk as thin as you can, about ⅛ inch (3 mm) or a little thinner.
5. Cut out hearts and stars and move them to the sheets, ½ inch (1 cm) apart. Gather the scraps, chill them again if they get soft, and roll again.
6. Bake 6 to 8 minutes, until slightly darker at the edges. Watch closely, because thin cookies go from done to too dark quickly. Cool 2 minutes on the sheet, then move to a rack. They crisp as they cool.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Whisk the spices and baking soda into the flour
- Cut out hearts and stars, pressing on the rolled top edge of the cutter
- Lay the cookies on the baking sheets in rows
- Carry a plate of cookies to the family on Lucy morning (with battery candles)

GOOD TO KNOW

- Rolling the dough between two sheets of parchment keeps it from sticking and makes thin cookies easier for children. Stored airtight, pepparkakor stay crisp for 3 weeks.
- In 2026, St. Lucy's Day falls on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, so the Mass is of the Sunday. Families can still keep the Lucy breakfast at home that morning.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint Lucy, pray for us, and help us carry the light of Christ into the dark days of winter.