

Sparkling Gingerbread

This spicy gingerbread gets three hits of ginger—crystallized, fresh, and ground—for lots of punchy flavor in an easy-to-stir batter. You can grate the fresh ginger with a Microplane; you don't even need to peel it. The cake's sparkling, crispy top comes from a generous sprinkle of turbinado sugar, but it's also delicious with a bit of citrus or a chocolate glaze instead.

1/2 cup (100g) dark brown sugar
2 large eggs
1/2 cup (120ml) buttermilk, well shaken
1/2 cup (113g) unsalted butter, melted
1/4 cup (80g) unsulfured molasses (not blackstrap)
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
1 tablespoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1 1/2 cups (190g) all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup (25g) finely chopped crystallized ginger
2 tablespoons turbinado sugar

1. Position a rack in the center of your oven and preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter or coat an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick spray. Line the pan with a strip of parchment paper that hangs over two of the edges, then butter or spray the paper, too.
2. In a large bowl, whisk the brown sugar and eggs until pale and foamy, about 1 minute. Add the buttermilk, butter, molasses, fresh and ground ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and salt. Whisk until smooth and emulsified.
3. Add the flour, baking powder, and baking soda and whisk until well-combined and smooth. Use a rubber spatula to fold in the crystallized ginger.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, tap the pan gently on the counter to release any air bubbles, and smooth the top of the batter. Sprinkle the turbinado sugar evenly over the top.
5. Bake the cake until puffed and golden, and a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, 30 to 40 minutes. Set the cake on a rack to cool for about 15 minutes. Then use the parchment paper to lift the cake out of the pan and set it on the rack to cool completely. (Store the cake, well wrapped, at room temperature for up to three days.)

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