OUR MERRIEST & BEST ALL-CHRISTMAS ISSUE

10 WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS STORIES

45 PAGES OF DELICIOUS HOLIDAY FOOD
Sugar & Spice Cookbook!
12 Christmas Roasts! More!

MAKE OUR LITTLE COUNTRY COTTAGE
(Directions Inside)

GINGERBREAD PORTFOLIO
"Quilt" Cookies to Bake
Gingerbread Contest Winners
JOLLY JUMBO SANTA COOKIE
MAKE OUR
CHRISTMAS COUNTRY COTTAGE
(pictured on the cover)
You'll need some flour, some sugar and spices, nuts, candy canes, gumdrops, jelly beans, and—for the roof—red licorice. Here are the step-by-step directions.

Each sq. = 1 inch. Connect lines of squares across pattern to form grid

In addition to patterns given, you will need a 7¾" by 3" back, an 8¼" by 5½" back roof, an 8¼" by 1¾" porch roof, an 8¼" by 2½" porch floor, a 2½" by 3½" dormer roof (cut 3), a 1½" by 2¼" dormer window (cut 3), a 1½" by 1½" shutter (cut 5), use one for front step.

Following recipe, page 14, roll out dough for large pieces 1¼" thick; bake 25 to 30 minutes. Roll out dough for small pieces (dormer roofs, dormer windows, dormer sides, shutters, step) ½" thick; bake 10 to 12 minutes or until firm.

ICING
Paper-cone work: You will need the following icings applied with paper cone (see page 242 for how to make cone):

- 2 tablespoons yellow, thinned, for windows, door, porch floor.
- 3 tablespoons leaf green. Thin 1 tablespoon for shutters; reserve rest.
- 2 tablespoons hot pink. Thin 1 tablespoon for curtains in lower windows; reserve rest.
- 2 tablespoons avocado. Thin 1 tablespoon for curtains in upper windows; reserve rest.
- With 2 teaspoons thinned red icing, small paintbrush, make candle in each window; with paper cone, color one shutter piece red for front step.

Pastry-bag work:
- With reserved hot-pink icing, #1 tip, pipe ruffles on lower-window curtains.
- With reserved avocado icing, #1 tip, pipe fringe and folds onto upper-window curtains.
- With 1 tablespoon black icing, #1 tip, make mullions in windows.
- With 1 tablespoon brown icing, #2 tip, outline designs on door. Attach silver dragée doorknob.
- With red icing, #1 tip, pipe dots on top of candles; attach silver dragees.

continued on page 14
Columns: Attach four white chewing-gum squares to porch floor for column bases. Measure length for each column between gum piece and porch roof. Cut candy canes to fit, ice and set in place. When dry, pipe on extra icing for strength where columns meet porch floor and roof.

GINGERBREAD DOUGH

| 6 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1/4 cups sugar |
| 1/2 cup shortening |
| 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon |
| 1 tablespoon ground ginger |
| 2 teaspoons double-acting baking powder |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla extract |
| 1 eight-ounce container sour cream |
| 2 eggs |

To prepare dough: Into large bowl, measure 3 1/2 cups flour and remaining ingredients. With mixer at low speed, beat until well mixed, constantly scraping bowl with rubber spatula. With hand, knead in remaining 2 1/2 cups flour to make a soft dough. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate 2 hours or until dough is not sticky and is of easy kneading consistency.

To roll dough: Keep refrigerated until ready to use. Working with half a batch at a time on lightly floured work surface with lightly floured hands, knead dough until smooth. Then, on greased and floured 17" by 14" cookie sheet, with lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough to 3/16" or 1/4" thickness, using dowels of the same size at either side of dough on cookie sheet to help create a uniform thickness. (For easy rolling, place cookie sheet on damp cloth to prevent it from slipping.)

To cut and bake dough: Enlarge diagrams and cut patterns from oak tag or lightweight cardboard. Using knife, cut as many pieces as you can from rolled dough, leaving at least 1/2" between them. Remove scraps and reserve for rerolling. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake until golden brown and very firm when lightly touched with finger. Remove cookie sheet from oven and cool on wire rack 5 minutes. Then carefully move baked pieces from cookie sheet and place directly on wire rack to cool completely.

Note: Trim shapes to pattern size, if necessary, when cookies are still warm.

If you have leftover dough, make cookies. Roll 1/8" thick, cut out, arrange on cookie sheet 1/2" apart, and bake 15 to 20 minutes. Decorate with any leftover frosting.

CONSTRUCTION TIPS

To assure proper fit, check gingerbread pieces before assembling; if necessary, shave edges with a rasp (sold in hardware stores) or a sharp knife. When assembling gingerbread pieces with icing, work with pastry bag with medium tube. Check vertical angles of major pieces with a right triangle or carpenter's square. To attach walls of houses: Pipe line along edge of one wall; press it against adjoining wall, and hold in place for several minutes until icing sets. Let dry thoroughly propping attached pieces with a sturdy small object. When dry, smooth seams with damp cloth; fill in any spaces with more icing.

For extra stability, pipe icing along inside seams as well. Allow to stand for at least an hour until icing has completely dried.

Chimney and dormers: Ice and sandwich chimney pieces together. Let dry. Spread icing on all sides; press on seeds and nuts for stones. Let dry, set aside. Attach dormer sides to dormer window front, keeping sides parallel. Attach dormer roof. Repeat for other dormers. Let dry. Ice and attach center dormer at seam in roof, where porch and house roofs meet. Ice and attach dormers on either side, centered over lower win-

Note: Dragées are for decorating only, not to be eaten.

Icing bows, wreaths, garnish:
Mix 4 tablespoons heavy green icing. Tape patterns to 9" by 12" piece of heavy cardboard; tape waxed paper over patterns. With pastry bag, #63s leaf tip, make garland and wreaths (tie extra in case of breakage). While wet, press on silver dragées (see Note above), nonpareils. With #44 tip, make bows. Let dry. With #2 tip, 1 tablespoon red icing, pipe red bows on wreaths. Let all dry 24 to 36 hours. Carefully peel off waxed paper. Repipe backs for strength. Let dry. Attach large wreaths to sides of house, small wreath to front door. Set aside garlands, bows.

Icing Christmas tree: To make Christmas tree on porch, cut sugar ice cream cone to 2" to 2 1/2" high. With heavy green icing, 63s leaf tip or spatula, swirl on leaf design. While wet, attach silver dragées (see Note). Let dry. Pipe on red-icing dots for Christmas balls. Set aside.

"Shingles": With slightly thinned white icing and small spatula, spread icing over walls of cottage. Starting from bottom and working up, make horizontal rows of icing. Keep rows uneven for "shingle" effect. Let dry. Repeat for dormer sides. With white icing, #1 tip, make uneven vertical "shingle" lines on walls and dormer sides. With #3 tip, outline windows and door.

"Stone" foundation (not visible in photo): Using a spatula and as much more white icing, spread icing at baseline of house sides. Press broken nuts and seeds into icing for "stones." Let dry.

- With reserved green icing, #1 tip, pipe lines onto shutters. Let dry, then attach shutters to lower front windows.

ASSEMBLY

Walls: With heavy white icing, ice base of back wall; attach to 12" by 14" foam core or heavy cardboard base. Ice side edges of back wall and bases of side walls. Attach sides to back wall so back is sandwiched between side walls. Make sure corners are right angles; support with food cans while drying. Check fit of front wall, then attach between sides. Let dry. Attach front porch floor.

Roof: Check fit of roof pieces. Bevel edge of porch roof to fit against front roof. Ice edges of house sides that support porch roof and set porch roof in place. Hold until set. Ice and attach front roof. Let dry. Check fit of back roof; bevel ridge if necessary. Ice and attach to front roof. Let dry.

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