



Honey Ginger Snaps

Ingredients

150g butter
¼ cup (90g) honey
1½ cups (225g) plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
3 teaspoons ground ginger
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 tablespoons thinly sliced
crystallised ginger
1 tablespoon raw sugar

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line three baking trays with baking paper.

Combine the butter and honey in a saucepan over low heat. Stir until the butter melts and the mixture begins to bubble. Remove the pan from the heat.

Sift the flour, baking powder and spices together, then stir into the honey mixture until smooth.

Roll tablespoons of the mixture into balls and place on the trays, leaving room for the biscuits to spread. Using your thumb, make an indent in the centre of each biscuit. Top each with a sliver of crystallised ginger and a sprinkle of raw sugar. Bake for 10 minutes, until golden. Cool the honey snaps on the trays. Devour!



Steve says...

What I love about honey ginger snaps is that they're homemade and healthy...for a biscuit. My wife Suzy is a very good cook. She is one of those annoying people who doesn't even open a cookbook – it just happens. At the moment my bees are 450km from home, so I go away for a week at a time every fortnight and she'll often make me these. They're great because they don't go soft so you can nibble on them while you're driving.

My father was a beekeeper. I was the oldest of three kids and would spend quite a bit of time with him out in the bush at the beehives. Mum used loads of honey in cooking and we used to sell honey at the monthly markets where I grew up in Taree. The night before, when the honey was all packed, I remember making gingerbread men and biscuits that we would also sell.

I was always interested in beekeeping. I could see the potential and liked the idea – it's a fairly sustainable harvest. And I like the bush. There are times in winter when it gets cold and wet – and you just grizzle and groan – and then it's hot, but you're out in the open air.

I run about 400 hives, mostly on private properties. I like the thought of them being safe on farms and providing pollinating services where needed. I follow the different flowering cycles of Australia's unique eucalypt species by trucking the bees to the trees. I really enjoy that part of it and the research I do. I've become a bit of a backyard botanist.

A good healthy hive has 50,000 to 60,000 bees. A hive is like one organism; if you take the queen out the whole thing is buggered. But it's been difficult because of the drought. We're all doing it tough; my beekeeper mates have helped me out when I've needed it and I'll repay the favour when I can. It's good to talk to other farmers. There's always someone doing it tougher than you. I know one fella who's lost 800 hives in the fires. That's a huge, huge loss.

As a farmer, you just have to get up in the morning and keep going. Don't listen to weather reports. Just have hope in Mother Nature and wait for the sound of the bloody rain on the roof again. It'll come when it comes.

STEVE'S RECIPE IS FEATURED IN *FARMER: RECIPES AND STORIES FROM THE LAND* BY JODY VASSALLO. ALL PROFITS FROM SALES OF THE BOOK GO TO THE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION.