

Joe Frogger Cookies

A *Joe Frogger* is a ginger cookie that dates back to Colonial times. *Joe Froggers* have been cherished by generations of residents of Marblehead, Massachusetts. The cookies were originally baked by a man known as Old Black Joe Brown and an Aunt Crese, who maintained a tavern on Gingerbread Hill. Because the cookies would keep for long periods of time, fishermen would take barrels of *Joe Froggers* along with them on their journeys.

Joe Frogger Cookies

3½ cups flour
1½ teaspoons salt
1½ teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon ground cloves
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
¼ teaspoon allspice
1 cup molasses
½ cup vegetable shortening
1 cup light brown sugar
2 tablespoons dark rum
1/3 cup hot water

Mix flour, salt, ginger, baking soda, cloves, nutmeg and allspice in a medium bowl. In a large bowl, beat together the molasses, shortening and brown sugar. Combine the hot water and rum.

Add the dry ingredients and the water/rum mixture alternately to the sugar/molasses mixture. (If the dough is dry, add a tablespoon or two of water.)

Roll out the dough between two sheets of waxed paper until ¼ inch thick. Refrigerate at least two hours.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease two baking sheets.

Cut the dough into 3-inch cookies with a cookie cutter. (The original *Joe Froggers* were much larger. For the traditional size, use a coffee can.) Place on greased cookie sheets and bake for 10 – 12 minutes. (Longer for the traditional size.) The cookies are baked when they are dark around the edges and firm in the centers. Set the cookie sheets on a rack to cool for five minutes. Remove to a rack to cool completely.