Ingredients

- 3½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- Add 1/2 cup of crystallized ginger (recipe below)
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup packed dark brown sugar
- 4 teaspoon peeled and grated fresh ginger
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup unsulfured molasses
- Icing (recipe below)

Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ground ginger, allspice, and cloves; set aside.

2. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat together butter, sugars, and fresh ginger on low speed until combined. Increase speed to medium; beat until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, occasionally scraping bowl with rubber spatula. Beat in egg and molasses until blended. Reduce speed to low and gradually add in flour mixture, beating until just incorporated.

3. Transfer dough to clean work surface. Dough will be very sticky and wet. Divide dough in half, and flatten each half into a disk and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.
4. Arrange 2 racks in upper and lower thirds of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper; set aside. Remove dough from refrigerator and let stand until slightly softened. (This will help keep dough from cracking when rolled.) On large piece of parchment paper lightly dusted with flour, using a floured rolling pin, roll dough to about ¼-inch thickness. To prevent dough from sticking to parchment while rolling, occasionally run large metal offset spatula under dough, and sprinkle work surface with more flour. Place parchment paper with rolled-out dough on another cookie sheet; freeze until very firm, about 15 minutes.

5. Remove dough from freezer; working quickly, with floured cookie cutters, cut out desired shapes. (If dough begins to soften and cookies don’t hold their shape, return to freezer for a few minutes.) With wide metal spatula, transfer cutouts to prepared baking sheets; refrigerate until firm, about 15 minutes.

6. Bake cookies until crisp but not darkened, 12 to 15 minutes, rotating sheets between upper and lower racks halfway through baking. Keep cookies on parchment and transfer to wire rack to cool completely. Decorate as desired with icing. Yields about 24 cookies.

**Icing**

*Ingredients*
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- Milk

*Directions*
Add just enough milk to the powdered sugar to make a thick syrup. Mix in a bowl until all clumps are removed. You want the icing to be thick enough so that it won’t run when decorating.

**Crystallized Ginger**

*Ingredients*
- 1 pound of ginger root, sliced thin
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups sugar

*Directions*
Simmer on the stove until all the liquid cooks off. This takes a few hours. Stir regularly.