



## Lighter Gingerbread

**Servings:** 21 pieces

**Prep Time:** 35min

**Cook Time:** 40min

### Ingredients

- 140g dried pitted whole dates preferably Medjool, chopped into small pieces
- 75ml olive oil, plus a few drops for greasing
- 75g black treacle
- 50g maple syrup
- 1 tsp finely grated fresh ginger
- 1 large egg
- 175ml buttermilk
- 250g plain flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 50g dark muscovado sugar

### Directions

1. Put the dates in a small bowl and pour over 125ml of boiling water. Leave to cool for 30 mins. Lightly oil a 28 x 19 x 3cm traybake tin, then line the base with baking parchment.
2. Meanwhile, put the oil, black treacle, maple syrup and freshly grated ginger in a bowl and beat together with a fork to mix well. Set aside. Beat the egg in a small bowl and stir in the buttermilk. In a large bowl, mix the flour with the bicarbonate of soda, ground ginger, cinnamon and sugar – rub the mixture between your fingers to break down any lumpy bits of sugar. Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3.
3. Blend the dates and their liquid to a thick purée in a small food processor. Pour the egg, the dates and the treacle mixture into the bowl with the flour. Stir together briefly with a wooden spoon just until well mixed – the mixture will be soft like a thick batter. Pour it into the lined tin, gently level the mixture and bake for 40-45 mins. To test if it's done, insert a skewer in the centre – if the skewer comes out clean with no uncooked mixture on it, and the cake feels firm but springy to the touch, it should be done.
4. Leave in the tin for a few mins before removing to a wire rack, peeling off the parchment and leaving to cool completely. If you can wait, wrap it well in parchment, then foil. Leave for a day before cutting, as it will become stickier – it will keep moist for 3-4 days.