

Gingerbread Craft



COUNTRY
Croatia
LOCAL NAME
Licitar
YEAR
2010

Gingerbread broadly refers to any type of baked treat that is typically flavored with ginger and honey. The process of making a *licitar*, a type of Croatian gingerbread, is special because it requires skill and endurance. The dough matures for a few days, then is shaped in molds and baked, and then left for two weeks to dry. Coloring is the next step, after which a second drying takes place. Once dried, the *licitars* are decorated. *Licitars* are given as gifts for wedding guests, or they can be used as decorations. The custom of giving *licitars* is deeply rooted in Croatian tradition. *Licitars* are not only a tasty dessert, but they are also an artistic expression.

* Croatia [krouéiʃiə]

How to Make *Licitars*



- 1 Prepare dough and let it mature for a few days. Then roll the dough out and shape it in molds.
- 2 Bake the shaped dough until it turns light yellow in color.
- 3 Put a string between two baked *licitars*.
- 4 Dip the stringed *licitars* into the glaze and hang them until they dry.
- 5 Decorate each *licitar* with a picture, a mirror, or flowers.

p.40 • craft • treat (n.) • endurance • mature • mold (n.)
p.41 • pass down • fair (n.) • socialize • identity • craftsmanship

Secret Family Recipes

A *licitar* is uniquely Croatian because of the long history and the social role it has played. Croatians learned the recipe during the 16th century from their neighbors in the eastern Alps and went a step further to develop their own. Since then, making *licitars* has become a family tradition where secrets are passed down from generation to generation. In this way, every generation is able to leave its mark in each gingerbread they make. *Licitar* makers play an important social function, too. Gingerbread craftspeople appear at most festivals and fairs in Croatia. People watch cookies being made and socialize. In a time when local cultures are losing their unique identities, Croatian gingerbread craftsmanship provides us with a new perspective on traditional culture.

source: UNESCO (2012) *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (2010-2011)



- Q3 What is a *licitar* and why is it special?
Q4 Why are gingerbread craftspeople important in Croatian society?
a They attract many tourists and teach them how to make *licitars*.
b They provide Croatian people with chances to get together and socialize.



► *Licitar* makers are rolling out dough.



► A woman is decorating heart-shaped *licitars*.



► Gingerbread makers sell various kinds of *licitars* at their shops.