

2026 GINGERBREAD HOUSE COMPETITION

Official Rules & Procedures

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following rules and procedures have been set forth and established by **Oaklea Mansion Bed and Breakfast** for the 2026 Gingerbread House Competition. Competitors are encouraged to submit their entry form ahead of time via email if possible. Oaklea Mansion reserves the right to refuse any entry deemed inappropriate.

To be eligible, a completed **2026 Entry Form** must be submitted before or during the designated drop-off window. Correspondence and updates will be sent via email. Competitors under 18 years of age require parent/guardian consent along with minor age disclosure.

Email Submissions & Inquiries: oakleamansionbb@gmail.com • **Phone:** (903) 342-6051

2. ENTRY CATEGORIES

Each submission must be registered under one Age Category and one Style Category:

Age Categories

- **Adult Category:** Individuals age 19 and older
- **Youth Category:** Individuals ages 5 through 18

Style Categories

- **Traditional:** Classic gingerbread designs
- **Non-Traditional:** Creative & unique structures

3. JUDGING & CRITERIA

All entries will be evaluated independently by our judging panel based on five key criteria:

1. **Overall Appearance:** Visual appeal, balance, and presentation.
2. **Originality & Creativity:** Unique design choices and concept.
3. **Difficulty:** Architectural complexity and technique.
4. **Precision & Craftsmanship:** Clean execution, neatness, and detail work.
5. **Consistency of Theme:** Cohesive execution of the competitor's chosen concept.

Note: There is no overall theme restriction. Entries are not limited to houses—any building or structure is acceptable. Handmade decorative elements carry greater weight than prefabricated items. All decisions by judges are final.

4. SIZE & BASE LIMITATIONS

- **Base Requirement:** Entries *must* be mounted on a sturdy board base.
- **Dimensions:** Combined entry and base must not exceed **24 inches high × 24 inches wide × 24 inches long**.
- **Weight:** Total weight must not exceed **50 pounds**.

5. MATERIALS & CONSTRUCTION

- **100% Edible Above Base:** Everything above the base board must be composed entirely of edible materials.
- **75% Gingerbread Rule:** The main structure must consist of at least 75% gingerbread or cookie, with some portions exposed.
- **Approved Edible Items:** Fondant, gum paste, royal icing, chocolate, modeling chocolate, gelatin, pressed sugar, and unwrapped candies.
- **Prohibited Materials:** No artificial display components (e.g., Styrofoam, interior electric lighting, wiring, sound components). Candies must be free of non-edible sticks (e.g., lollipop sticks). Entries with unapproved items are disqualified from awards.
- **Construction:** Must be constructed solely by the registered competitor(s). Youth participants may receive adult supervision strictly for safety precautions (e.g., oven/stovetop operation).

- **Non-Edible Displays:** Entries using non-edible materials may be displayed during tours but will not be eligible for competition awards.

6. DROP-OFF PROCESS & 2026 EVENT SCHEDULE

Unload Location: Oaklea Mansion Bed and Breakfast, 407 S. Main St., Winnsboro, Texas 75494.

A completed 2026 Entry Form must accompany your entry. Competitors or their designees are solely responsible for carrying and placing their entries inside. Staff cannot assist with moving pieces.

★ KEY 2026 EVENT DATES ★

Wednesday, Dec 16, 2026

Drop-Off Window: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM (or by prior appointment).

Dec 17 – Dec 19, 2026

Public Display: On view during Oaklea Mansion Holiday Tours.

Friday, Dec 19, 2026

Judging: Official judging takes place.

Saturday, Dec 20, 2026

Awards Announcement: Winners and prizes announced.

Sunday, Dec 21, 2026

Pick-Up Window: Post-display pick-up following tour conclusion.

7. PRIZES & POST-DISPLAY PICK-UP

- **Prizes:** Cash prizes will be awarded to top 3 submissions in each age category. Grand prize may include a complimentary stay at Oaklea Mansion. Specialty awards may also be presented (e.g., *Best Movie Theme*, *Most Colorful*, *Most Outside-the-Box*, *Most Comedic*).
- **Post-Display Pick-Up:** Competitors wishing to keep their entries must pick them up on **Sunday, December 21, 2026** (or after Saturday awards). Entries remaining after this window will be discarded unless prior arrangements are confirmed.