

THE WHOLE GRAIN TRUTH ABOUT HOME-MADE BREAD



How many times have you started a diet by cutting out the bread? You've heard all the reasons: "Bread has too many calories." "It's loaded with fattening carbohydrates." "Just looking at a slice of bread will add a pound!"

But oh, how hard it is to give up a toasty muffin in the morning or a sandwich made from two slices of home-made bread or even a snack of crusty pretzels.

Don't despair. There's happy news for all you bread-lovers on a diet plan: Bread is actually good for you...and your diet!

Bread often gets an undeservedly bad reputation in the diet world. In fact, it's not the bread that's fattening but all those sweet extras. A generous portion of butter or jelly can triple the calorie count of a slice of bread.

Baking your own breads can satisfy an urge to be creative and provides a pleasure that dieters often deny themselves—the gratification of home-cooking.

The most common method of baking loaf bread is in the classic metal pan. Many cooks, however, like to experiment with "free-form" shaping using cookie sheets, casserole dishes and round or square cake pans. You'll even find special pans for muffins, rolls, popovers and brioche.

Whole grain breads play an important nutritional role in any diet. Whether you're dieting to lose weight or simply eating to maintain good health, these delicious, vitamin-packed breads are a must.

In the nutritional tables, breads take their place with the carbohydrate group. Not fattening in themselves, carbohydrates actually have the same number of calories as pure protein and less than half the calories of fat. And, whole grain breads are power-packed sources of important nutrients.

All of the recipes featured here are for delicious, very easy-to-prepare whole grain breads—made with wheat germ, the heart of a grain of wheat. Low in calories and high in vitamins, they make an important contribution to any eating regimen.

Besides the nice, nutty flavor and interesting texture of these breads, you're also getting B vitamins, iron, calcium, protein, trace minerals and valuable fiber.

There's no mystery about bread baking: It's fun, it's easy and your kitchen will be filled with the delightful aroma that only a loaf of freshly-baked bread can create.

TIPS ON CHOOSING BAKEWARE

Whether you're ready to bake bread or bread pudding, pretzels or pie, you'll want to select bakeware that gives you the best results. A quality nonstick surface on a well-made product is one of the best ways to assure picture-perfect foods and easy clean-up.

Here's a quick reference guide to choosing bakeware:

Aluminum conducts heat evenly for better browning. It provides uniform cooking without "hot spots." Aluminum cannot be used in microwave or to store and freeze foods.

Stainless steel is very bright and light.

Glass and ceramic bakeware do double duty because you can bake and serve in the same dish. Use in both microwave and conventional ovens. Reduce cooking times or temperatures when baking in glass—it retains heat longer.

Plastic now goes from freezer to microwave to table and to dishwasher. The new ovenware with "SilverStone" tolerates higher baking temperatures than other plastics and may be used in a conventional oven as well as a microwave.

Whichever material you choose, with proper care and cleaning, your bakeware should last for many years.



Experience the pleasure of these delicious whole grain breads—all containing the natural goodness of wheat germ. And, baking them in nonstick bakeware makes for easy cleanup and perfect results.

REGAL WHEAT GERM BREAD PUDDING

Servings: Makes 6 to 8
Preparation time: About 35 minutes
Baking time: About 1 hour 5 minutes
Calories: About 265 per serving

6 slices firm white bread
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup wheat germ, regular or brown sugar and honey, divided
1/2 cup raisins, divided
3 eggs, divided
3/4 cup sugar, divided
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon salt
2-1/3 cups skim milk
1/3 cup currant jelly

Preheat oven to 350°. Spread bread slices with butter. Cut into 1-inch squares. Cover bottom of 1-1/2 quart casserole with one-third of the bread squares, buttered side up. Sprinkle with one-third of the wheat germ and one-third of the raisins. Repeat with two more layers of bread squares, wheat germ and raisins.

Separate yolks and whites of 2 eggs. In medium-sized bowl, beat together 1 egg, 2 egg yolks, 1/2 cup sugar, vanilla, nutmeg and salt. In small saucepan, heat milk; add slowly to egg mixture, stirring constantly. Pour evenly over bread layers.

Place casserole in larger pan of warm water (water should come halfway to top of casserole). Bake for 60 to 70 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean; remove from oven. Increase oven temperature to 425°.

Prepare meringue: In small bowl, beat 2 egg whites until foamy; gradually add remaining 1/4 cup sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Spread jelly on pudding to within 1/2-inch from edge of casserole. Swirl meringue over jelly, sealing to edge of casserole. Bake 4 to 5 minutes, or until lightly browned. Serve warm or cold.

MICROWAVE DIRECTIONS

Follow directions for combining ingredients as given above, through pouring blended liquid over bread. Place casserole in microwave oven. Cook on medium-high power for 10 minutes, rotating casserole after 5 minutes. Remove from microwave oven; spread jelly on pudding (as above) and prepare meringue. Swirl on top of jelly, sealing to edge of casserole. Cook 3 minutes on medium power until meringue is set. If a brown meringue is desired, place under broiler 1 to 2 minutes, watching closely.

WHEAT GERM DATE BREAD

Servings: Makes 1 loaf; 16 slices
Preparation time: About 15 minutes
Baking time: About 55 minutes
Calories: About 225 per slice

2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup wheat germ, regular or brown sugar and honey
1/2 cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 cup chopped dates
1/2 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350°. In medium-sized bowl, combine flour, wheat germ, sugar, baking powder and salt; set aside. In small bowl, beat together milk, oil and egg. Add to dry ingredients; stir until moistened. Fold in dates and walnuts. Spread in nonstick 9-1/2 x 4-1/2 inch loaf pan. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes. Cool in pan 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely on wire rack. Wrap in foil or plastic wrap, and store overnight for easier slicing.

SOFT PRETZELS

Servings: Makes 30 pretzels
Preparation time: About 30 minutes
Baking time: About 15 minutes
Calories: About 75 per pretzel

1-1/2 cups grated sharp Cheddar cheese
1-1/4 cups regular wheat germ, divided
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon water, divided
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter or margarine
1 package active dry yeast
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg

Preheat oven to 375°. In large bowl, combine cheese, 1 cup wheat germ, sugar and salt; set aside. In small saucepan, heat 3/4 cup water and butter until warm (105°-115°F). Stir in yeast until dissolved; remove from heat, and add to wheat germ mixture; mix well.

Stir in just enough flour to make a soft dough that leaves side of bowl. Turn out dough onto floured board. Knead about 5 minutes, or until dough is smooth and elastic. Divide into 30 pieces. Roll each piece into a 12-inch rope. Twist each rope into a pretzel shape.

Place pretzels on nonstick baking sheets. In small bowl, beat egg with 1 tablespoon water. Brush each pretzel with egg mixture and sprinkle with remaining wheat germ. Bake pretzels for 15 to 18 minutes, or until lightly browned. Serve warm.

WHEATY YOGURT MUFFINS

Servings: Makes 12 muffins
Preparation time: About 10 minutes
Baking time: About 17 minutes
Calories: About 155 per muffin

1 cup whole wheat flour
3/4 cup wheat germ, regular or brown sugar and honey
3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 container (8 ounces) plain low-fat yogurt
6 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
1 egg, slightly beaten
1/2 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 375°. In large bowl, combine flour, wheat germ, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add yogurt, butter, egg and raisins; stir until moistened. Fill nonstick muffin-pan cups about two-thirds full. Bake muffins for 17 to 22 minutes. Serve warm.

MICROWAVE DIRECTIONS

Follow directions for combining ingredients as given above. Fill paper-lined microwave-safe muffin-pan cups half full. Microwave 6 muffins on 50 percent power for 4 to 4-1/2 minutes, rotating pan after two minutes. Repeat for remaining batter. Let stand 2-3 minutes before serving. Serve warm with butter or honey if desired. Makes 15-16 muffins.

WHEAT GERM POCKET BREAD

(Not illustrated)

Servings: Makes 10 round breads
Preparation time: About 25 minutes
Rising time: About 1-1/2 hours
Baking time: About 5 minutes
Calories: About 170 per round

2 packages active dry yeast
1-1/4 cups warm water (105°-115°F)
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 cup regular wheat germ, divided
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
Vegetable oil
2-1/2 to 3 cups all-purpose flour
Sesame seeds, optional

In large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir in sugar; let stand 5 minutes. Add 1/2 cup wheat germ, salt and 1-1/2 teaspoons oil; stir well. Beat in just enough flour to make a soft dough that leaves side of bowl.

Turn out dough onto floured board. Knead about 5 minutes, or until dough is smooth and elastic. Divide dough into 10 equal pieces. Shape each piece into a ball; sprinkle with remaining wheat germ and sesame seeds, if desired. Roll each ball into 6-inch round. Place rounds on nonstick baking sheets. Brush lightly with oil. (Do not cover.) Let rise in warm place for about 1-1/2 hours, or until puffy.

Preheat oven to 475°. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes, or until golden. Remove from baking sheets immediately, and cool on wire racks. If rounds don't open completely, cut open with tip of sharp knife.

WHEAT GERM HERB BREAD

(Not illustrated)

Servings: Makes 1 loaf; 16 slices
Preparation time: About 50 minutes
Rising time: About 30 minutes, divided
Baking time: About 30 minutes
Calories: About 145 per slice

2 packages active dry yeast
1/3 cup warm water (105°-115°F)
1 cup warm milk (105°-115°F)
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour, divided
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves, crushed
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed
1/2 cup regular wheat germ

In large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, butter, 2-1/4 cups flour, sugar, salt, marjoram and thyme; stir until smooth. Add remaining 1 cup flour and wheat germ. Stir vigorously 30 strokes, or until flour is incorporated. (Batter will be stiff and sticky.) Cover and let rise in warm place about 15 minutes, or until doubled.

Preheat oven to 375°. Stir down batter vigorously 30 strokes. Spread batter evenly in nonstick 9 x 5-inch loaf pan. Cover with towel and let rise in warm place about 15 minutes, or until batter reaches top of pan. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from pan immediately and cool bread on wire rack.