



Members Recipe Book

Fruit Loaf - This may take a little time but it is worth the effort.

By Maria Battaglia

Ingredients

100 g (3 1/2 oz) sultanas, chopped
100 g (3 1/2 oz) dried apricots, chopped
100 g (3 1/2 oz) dried figs, chopped
100 g (3 1/2 oz) dates, chopped
2 tablespoons rum (or orange juice)
60 g (2 oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature
250 ml (9 fl oz) full-fat milk (I used Light)
7 g dry yeast (one sachet)
500 g (17 1/2 oz) strong bread flour
40 g (1 1/2 oz) caster sugar
10 g (1/3 oz) or 2 tsp salt
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
125 g (4 oz) flaked almonds
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon all spice
Zest of 1 1/2 large lemons, grated
Zest of 1 1/2 large oranges, grated
Butter, for greasing
1 egg, whisked for wash
Pinch of salt
2 loaf tins (optional – I like to shape mine into oval blobs and bake them free-style)

Method

To make the loaves, firstly soak all of the dried fruit in the rum (you may need a little more rum – add at your discretion).

Add the butter to the milk and warm until the butter melts (don't heat it higher than 60°C as this will kill the yeast).

In a large bowl, mix the yeast, flour, sugar and salt and spices together. Blend in the milk and then the beaten eggs. You can do this by hand, by taking it out and kneading on a flour-free bench for 10–15 minutes. Alternatively, use an electric mixer with a dough hook to knead the dough for 5 minutes, and finish it by hand for a few minutes—the best of both worlds.

Rest in the mixing bowl, in a warm place, for about 40 minutes to an hour or until the dough doubles in size.

Sprinkle the almonds on a baking tray and toast in a preheated oven at 200°C until they are golden brown. Cool.

In a large bowl, mix in the rum soaked fruit and nuts, including the citrus zest. Knead the mixture into the dough for one minute until all the fruit is evenly distributed.

Divide the dough into two equal pieces and mould each into a rough ball. Place each ball onto a tray lined with baking paper. Place a tea towel over the top and rest the dough again for 30 minutes.

Whisk the egg wash with the pinch of salt and brush across the top of the two loaves. Cut a deep incision (at least 2 cm deep) lengthways down the middle of each loaf.

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Bake the two loaves for 30 minutes or until they are dark golden on top and are hollow when tapped.