

irish soda bread

RECIPE COURTESY OF ZOË FRANÇOIS

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 cups (280 grams) whole wheat flour
- ½ cup (65 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (50 grams) oat flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup dried fruit
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk

ACTIVE TIME:

15 minutes

TOTAL TIME:

1 hour 5 minutes

EASE OF PREPARATION:

Easy

YIELD:

1 loaf

Every home in Ireland has their own soda bread recipe, and this is mine. It's a quick, simple recipe that I absolutely love. I'm using dried cherries here, but you can add whatever you want to the dough, including other dried fruit or nuts. You can even make it savory with cheese or olives.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F / 218°C. Grease an 8-inch / 20 cm cast iron skillet with 1 tablespoon of the butter. (See Cook's Note.)
2. Whisk together all three flours, the sugar, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl with your fingers. Toss in the dried fruit.
3. Pour in 1 cup of the buttermilk and gently toss together with your fingers. Add up to 1/2 cup more buttermilk, mixing it in just until the dough comes together in a smooth ball that is stiff enough to hold its shape, but soft enough that you don't have to knead it together.
4. Place the dough ball in the prepared pan and press it to about a 1-inch-thick disk. Cut a 1/2-inch-thick cross in the dough. Press the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter in the center and sprinkle the top of the dough with sugar.
5. Bake for 5 minutes, then reduce the heat to 375°F / 190°C and continue baking for 30 minutes or until caramel brown on the bottom and golden on top.
6. Allow to cool for about 15 minutes and serve warm.

COOK'S NOTE: *You can also bake the bread in an 8-inch / 20 cm round cake pan or as a freeform loaf on a baking sheet.*