

ITIKI'S WHOLEMEAL BOAT BREAD



INGREDIENTS

- 500g flour – 50:50 mix of wholemeal and plain (or vary according to your taste)
- 1 sachet of dried yeast (about 2 teaspoons)
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 300mL of tepid desal water
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of clear honey
- Milk for glaze (optional)
- Oats to sprinkle (Optional)

METHOD

1. Mix dry ingredients together in a in a large bowl
2. Make a well in the centre and add the water, olive oil and honey
3. Mix together to form a soft dough and turn the dough out onto a lightly floured or non-stick surface
4. Knead for 5-10 mins, until the dough no longer feels sticky, sprinkling with a little more flour if you need it
5. Form dough into a ball and place in a lightly oiled bowl and from here you have two options
 - a) You can do the above steps in the evening and leave the dough in the fridge overnight to do a slow, cold rise. Cover it with a beeswax wrap leaving plenty of airspace for it to expand. Go to step 6 in the morning.
 - b) If you are making the bread in the morning place the bowl of dough in the sink with about 5cm of hot water. Cover sink with a damp tea-towel.
6. Turn the dough out onto the bench and punch down to let the air out. Form it into a loaf shape and place in a lightly oiled or non-stick loaf tin.
7. Place loaf tin in the sink with 5cm hot water and cover with a damp tea-towel. Leave it to rise (almost double in size). The time this takes depends on the ambient temperature, anywhere from 15 mins to 45 if it came out of the fridge. Don't leave it too long or it will run out of "oomph" and start to collapse. Set a timer if you have a tend to get side-tracked (this is the name of our next boat...)
8. Pre-heat oven to 180°C or 200°C electric. Gently brush loaf with milk and sprinkle some oats (or other garnish) artistically on top. Place bread in centre of oven. Keep an eye on the temperature to ensure it remains constant. Bake for 15-20 mins*, then turn off oven and leave for another 5 mins or until you are salivating so much you have to take it out and eat it!
9. Spread with a liberal helping of artery-clogging French butter and try not to fight too much over who gets the crust!

TIP #1: In the unlikely event that there is any bread left at the end of the day, slice it, place it in a plastic bag and put it in the freezer as it keeps reasonably well frozen.

TIP #2: If you are in a hurry, you can try and skip step 5 and do one rise, in the tin. Bread will be a little denser.

*Time may vary according to your oven. To test if it is cooked, tap the top and it should sound hollow