

Walnut Herb Bread

Makes 1 loaf

Ingredients:

1 cup warm water (105 to 115 degrees)
pinch of granulated sugar
1 ½ envelopes dry yeast (1 ½ tablespoons)
1 cup warm milk (105 to 115 degrees)
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon salt
3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
1 garlic clove, minced
4 ½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour
¾ cup walnuts, lightly toasted and coarsely chopped



Equipment Needed:

An electric stand mixer with paddle attachment (optional); a 1 ½-quart baking dish or 9 -inch springform pan; a wire rack

Directions:

Mix the water and granulated sugar in a small bowl. Sprinkle the yeast over the top and stir to dissolve. Let stand in a warm place to proof for 5 to 10 minutes or until the yeast swells and becomes bubbly.

Combine the milk, brown sugar, salt, parsley, basil, tarragon, garlic, and 1 ½ cups of flour in the bowl of an electric stand mixer and beat until smooth.

Add the yeast mixture and the remaining 3 cups of flour. Beat vigorously until the batter is smooth but still sticky. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap.

Let rise in a warm place for 45 to 60 minutes or until doubled in bulk.

Sprinkle the walnuts over the top of the batter and beat vigorously to distribute evenly. Pour into a well-greased 1 ½ quart baking dish or 9-inch springform pan. Let rise, loosely covered, in a warm place until the batter is even with the top of the pan.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Bake the bread for 50 to 60 minutes or until the top is brown and crusty and a tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Invert the loaf out of the baking dish or release the side of the springform pan. Let cool on a wire rack.

Notes:

This savory bread is excellent with soft cheeses such as Gouda, provolone, or fontina. Serve warm to allow the cheese to soften into the bread.

Homemade bread is a tradition with special meals around Thanksgiving and Christmas. This recipe is especially nice for a charcuterie board paired with cheeses and dried fruit and meats. Although some may feel intimidated by yeast breads, this recipe is described as very simple.

Source: *Herbal Cookery From the Kitchens and Gardens of the St. Louis Herb Society*, The St. Louis Herb Society, 2009, page 63.