

Catherine Fulvio's Date & Walnut Soda Bread

Ballyknocken Cookery School

INGREDIENTS

- 300 g stone ground wholemeal flour
- 250 g plain flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1½ tsp bread soda
- 100 g chopped "ready to eat" dates
- 50 g chopped walnuts
- 3 tbsp soft brown sugar
- 200 ml buttermilk
- 120 ml pale ale

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking tray with parchment.
2. Mix the dry ingredients together in a large bowl except the bread soda. Sift the bread soda to ensure there are no lumps into the dry ingredients. Add the dates and walnuts to the flour mix.
3. Mix the sugar with the buttermilk and add the ale together in a jug, stirring well. Pour in most of the brown sugar, buttermilk and ale, adding more if required and mix until it forms a dough.
4. Transfer to a floured surface and shape into a round or oval shape, using a knife cut a cross into the dough without cutting all the way through.
5. Bake in the preheated oven for about 38 to 40 minutes. But reduce the oven temperature to 160°C after 20 minutes if it is browning too quickly. The bread, when cooked, should be well risen and "a hollow sound" should come from the base of the bread when tapped.
6. Leave to cool on a cooling rack.