

CUMIN AND CARAWAY LOAF

Flour – 250g strong white, plus shake of fenugreek
Yeast – 10g
Salt – 5g
Cumin and caraway seeds – 15g of each
Olive oil – 25ml
Water – 140ml

This quantity makes a standard sized loaf. To make more loaves, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into 2, 3 or 4 equal pieces as appropriate when you shape it up for the second proving.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the olive oil and water, and mix by hand until you have a sticky dough. Don't add any extra flour or water!

Knead the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface gently re-shape it, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball. Place the ball on a baking tray, dust with flour using a sieve and slash it with a sharp knife or scalpel.

Leave it uncovered to prove again 1-1.5 hours, then bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes, until it has a good colour on it.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 200 C; Normal oven 220 C/425 F; Gas mark 7

WHOLEMEAL BREAD

Flour – 200g wholemeal and 50g strong white
Yeast – 10g
Salt – 5g
Butter – 25g, soft
Water – 160ml

This quantity makes a standard sized loaf. To make more loaves, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into 2, 3 or 4 equal pieces as appropriate when you shape it up for the second proving.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the butter (if it's still a bit cold, work the butter in a little with your fingers) then add the water, and mix by hand until you have a sticky dough. Don't add any extra flour or water!

Knead the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface gently re-shape it, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball. (If you want to use a traditional baking tin, make the ball more rugby shaped than football shaped!)

Place the ball on a baking tray (or in your tin), and slash it with a sharp knife or scalpel.

Leave it uncovered to prove again 1-1.5 hours, then bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes, until it has a good colour on it.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 200 C; Normal oven 220 C/425 F; Gas mark 7

PITTA BREADS

Flour – 100g strong white
 Yeast – 6g
 Salt – pinch
 Caster sugar – 10g
 Olive oil – 10ml
 Water – 60ml

This quantity makes 4 small pittas – plenty for lunch for two! To make more, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into equal pieces as appropriate before you bake them.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the olive oil and the water, and mix by hand until you have a sticky dough. Don't add any extra flour or water!

Knead the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Get your oven on and pre-heat the tray you will be using to bake the pittas.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface and divide it into 4 pieces. Re-shape each piece, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball. Use a rolling pin on lightly floured surface to roll each into a traditional oval pitta shape.

Place them onto the hot tray from the oven and bake for 10-15 minutes, depending on how burnt you want them!

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 220 C; Normal oven 240 C/475 F; Gas mark 9

WALNUT AND SULTANA BREAD

Flour – 200g wholemeal, 50g strong white
 Yeast – 10g
 Salt – 5g
 Butter – 20g
 Walnut pieces and sultanas – 50g each
 Water – 150ml

This quantity makes a standard sized loaf. To make more loaves, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into 2, 3 or 4 equal pieces as appropriate when you shape it up for the second proving.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the butter (if it's still a bit cold, work the butter in a little with your fingers).

Add the walnut pieces and sultanas to the dry mix, and mix them in evenly with your fingers.

At this point, add the water, and mix by hand until you have a sticky dough. Be particularly careful with the water on this one – better to be too dry than too wet at this stage.

Knead the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple. You will find the walnuts and sultanas jumping out of the dough as you work it; just be patient and keep sweeping them back in. As you knead, the sultanas will release moisture – which is why it was best to be sparing when you added the water.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface gently re-shape it, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball. Place the ball on a baking tray, dust with flour using a sieve and slash it with a sharp knife or scalpel.

Leave it uncovered to prove again 1-1.5 hours, then bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes, until it has a good colour on it.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 200 C; Normal oven 220 C/425 F; Gas mark 7

BRIOCHE BUNS

Flour – 250g strong white
Yeast – 8g
Salt – 5g
Caster sugar – 20g
Butter – 30g
Egg – 1
Milk – 85ml

This quantity makes 4 decent sized brioche buns. To make more, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into equal pieces as appropriate before the second proving.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the butter (if it's still a bit cold, work the butter in a little with your fingers).

Add the egg and milk. This will make a very loose dough which you will not be able to knead in the conventional way. You will need to use the lift and flick technique – persevere with this, it will work!

Work the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple. Do not be tempted to add more flour as you work it. Use a scraper if you need to, to lift the dough off the surface as you go. Only at the very end, if you want to, you can use a sparse amount of flour to clean your fingers and incorporate the dough that comes off into your mix.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface, divide it into four equal lumps. Gently re-shape each, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a small ball and then cup your hand over it and "swirl" your hand around the work surface to create a tight, neat, bun.

Place the buns equidistant on a baking tray and leave them uncovered to prove again 1-1.5 hours,

Just before you put them in the oven, brush each bun carefully with eggwash.

Bake in a pre-heated oven – they will probably take 15-20 minutes, but keep an eye on them through the glass. You want them a deep mahogany colour, but there is a fine line between mahogany and burnt!

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 200 C; Normal oven 220 C/425 F; Gas mark 7

COTTAGE LOAF

Flour – 200g strong white
Yeast – 10g
Salt – 5g
Butter – 45g
Water – 125ml

This quantity makes a standard sized loaf. To make more loaves, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into 2, 3 or 4 equal pieces as appropriate before you bake.

Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl and give them a quick finger mix. Add the butter (if it's still a bit cold, work the butter in a little with your fingers).

Add the water and mix by hand until you have a sticky dough. Don't add any extra flour or water!

Knead the dough for 5-8 minutes until it is smooth and supple.

Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

This bread only has one proving, so at this point take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface gently re-shape it, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball – either football or rugby!

Place the ball on a baking tray, dust with flour using a sieve and slash it with a sharp knife or scalpel.

Bake it for 25-30 minutes.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 210 C; Normal oven 230 C/450 F; Gas mark 8

Although many breads can be eaten while still warm, this is one that should definitely be left until completely cold. The generous amount of butter in the mix means that if the loaf is still warm, the butter will be very soft and the bread will turn into a doughy mass. But left until cold, you get a dense, firm and wonderfully tasty loaf.

CHOCOLATE AND CHERRY LOAF

Flour – 250g strong white
 Yeast – 12g
 Salt – 5g
 Olive oil – 15g
 Tinned or fresh cherries - 80g
 Chocolate chips (dark or milk) – 70g
 Water – 120ml

This quantity makes a standard sized loaf. To make more loaves, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into 2, 3 or 4 equal pieces as appropriate before the second proving.

You can try different fruits, fresh or tinned, in this loaf as you wish, eg blackberries, blueberries, plums, damsons.

Chop the cherries roughly and allow to drain. Put all the dry ingredients into a bowl. Add to the bowl the chocolate chips and cherries and give everything a quick finger mix.

Add the olive oil.

Now add water - use cold water or the chocolate chips will melt. Mix the dough ingredients thoroughly with your hands to make a wet dough which you will need work using the flicking technique until it is uniform and smooth.

Dust your work surface with flour. Tuck the dough in on itself to form a tight ball and put it in a bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Take the dough out of the bowl and on a flat surface gently re-shape it, tucking the dough in on itself again to form a ball. Place the ball on a baking tray, dust with flour using a sieve.

Leave it uncovered to prove again 1-1.5 hours, then bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes, until it has a good colour on it.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 180 C; Normal oven 200 C/400 F; Gas mark 6

BAGUETTES

Flour – 250g strong white
Yeast – 10g
Water – to mix, approx. 100ml
Salt – 5g
Butter – 25g

This quantity makes two medium sized baguettes. To make more, simply multiply up the quantities pro-rata by 2, 3 or 4 etc, and then divide the dough into equal pieces as appropriate before the second proving.

You need to start this recipe 12 hours in advance.

Start by putting 100g of the flour and all the yeast, 10g, into a bowl. Add water gradually while you whisk with a balloon whisk. Add enough water to create a loose batter, much as you would make for pancakes.

Cover the bowl with a clean tea towel and leave for 12 hours.

Add the remaining 150g of flour, the salt and the butter and mix with your hand in the bowl until you can lift the dough out as one lump, leaving a clean bowl.

Knead the dough until you have a smooth, elastic dough. Tuck the dough in on itself and shape it up to form a tight ball, and put it back in your bowl covered with a clean tea towel. Leave it to prove for 1-1.5 hours.

Tip out the dough onto a lightly floured surface, maintaining the integrity of the dough ball. Carefully cut the dough in half using your dough scraper. Tuck the dough of each half in on itself and shape them up to form tight balls. Holding the dough ball in front of you, roll each ball carefully between your flat palms until it forms a cylinder. Lay each, seam down, in your baguette baking tray. Dust with semolina and slash, and leave to prove for 1 – 1.5 hours.

Pre-heat the oven as usual with a baking tin on the lower shelf. When the oven is at temperature pour a kettle of boiling water into the tin and place the baguette baking tray above it.

Bake for 20-25 minutes until the baguettes take on a rich brown colour.

Oven temperature: Fan assisted 200 C; Normal oven 220 C/425 F; Gas mark 7