

Salt and Serenity

Irish Soda Bread

Adapted from Clodagh McKenna's book *Clodagh's Irish Kitchen*.

Makes one large loaf. A kitchen scale is needed to weigh the flour.

450 grams all-purpose flour

450 grams whole-wheat flour

1 ½ teaspoons baking soda

½ teaspoon kosher salt

600 ml buttermilk, plus an additional 50 ml for brushing on bread

2 Tablespoons flax seeds

⅓ cup pumpkin seeds

⅓ cup sunflower seeds

⅓ cup raisins

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking tray with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Sift the all-purpose and whole-wheat flours into a large mixing bowl, followed by the baking soda and the salt. Mix the dry ingredients together with clean hands.
3. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and slowly pour half the buttermilk into the well. Using a wooden spoon or dough whisk, mix the buttermilk into the flour. Add raisins, flax, pumpkin and sunflower seeds. Pour in the remaining buttermilk and continue mixing dough. Dump dough out onto the counter and gently work it so that there are no more dry spots and all the dough is moistened.
4. Dust your hands with flour and shape the dough into a ball. Place on the parchment lined baking sheet. Flour a large knife and cut the shape of a cross into the top of the dough, to two-thirds of the way. Brush the dough with buttermilk using a pastry brush.
5. Bake for about 30 minutes, then turn the bread upside-down and bake for a further 15 minutes. To test whether the loaf is cooked, tap the bottom with your knuckles – it should sound hollow.
6. Transfer to a wire rack to cool before serving. This will keep for 3–4 days in an airtight container.

