

# Salt and Serenity

## Oat and Honey Soda Bread

Adapted from Karen Barnaby's recipe for Oat and Honey Soda bread.

Feel free to vary the dried fruit and nut additions or leave them out if you prefer. The dough for this bread is a very loose batter. It must be baked in a parchment lined covered pan. An 8- or 9-inch Dutch oven or other deep pot with a lid is ideal. You could also use a deep cake pan (at least 3 inches deep) that can be covered with an inverted stainless-steel bowl.

315 grams (2¼ cups) whole-wheat flour  
100 grams (1 cup) rolled old fashioned oats  
1½ teaspoons baking soda, sifted to remove any lumps  
¾ teaspoon salt  
56 grams (¼ cup) unsalted butter at room temperature  
420 grams (1¾ cups) buttermilk  
42 grams (2 Tablespoons) honey  
50 grams (⅓ loosely packed cup) raisins (optional)  
43 grams (⅓ cup) walnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped (optional)  
20 grams (2 Tablespoons) rolled old fashioned oats

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F (200 C) and have your baking vessel lined with parchment paper before you begin. (See note above recipe)
2. Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl and blend with a whisk. Blend in the butter by rubbing it in with your fingers until it looks like coarse meal. Mix in the raisins and nuts if you are using them.
3. Make a well in the dry ingredients and add the buttermilk and honey. You may need a little more or a little less buttermilk as it depends upon the humidity of the flour. Hold 1/4 cup (60 mL) back and use it if you need to.
4. Be careful to not overwork the dough. Forming your hand into a stiff claw is the best way to mix the dough. The dough will feel very loose and wet. This is correct. Pat it gently into shape, to avoid kneading. Transfer to the prepared vessel and pat out into a 7-inch (18 cm) round. Sprinkle top with 2 tablespoons oats. Cut an X in the bread that is a ½ inch (1.25 cm) deep with a sharp knife. Cover the pot.
5. Bake for 35-40 minutes until lightly browned. Remove the cover and bake for 5-10 minutes longer.
6. The bread should be springy to the touch and sound hollow when tapped. Using an instant read thermometer, you should reach an internal temperature of 205°F. Cool slightly then transfer to a rack to finish cooling. Soda bread is best on the day it is made. It can be sliced and frozen if there are any leftovers. Just pop a frozen slice into the toaster.