

Salt and Serenity

Classic Banana Bread

Very slightly adapted from Noreen Gilletz's Banana Bread recipe in her book, "Pleasures of Your Food Processor."

1 yellow, not too ripe banana, peeled and sliced lengthwise
14 grams (1 Tablespoon) unsalted butter
30 grams (2 Tablespoons) brown sugar
350 grams (1½ cups) peeled, ripe bananas, about 3-4 bananas
198 grams (1 cup) granulated sugar
49 grams (¼ cup) vegetable oil
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
113 grams (½ cup) buttermilk (or ½ cup milk mixed with 1½ teaspoons lemon juice)
210 grams (1½ cups) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
½ teaspoon kosher salt
78 grams (¾ cup) toasted and coarsely chopped walnuts (optional)

1. Melt butter in a medium sized nonstick skillet. Turn heat to medium-low. Gently press brown sugar onto the cut side of banana halves. Place bananas cut side down, in skillet; cook until bananas are golden brown and caramelized, 4 minutes. Gently turn and cook 2 minutes more. Remove from heat; set aside until ready to use.
2. Preheat oven to 300°F. Spray a 9x5 inch light coloured metal loaf pan with cooking spray.
3. Place ripe bananas in a large mixing bowl. Using a potato masher or fork, mash the bananas. They do not have to be completely smooth; a few lumps are fine. Add sugar and whisk until incorporated. Add oil, eggs and buttermilk and whisk briefly until all the liquids are incorporated.
4. In a medium sized mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda and salt. Add dry ingredients to the wet mixture. Use a rubber spatula to mix the dry ingredients into the liquid. Don't overmix. Just mix until no flour streaks remain. Mix in chopped walnuts, if using. Pour mixture into greased loaf pan. Top with caramelized bananas, cut side up.
5. Bake in lower third of oven for 55 minutes. Check the loaf. If the top of loaf is getting too brown, tent loosely with foil. Continue baking for a further 10-15 minutes, until the internal temperature of the loaf registers 200°-205° F, or until a wooden skewer inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool completely on a wire rack.

