



Basic homemade white bread

Makes 1 large or 2 smaller loaves (1,5 kg bread dough)

Ingredients:

- ♥ 1 kg stoneground or ordinary white bread flour (see tips)
- ♥ 1 x 10 g packet instant yeast
- ♥ 10 ml (2 tsp) soft brown sugar
- ♥ 7,5 ml (½ tbsp) salt
- ♥ 45 ml (3 tbsp) avocado or olive oil
- ♥ 800 ml lukewarm water
- ♥ extra flour for kneading

Method:

1. Place flour, yeast, sugar and salt in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the flour and add the oil. Mix well, but don't be alarmed if it seems as if lumps are forming.
2. Start by adding two-thirds of the water to the flour and stir with a wooden spoon or mix with your hands. Gradually add more water until a soft, manageable dough is formed. Stone ground flour will require a bit more water than ordinary white bread flour.
3. Turn dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Knead by hand by making a forward-rolling action with the heel of one hand and continue to repeat the motion. Knead until dough is smooth and elastic – it should take 7-10 minutes (or use the dough hook on your electric mixer).
4. Knead until the dough can be shaped into a neat ball. When lightly pressed with your thumb to form a dent, it should bounce back immediately. If not, continue to knead for another few minutes.
5. Spread a few drops of oil in a clean mixing bowl and place dough in the bowl. Spread a little oil over the dough to prevent it from drying out. Don't use too much oil, as it can prevent the dough from rising.
6. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and place a clean dishtowel or blanket over the bowl. Place the bowl in a warm spot, such as on a windowsill or close to a warm oven. Allow to rise for 20-30 minutes or until doubled in volume. (On a cold day, you can place the dough in a car, that's standing in the sun - it makes for a wonderful 'warm spot'.)
7. Turn out risen dough onto a lightly floured surface again and knock down with your hands.
8. Line two 1-litre loaf tins or one 2-litre loaf tin with baking paper and lightly grease with oil.
9. Shape the dough with your hands to be just smaller than the tins. (Or see tips for more ways to shape the dough.) Place dough in the tins, lightly brush with oil and cover with a clean dishtowel.
10. Allow to rise in a warm place for another 20-30 minutes or until doubled in volume. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200 °C. Sprinkle a few pinches of dry flour over the bread. Bake for 30-45 minutes or until it sounds hollow when tapped.
11. Cool for a few minutes in the tin, then carefully turn out and allow to cool down completely. (Or immediately slice the warm crust to reward all your effort.)



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