

Sister Malachy Hannigan's Irish Soda Bread

Ingredients

Preheat oven: 375 degrees F.

Makes one round loaf

(or one 9 x 5 x 2 3/4-inch loaf)

- 4 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tbsp. caraway seeds
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 cups seedless raisins
- 1-1/2 cups (about) buttermilk
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. baking soda

Directions

Grease a two-quart casserole or a 9 x 5 x 2 3/4-inch loaf pan and set to one side. Combine 1 cup of buttermilk with egg and baking soda. Set aside.

Sift together into a large bowl the flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Stir in caraway seeds. Cut in butter with pastry blender or 2 knives till it resembles coarse corn meal. Stir in raisins. (If you like, you may plump raisins in hot water before adding.)

Stir buttermilk mixture into flour mixture till just moistened. Add as much of the remainder of the buttermilk as is needed to have a dough that is not dry but not too sticky either. If you like, you may knead the dough but it is not necessary for good results. Turn the dough into prepared baking pan and, with a sharp knife, cut a cross through the center. Make the cross fairly deep and from one end of the pan to the other. Brush with egg yolk which has been beaten with fork or with cream. Bake in preheated 375 degree oven for 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until done. Test by tapping the bottom of the bread; when it sounds hollow it is fully baked. Turn out onto wire rack and cool away from draft. Delicious served plain, with butter or with jam.

