

Kretchman Family Recipe

Oatmeal Bread

Makes 1 loaf – can be tripled

Ingredients:

½ cup very warm water (do not double or triple this if making 2 or 3 loaves)
½ tsp active dry yeast
½ tsp salt
½ cup dried quick-cook oats
½ cup wheat flour
1/3 cup wheat germ
1/3 cup honey (brown sugar also works, but you will need to increase water a bit)
1 tbsp butter
2/3 cup boiling water
2 ½ to 3 cups bread flour

In a small cup, dissolve the yeast into the ½ cup of very warm water and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl combine the salt, oats, wheat flour, wheat germ, honey and butter. Add the boiling water and mix ingredients thoroughly. Take about a half teaspoon of the mixture and stir into the yeast water. If after 5 minutes or so you don't have some foam beginning to form on the top of the yeast water, you need to get fresh yeast.

Once the hot mixture has cooled enough to not kill the yeast, stir in the yeast water. Add the flour slowly and stir until the lump becomes too difficult to work with a utensil. Machine or hand knead (in the bowl or on a floured surface) until the lump is no longer sticky and is a bit silky.

Place the lump in a greased bowl, cover and place in a warm area until the lump doubles in size, about 30 minutes. Then, if making more than one loaf, divide the lump accordingly, shape and place into a lightly greased bread pan(s), making sure to lightly press a crease with your knuckles along the center of the top to press the corners toward the pan recesses.

Cover again (plastic wrap is recommended, slightly greased) and place in a warm place until the top of the lump(s) is about ½ inch above the rim of the bread pan. If using a tall bread pan, the lump should rise until it is about as tall as it is wide. This typically takes about 45 minutes.

Uncover, (spread pans uniformly in oven so air can circulate freely,) and bake at 350F/175C for about 30 minutes. Foil may be placed on top of the loaf(s) for the last 10 minutes or so to avoid too much browning. Remove from oven and cool for 5 minutes on a wire rack. Remove the loaf(s) and lightly butter the top(s).

Best served warm with butter, jam, and/or honey. Slices can be warmed in a microwave and loaves can be frozen.