ST. PATRICK'S DAY · MARCH 17

Irish soda bread for St. Patrick's Day

Prep 15 min **Cook** 40 min **Cool** 20 min **Total** 1 hr 15 min **Makes** One round loaf, about 12 slices

Level Easy

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. A grown-up cuts the cross on top with a sharp knife.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten) and milk. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups (500 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for shaping
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar (optional)
- 1¾ cups (420 ml) buttermilk, plus a splash more if needed
- ½ cup (75 g) raisins (optional, for "spotted dog")

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 450°F (230°C). Dust a baking sheet with flour or line it with parchment paper.
2. Whisk the flour, baking soda, salt, and sugar in a large bowl. Stir in the raisins, if using.
3. Make a well in the center and pour in most of the buttermilk. Mix quickly with a wooden spoon or one hand shaped like a claw until a soft, slightly sticky dough forms, adding the rest of the buttermilk if dry flour remains.
4. Turn the dough onto a floured surface and pat it gently into a round about 1½ inches (4 cm) thick. Do not knead it: the less it is handled, the lighter it bakes.
5. Set the round on the baking sheet. A grown-up cuts a deep cross over the top with a sharp knife, almost to the edges.
6. Bake 15 minutes, then lower the heat to 400°F (200°C) and bake 25 to 30 minutes more, until golden and the bottom sounds hollow when tapped.
7. Cool on a rack for at least 20 minutes (wrap it in a clean tea towel for a softer crust). Serve with butter and jam.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Whisk the dry ingredients
- Mix in the buttermilk with a clawed hand
- Pat the dough into a round
- Tell the shamrock story while it bakes

GOOD TO KNOW

- Soda bread is best the day it is made. Toast leftovers the next morning.
- No buttermilk? Stir 1½ tbsp lemon juice into 1¾ cups (420 ml) milk and let it stand 10 minutes.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me. Saint Patrick, pray for us.