BARBARA’S BREAD RECIPE

Servings: 12-15 | Prep Time: 15-28 hours | Baking Time: 45-50 minutes

INGREDIENTS

3 ½ cups bread flour, divided
½ tsp herbs (optional)
1 tsp salt
1 tsp dry yeast
1 ¾-2 cups water

DIRECTIONS

Mix the bread flour (regular flour does not rise as well) herbs (if using), salt, yeast, and enough of the water to make a sticky ball. Cover with the glass plate. (Don’t use plastic wrap because it is not healthy or eco-friendly.) Let sit for 12-24 hours at room temperature away from a draft. Within 2-3 hours of the time you wish to bake the bread (which takes another 45-50 minutes); you will need to oil the bottom and sides of the baking pan you wish to use. I like to use round granite wear pans with lids but you can use a glass or pottery baking dish with a lid. Add approximately ½ cup of flour to your dough, which will be soft and spongy, by sprinkling some on the top and then gently folding the rest over a few times to redefine a floured ball of dough that you can gently lift and place in your oiled pan. On the top of your loaf, sprinkle oatmeal, cornmeal, or seeds, etc. Cover and let rise for 2-3 hours. One hour before your guests arrive, place the pan in a 450 degree oven with the lid on it. After 30 minutes, remove the lid and bake for another 15-20 minutes at 425 degrees. That will give it a nice crust. Serve warm with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and cracked pepper as a dipping sauce (and a glass of wine). It is best to make this bread for other people; otherwise you are tempted to eat an entire loaf yourself.

YOU WILL NEED

One medium sized glass or metal mixing bowl and a plate to cover it
One large mixing spoon, a teaspoon, and one measuring cup
One glass or metal baking pan with a lid

VARIATIONS

Use 2 cups of bread flour and any other flour you wish. I use whole wheat for the 3rd cup. I have used buckwheat flour, oat flour, soy flour, tapioca flour, and rice flour. They all work in small quantities but don’t rise as well. You can also use some wheat germ, oat germ, flax seed meal or whole flax seed, some oatmeal, cornmeal, or any other grain you wish for texture. You may need to increase the amount of water to bind it all.