

17th Century Bread Recipe

Both indigenous tribes and European settlers had to make their own food. There were no supermarkets around! Everything you ate would have to be harvested, cooked, baked, and otherwise created.

Like the Journey Cake we featured in our 16th Century recipes, bread-like foods were incredibly important to life here. Unlike fresh foods, these baked recipes could last longer, and be carried with you on long journeys and kept over several days.

This bread recipe comes from a 17th Century recipe book written by Frenchman Robert May. The French influence in this area begins with French exploration of the area in the 17th Century.

Ingredients:

- 2 tsps active dry yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 to 1 1/3 cups water milk and mixture (3:1 ratio)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 2 egg whites
- 1 1/2 to 2 tsp salt

This recipe makes 2 medium round boules/ loaves.

Directions:

- 1) Warm about 1/4 cup of the water-milk mixture. Into this mixture, put the sugar and yeast. Mix together. Place it aside for 10 minutes. Put the egg whites in a small bowl and beat.
- 2) Put the flours, salt, the proofed yeast mixture, the beaten egg whites and the water-milk mixture in the processor bowl and knead until you have a soft, smooth and elastic dough. Add as much more flour or water or milk to get this consistency.

3) Shape the dough into a ball, and transfer to a lightly oiled bowl, loosely cover it and leave it to rise till soft, spongy and almost double in volume. This should take about an hour.

4) Divide the dough into two equal portions (save a little dough before shaping if you want to make decorations with it), and shape each one into a boule. Loosely cover with plastic or a light cloth and leave it to rise for about 30 to 45 minutes.

5) Decorate crust with the spare bit of dough or by slashing the crust. Bake at 450F for 15 minutes. Then turn down the oven temperature to 350F and bake for another 15 to 20 minutes., until the loaf is brown and sounds hollow when tapped.

6) Let the bread cool completely before slicing

Enjoy a taste of the 17th Century!