

Italian Fruited Bread

A Bite of History | December 2004



Slice and enjoy this Italian sweet bread as is or toasted.

- 6¹/₄–6³/₄ CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR**
- 1¹/₃ CUP GOLDEN RAISINS**
- 1¹/₃ CUP DARK RAISINS**
- 1 CUP COARSELY CHOPPED WALNUTS**
- 1 CUP CHOPPED MIXED CANDIED FRUITS**
- 1¹/₂ TSP. SALT**
- 1 TSP. ANISE SEED, CRUSHED**
- 1¹/₂ CUPS MILK**
- 1¹/₄ CUP SUGAR**
- 3 TBSP. BUTTER**
- 1¹/₂ CUP WARM WATER (105°–115°)**
- 2 PKG. ACTIVE DRY YEAST**
- 1¹/₄ TSP. SUGAR**
- 2 EGGS, SLIGHTLY BEATEN**
- 1 EGG**
- 1 TBSP. WATER**

In a very large mixing bowl combine 4 cups of the flour, raisins, walnuts, candied fruit, salt, and anise seed. Set aside.

In a medium saucepan combine milk, ¹/₄ cup sugar, and butter. Heat and stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved and milk is steaming. Do not boil. Set aside; cool to lukewarm (105° to 115°).

In a small bowl, combine warm water, yeast, and ¹/₄ teaspoon sugar. Let stand until foamy (about 5 minutes).

Make a well in the flour mixture, then add milk mixture, yeast mixture, and 2 slightly beaten eggs. Stir with a wooden spoon until well-combined. Stir in as much remaining flour as you can with a wooden spoon. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead in enough of the remaining flour to make a moderately stiff dough that is smooth and elastic (6 to 8 minutes total).

Place dough in a greased bowl, turning once to grease surface of dough. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (1 to 1¹/₄ hours). Punch down dough. Cover and let rise again until doubled in size (45 to 60 minutes). Punch down dough; cover and let rest 10 minutes.

Grease two 9×5×3-inch loaf pans; set aside. Divide dough in half. Shape into loaves. Place in prepared pans. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled in size (30 to 45 minutes). Beat 1 egg with 1 tablespoon water. Brush tops of loaves with egg mixture. Bake in a 350° oven for 45 to 50 minutes or until bread sounds hollow when lightly tapped. Immediately remove from pans. Cool on wire rack. To freeze, place loaves in freezer bags and freeze for up to 3 months. Thaw at room temperature. Makes 2 loaves (24 servings).