



Fruit Soda Bread for St Patrick's Day

Makes 1 loaf or 6 mini-loaves

100g rolled oats25g butter or block margarine200g plain flour200g wholemeal flour100g caster sugar1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

1 ½ teaspoon mixed spice
1 teaspoon salt
75g raisins
50g sultanas
250ml buttermilk
3 tablespoons demerara sugar

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.

Rub the butter into the oats with your fingertips in a big bowl.

Stir in the flours, caster sugar, bicarbonate of soda, mixed spice, salt, raisins and sultanas.

Pour over the buttermilk and quickly stir in with a round-bladed knife.

Tip out onto a flour-dusted surface and gently bring together into a ball with your hands. Either use as a large loaf or divide into 6 smaller balls, for mini-loaves.

Transfer to a flour-dusted baking sheet and scatter over the demerara sugar, pressing it into the top.

Use a sharp, flour-dusted knife to cut a big cross in the top and bake for 30-35 minutes for the large loaf or 10-15 minutes for the mini loaves - until crusty on the outside. Eat warm or cold, thickly sliced, with butter.

Top Tip: If you do not have buttermilk available then add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice OR white wine vinegar to 50ml of full fat milk OR semi-skimmed milk. Stir well and leave to stand for 5 minutes.