

Bring a great holiday gift: homemade bread for brunch

During the holidays or at any time of year, inviting friends for Sunday brunch is a good way to entertain. Why? Because it's easy on the cook, easy on the budget and easy on busy schedules.

Whether the party is at your house or a friend's, a loaf of fancy homemade bread will make the occasion even more special. The guest who brings along such a treat for a holiday party is assured a return invitation. The hostess who serves a sweet bread with lacy frosting and cups of steamy coffee will never be lacking company.

Although most accomplished cooks already know the recipe secret for moist breads, it may come as a surprise to others that condensed soup is the key ingredient.

Only the cook need know that a convenience soup from the cupboard is responsible for the fresh feeling and light texture of two breads that are good enough to become a tradition.



ALMOND RING BREAD, with condensed soup as a key ingredient for moisture and texture, is an irresistible addition to the brunch table at home or for a friend's holiday party.

ALMOND RING BREAD

- 5 1/2 to 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1 can (10 1/2 ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon rind
- 1/4 cup finely chopped toasted almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- Confectioner's sugar glaze

In large bowl of electric mixer, combine 1 1/2 cups flour, sugar and yeast.

In saucepan, heat soup, juice, water and butter until warm (120° F.). Add to flour mixture.

Beat at medium speed of electric mixer for 2 minutes.

Add eggs, lemon rind and 1/2 cup flour.

Beat at high speed for 2 minutes, scraping sides and bottom of bowl often.

Stir in enough remaining flour to make a stiff dough.

Cover; let rise in warm place 1 hour or until doubled in bulk.

Punch down; stir in almonds and extract.

Spoon into well-greased and floured 10" tube pan.

Cover; let rise 1 hour or until doubled.

Bake at 400° F. for 30 minutes or until done.

Remove from pan; cool on wire rack.

Drizzle with confectioner's sugar glaze; garnish with additional whole almonds. Makes 1 large loaf.

FROSTY TWIST BREAD

- 6 to 6 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 can (10 1/2 ounces) condensed cream of potato soup
- 1/2 cup water

at medium speed 2 minutes. Add eggs and 1/2 cup flour. Beat 2 minutes at high speed, scraping bottom and sides of bowl often.

Stir in fruit and enough flour to make a stiff dough.

Knead on lightly floured board until smooth, adding additional flour as needed.

Place in greased bowl, turning once.

Cover; let rise in warm place 1 hour or until doubled in bulk.

Punch down. To make loaves, divide in half.

Roll out each half to 14-inch circle on lightly greased baking sheet.

Place glass in center. Cut into quarters up to glass.

Cut each quarter into 5 equal strips, making 20 strips.

Twist 2 strips together; repeat making 10 twists.

Cut off one twist; remove glass.

Coil twist and place in center.

Bring ends of remaining 9 twists to center in form daisy.

Repeat with remaining half of dough.

Cover; let rise 45 minutes or until doubled.

Bake at 375° F. for 20 minutes or until done; cool on wire rack.

Drizzle with frosting. Makes 2 loaves.

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- 1 1/2 cups chopped candied fruit
- Confectioner's sugar frosting

In large bowl of electric mixer, combine 2 cups flour, yeast and sugar.

In saucepan, heat soup, water and butter until warm (120° F.).

Add to flour mixture. Beat



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TWELVE-FRUIT COMPOTE

- 3 cups water
- 1 pound mixed dried fruits including pears, figs, apricots, and peaches

2. Add cherries, apples, and cranberries. Stir in sugar, lemon, and spices. Cover; simmer 5 minutes.

4. Stir in grapes and brandy. Bring just to boiling. Remove from heat. Stir in orange peel. Cover; let stand 15 minutes.

About 12 servings

- 1 cup pitted prunes
- 1/2 cup raisins or currants
- 1 cup pitted sweet cherries

- 2 apples, peeled and sliced or 6 ounces dried apple slices
- 1/2 cup cranberries

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 6 whole cloves

- 2 cinnamon sticks (3 inches each)
- 1 orange

- 1/2 cup grapes, pomegranate seeds, or pitted plums
- 1/2 cup fruit-flavored brandy

1. Combine water, mixed dried fruits, prunes, and raisins in a 6-quart kettle. Bring to boiling. Cover; simmer about 20 minutes, or until fruits are plump and tender.



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