

BASIC HOME-STYLE BREAD

from Beard on Bread

Makes two 9x5x3" loaves

1 package active dry yeast
2 cups warm milk (100-115°)
2 Tbs. granulated sugar
1/4 cup melted butter
1 Tbs. salt (*careful: may be too much*)
5 to 6 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg white, lightly beaten -- optional

In small bowl, mix the yeast, 1/2 c of warm milk, and sugar until yeast is completely dissolved. Allow to proof.

In large mixing bowl, mix the remaining milk, the melted butter, and the salt.

Then stir in, one cup at a time, three cups of flour with a wooden spoon.

After the third cup, add in the yeast mixture. Then continue stirring in flour until the mixture is rather firm, which should take about 4 to 5 cups.

Remove the dough to a floured board and knead. Add more flour as necessary if it gets sticky until it is supple, satiny, and no longer sticky.

Put dough in a buttered bowl. Cover and allow to rise in draft-free place until doubled in bulk, about 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

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Deflate the dough by punching it firmly two or three times. Return to floured board, and knead for 4 to 5 minutes more. Shape into loaves.

Place in well-buttered loaf tins, cover, and let rise again until doubled in bulk. Slash the loaves with a sharp knife and brush with lightly beaten egg white or water.

Bake in a 400° oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until the bread sounds hollow when tapped with the knuckles.

Remove the loaves from the pans and put them in the oven a few minutes longer to become crisped.