

Feeding the Five Thousand

“And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes” (Matthew 14:19).

A Bread Recipe

(for 2 regular or 5 small loaves)

Note: This method takes approximately 2 ½ - 3 hours to make. The actual time spent working with the dough is far less—probably only ½ hour. You need to carefully plan when you can take breaks in working with the dough to do other things. Bread is quite forgiving and doesn't mind being neglected a little as the yeast is dissolving, or when it is rising. Cooking time is very precise.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups warm water (Water needs to be quite warm to dissolve yeast and get a good start)
- 1 tablespoon honey (or brown or white sugar)
- 1½ tablespoons dried yeast
- 1 tablespoon salt
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- Flour (whole wheat or unbleached, or a combination of the two)

Procedure:

1. Combine first three ingredients in a large bowl. Blend. (If the bowl is very cold – warm it up with some warm tap water or all the warmth of the bread water will be lost.)
2. Let them sit undisturbed until the yeast starts to bubble (10 min to ½ hour).
3. Add salt and oil. Stir in the flour in smallish quantities.
4. When the mix is too stiff to stir, continue to add flour and knead it in by hand. The dough should be soft, but not sticky. (Too much flour will make the dough hard and stiff and produces a crumbly loaf.)
5. When you have a nicely formed dough ball, spread a little oil on top of the loaf and leave to rise until doubled. (This takes ½ hour to an hour.)
6. Preheat the oven to 350. You will want to use a middle shelf in the oven. Remove the second oven shelf.
7. Grease 2 loaf pans (or 5 small loaf pans to make 5 loaves)..
8. Pour a little oil on the counter and spread out into a circle. Drop the dough on to the circle and knead for a couple of minutes.
9. Divide the dough into 2 balls (or 5 balls for 5 small loaves). Use a rolling pin to roll each ball into a rectangle. Use your hands to roll up the rectangles into loaf-shaped rolls (like a jelly roll cake).

(Note: you have a lot of control over these shapes. Try to shape and roll them so that they fit nicely into your pans. if you make your rectangle too wide, when you roll it up it will be too long for the pan.)

10. Put pans into preheated oven. Bake for 40-45 min. Gently tap on the top of the loaf for doneness. If the loaf seems squishy on the sides, it is not quite done.
11. Remove from oven and cool on a rack until completely cooled. Store in plastic bag. May be frozen.