

From Cait:



Irish Soda Bread Recipe

(This can be increased, but I suggest it only be halved again so 4 cups becomes 6...otherwise if too large the baking time gets difficult to judge and the outside becomes too hard before the inners get cooked well. Cait)

- 4 cups flour
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 cup raisins (hint: plump raisins by soaking in water overnight first as this will retain the juice in the baking)
- Caraway seeds to taste
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla (Cait's addition-optional, but delicious)
- 1 - 2 cups buttermilk

Method

1 Preheat oven to 350°. Sift together 4 cups of flour, the sugar, salt, and baking powder into a large mixing bowl.

2 Using your fingers work butter into flour mixture until it resembles coarse meal, then stir in caraway seeds and raisins.

3 Mix baking soda *and* tsp. of vanilla into buttermilk.

4 Make a well in the center of the flour mixture. Add buttermilk to well and mix in with a wooden spoon until dough is too stiff to stir. Dust hands with a little flour, then gently knead dough in the bowl **just long enough to form a rough ball**. If the dough is too sticky to work with, add in a little more flour. **Do not over-knead!** Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and shape into a round loaf. Note that the dough will be a little sticky, and quite shaggy (a little like a shortcake biscuit dough). You want to work it just enough so that it comes together. If you over-knead, the bread will end up tough.

5 Transfer dough to a large, lightly greased cast-iron skillet or a baking sheet . Using a knife, score top of dough about an inch or so deep in an "+" shape. This allows the heat to get into the center of the dough while it cooks--and some of us Bless the Bread! Transfer to oven and bake until bread is golden and bottom sounds hollow when tapped, **about 60 minutes**. Check for doneness also by inserting a long, thin skewer into the center. If it comes out clean, it's done.

Hint 1: If the top is getting too dark while baking, tent the bread with some aluminum foil.



Remove pan or sheet from oven, let bread sit in the pan or on the sheet for 5-10 minutes, then remove to a rack to cool briefly. Serve bread warm, at room temperature, or sliced and toasted. Best when eaten warm and just baked.



(Pictures by [RoisinArt](#)[™])

From Rose

Whiskey Butter!



1. Soften a pound of butter.
2. Whip with hand mixer and
3. Add confectioners sugar to taste
4. Add whiskey to taste.
5. Whip all together until light and easily spreadable.

Use with Irish Soda Bread, or good on scones, or any raisin bread.