



Barbari Bread

Makes 4 loaves
Preparation time: 40 minutes
plus 6 hours of rising time
Cooking time: 12 minutes for
each loaf

نان بربري

Nan-e barbari

NOTES

Barbari bread is a flat oval or round 1 to 1½-inch-thick loaf. It is at its best eaten fresh, as you would a French baguette.

You can also cook this bread without a baking stone by using a baking sheet. Dust it with cornmeal, place a loaf on it, and with damp hands dent the top and sprinkle with seeds. Bake for 12 minutes on one side and 6 minutes on the other.

VARIATION

If you'd like to make Barbari bread using whole wheat flour, use about ½ cup less flour.

DOUGH

1 package or 1 tablespoon dry active yeast
3 cups warm water
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons sea salt
6½–8½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted
4 tablespoons oil or butter

½ cup yellow cornmeal, for dusting

DECORATION AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

1 tablespoon sesame seeds or nigella seeds
Baking stone
Baker's peel

GLAZE

1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon flour
2 tablespoons warm water

1. In a wide mixing bowl, dissolve the yeast in 3 cups warm water. Add the sugar and set aside for 10 minutes.
2. Add the salt to the yeast mixture and mix well. Gradually add the flour and stir constantly. When 6 cups flour have been added and you have a sticky dough, add 1 tablespoon oil and mix for 2 minutes. Transfer the dough to a floured counter and knead for about 15 minutes, adding the rest of the flour if necessary, until the dough is no longer sticky.
3. Pour 3 tablespoons oil into another wide bowl and place the dough over it. Cover the bowl entirely with a clean damp towel or plastic wrap and allow the dough to rise for 4 hours, without moving it, in a warm, dark place (oven or pantry).
4. Punch the air out of the dough while it is still in the bowl and flip it over. Cover with a clean damp towel and allow to rise 2 more hours.
5. To cook the bread, place a baking stone in the lower level of the oven and preheat the oven to 500°F (260°C) for at least 20 minutes.
6. To make the glaze: In a small bowl, mix together the baking soda, flour, and warm water, and mix well until smooth.
7. With oily hands, divide the dough into 4 balls. Place each ball on a lightly oiled surface. Use an oiled rolling pin to roll each ball out to an approximately 14x8-inch oval shape. Place loaves on an oiled surface, cover with a towel, and leave at room temperature for 20 minutes.
8. Dust the baker's peel with the cornmeal and transfer a loaf to the baker's peel. Brush the glaze down the length of the dough. With damp fingers, make dents on the top of the loaf and sprinkle the tops with seeds.
9. Immediately slide the dough onto the hot baking stone in the oven, cornmeal side down, and bake for 8 minutes. Turn over and bake for 2 to 4 minutes longer. Continue for the remaining loaves.
10. Use the baker's peel to remove the bread from the oven and slide it onto cooling rack. Cover with a clean towel and serve hot. If you are not serving the bread fresh, wrap in aluminum foil and toast before serving. *Nush-e Jan!*