# Leek and Prune Bread-Pudding Loaf

1 large savory loaf, cut into 10 thick slices | Active 35 min | Cook 75 min | Total 140 min

## Ingredients

- 300 g/10 1/2 oz plain day-old bread, cut into 2 cm/3/4 in cubes; no mold
- 300 g/10 1/2 oz trimmed leeks, washed and sliced
- 15 ml olive oil (1 tablespoon)
- 60 g/2 oz pitted prunes, chopped into 5 mm pieces
- 3 large eggs, 150 g without shells
- 300 ml milk (1 1/4 cups)
- 20 g Dijon mustard (about 1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon)
- 100 g/3 1/2 oz mature cheddar, grated
- 2 g fine salt (about 1/3 teaspoon)
- 0.5 g black pepper (1/4 teaspoon)

## Set out

Oven, Large loaf tin with usable capacity at least 2.5 L/2 2/3 qt, approximately 30 × 12 × 8 cm/12 × 5 × 3 in inside, Parchment sling, Skillet, Large bowl and whisk, Knife and board, Spatula, Food thermometer, Cooling rack, Shallow containers and refrigerator, Foil for shielding the loaf

## Allergens

Wheat, Milk, Egg, Mustard. Check labels and substitutions.

## Make it

**1.** Heat the oven to 350°F/180°C. Line the loaf tin with a parchment sling, leaving handles clear of oven elements. Heat oil in the skillet and cook leeks over medium-low heat 12-15 minutes, stirring, until tender and no liquid pools.

**2.** Whisk eggs, milk, mustard, salt and pepper in the bowl. Add all the bread, leeks, prunes and cheese. Fold gently and leave 15 minutes, turning once so the cubes hydrate evenly.

**3.** Spoon the complete mixture into the large tin without packing hard. Leave at least 2 cm/3/4 in below the rim. Bake 50-60 minutes until set in the middle and 165°F/74°C in several central spots. Cover loosely with foil if the surface darkens early; continue until the center is done.

**4.** Rest 20 minutes. Lift the loaf onto a board with the parchment and cut 10 equal slices. For later service, cool the slices promptly in shallow containers and refrigerate rather than leaving the whole warm loaf on the counter.

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## Bring it

Carry pre-cut slices in a rigid shallow box at 40°F/4°C or below, or maintain 140°F/60°C or above in a suitable hot carrier. Uncontrolled travel plus display must stay within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C.

## Finish at the gathering

Cold slices are ready to put on an ice-supported platter. For warm slices, arrange a 350°F/180°C oven and a shallow covered dish; allow 20-30 minutes and check 165°F/74°C throughout.

## Make it yours

Separate the 10 slices before packing so nobody needs to saw through a loaf on a crowded table. The prune pieces can be left visible for guests who like to know where the sweet notes are.

## Ingredient labels

Bread, milk, cheese, eggs and Dijon contribute the listed allergens. Bread may contain soy, sesame or other ingredients; check the actual loaf and mustard.

## A useful detail

The 140-minute estimate allows chopping, the 15-minute skillet stage, soaking, up to 1 hour baking and 20 minutes resting. A soft custard center needs longer even when the bread cubes on top look crisp.

## Another way

Replace prunes with 60 g chopped dried apricots for a brighter tart accent.

Use 100 g mature Gouda instead of cheddar; both contain milk.

## Keep it well

Refrigerate slices promptly at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 3 days or an earlier opened dairy deadline. Follow the Bring it handling limits; reheat covered slices to 165°F/74°C. Freeze promptly chilled slices for up to 1 month for quality and thaw in the refrigerator.