Cooked-Barley and Apple Soda Bread

1 round soda loaf cut into 8 thick slices; 2 slices and 30 g cheddar per person · Active 25 min · Total 2 hr

Skills: Mixing a soda dough and checking a moist loaf center

Ingredients

- 3 1/3 cups all-purpose flour (400 g)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda (5 g)
- 3/4 teaspoon fine salt (4.5 g)
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon sugar (16 g)
- About 1 cup plain cooked pearl barley, cold, very well drained, prepared within the last 24 hours (200 g)
- About 2 medium apples, cored, coarsely grated and lightly squeezed before weighing (200 g prepared after squeezing)
- 3/4 cup plain yogurt (180 g)
- Up to 2 tablespoons milk (30 ml), only if needed for dry flour pockets, added 1 teaspoon/5 ml at a time
- 1 tablespoon neutral oil (15 ml)
- 1 cup grated or sliced cheddar for serving (120 g)

Set out

mixing bowl, grater, baking tray and baking paper, knife, wire rack, skewer, food thermometer

Allergens

wheat, barley, milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Check the barley’s original cooking date and refrigerated history. Heat the oven to 375°F/190°C and line the tray. Mix flour, baking soda, salt and sugar thoroughly in the bowl, then stir in the cold well-drained cooked barley and the lightly squeezed grated apple, weighed after squeezing.

2. Stir yogurt and oil together without milk, then add to the dry mixture. Mix with a spoon and then a hand just until no dry flour remains. If dry pockets remain, add milk 1 teaspoon/5 ml at a time, using no more than 2 tablespoons/30 ml. Stop once the dough is soft and slightly tacky but holds a formable low round; do not add milk to an already joined dough. Do not knead as a yeast dough.

3. Transfer to the lined tray and form a low round about 8 inches/20 cm across and 2 1/2 inches/6 cm high. Cut a deep cross, about 1 inch/2.5 cm into the top, dividing visually into quarters without cutting through the base. Put into the oven immediately.

4. Bake for 55–65 minutes until well browned and the center reaches about 205°F/96°C. A skewer inserted into the thick center should show no sticky raw dough. If the top colors too quickly, cover loosely with foil and continue baking until done.

5. Cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes before cutting into 8 thick slices. Serve 2 slices and 30 g cheddar per person. Refrigerate any planned saved portion after the brief cooling period rather than keeping this leftover-grain loaf at room temperature.

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A measured leftover, not an uncertain scoop

The barley is plain, cold and weighed after cooking and draining well. A recent small leftover portion is suitable; a grain mixture with an unknown cooking date is not.

Ingredient labels

Barley contains gluten as does the wheat flour. Yogurt, milk and the included cheddar all supply milk.

A useful detail

Use well-drained barley and apple weighed after lightly squeezing out excess juice. Begin with yogurt and oil only; milk is a measured adjustment for persistent dry pockets. The formable soda dough is baked promptly without a warm rise. The thirty-minute cooling period is included in the total.

Keep it well

Cool on a rack and refrigerate within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, in a covered container at 40°F/4°C or below. Use within 2 days after baking and no later than 3 days after the barley was originally cooked, whichever is earlier. Keep cheddar refrigerated. Reheat only the slices needed until 165°F/74°C throughout; making bread does not restart the grain’s storage clock.