



## Quick Brown Bread – Makes 1 Loaf

*This is a whole grain version of Irish soda bread, and it's a good recipe to use when you need a basic bread but don't have time to go through the multiple risings of a yeast dough. The bread is hearty and moist from the tangy buttermilk. If you'd like, you can grate the zest from an orange and add it to the batter for a nice citrus flavor. The bread is great "as is" with dinner, with a slice of cheese for lunch or a snack, as an accompaniment to soup, or slathered with jam (peanut butter is optional) for breakfast. If you'd like a more seasonal taste and flavor, try adding a teaspoon of cinnamon to the dry ingredients when you whisk them together and fold in a handful of dried cranberries before pouring the batter into the pan. The bread will smell wonderful when baking and be mouthwatering warm from the oven.*

*2½ cups of white whole-wheat flour  
1 cup of quick oats, plus 1 tablespoon  
2 tablespoons of brown sugar  
1 teaspoon of baking soda  
1½ teaspoons of baking powder  
½ teaspoon of salt  
2 cups of low-fat buttermilk  
1 egg*



*Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and coat a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. Whisk the flour, 1 cup of oats, brown sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and salt together in a large bowl. Whisk the buttermilk and egg together and add them to the dry ingredients until just combined. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and sprinkle the top with the remaining tablespoon of oats. Bake the loaf for about an hour or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the loaf comes out clean. Let the bread cool in the pan for 10 minutes before removing it.*



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## Butterscotch Nut Cake – Serves 8+

*This is a bit of a splurge with prepared ingredients like a pudding and oatmeal muffin mix as well as butterscotch morsels, toffee bits, nuts and coconut. Nonetheless the dessert—more of a dense pudding than a cake, really—is well worth the “one-in-a-while” indulgence. The toffee bits merge with the butterscotch morsels, nuts, and coconut to create a topping somewhat similar to that on a German chocolate cake. Nonetheless, in this case, the topping mixes with the cake. My husband likes the cake plain, but my son and I (as always) like it with low-fat ice cream to cool it. Nonetheless, the cake keeps well and is quite good served at room temperature or cold for the next day or two (or as long as it lasts, which usually isn’t all that long).*

*1 small coconut cook-and-serve pudding mix*

*1¾ cups of low fat milk*

*1 7-ounce package of oatmeal muffin mix (such as a “Jiffy” mix)*

*1 teaspoon of vanilla extract*

*1 teaspoon of coconut extract*

*½ teaspoon of cinnamon*

*¼ teaspoon of nutmeg*

*1 cup of butterscotch morsels*

*½ cup of toffee bits*

*1 cup of chopped walnuts*

*¼ cup of shredded coconut*

*In a medium saucepan, prepare the pudding mix with the milk as directed on the package. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and coat an 8- or 9-inch square pan with nonstick cooking spray. To the prepared pudding in the saucepan, add the oatmeal muffin mix, the vanilla extract, coconut extract, cinnamon, and nutmeg and stir until the dry ingredients are incorporated. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and smooth it out. Sprinkle on the butterscotch chips, toffee bits, walnuts, and coconuts and press*

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*them down gently or shimmy the pan to settle the topping ingredients a bit into the batter. Bake the cake for 45-50 minutes. It should be firm and dense, and it won't rise much. Don't worry if it's a little jiggly. It will firm up as it stands. Let the cake cool for 10 minutes and serve it "as is" or with low-fat vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt.*







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## December 16

### The First Breakfast

*Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast your net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.*

*John 21: 2-6*

*When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord.*

*John 21: 9-12*

On the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, only a short distance from Capernaum there is a modest cooking fire. A single figure attends to the fire, supplied only with fish and bread.

The time is near dawn, with only the faintest hint of light over the heights to the east. A few yards out from the shore, a boat scarcely large enough for the men and their nets floats on the calm water. The night's work has yielded no reward.

From ashore a voice calls, somehow familiar, inviting them to come to the fire and the food. It is Peter who is over the side of the boat, wading ashore in response to Jesus's call. In

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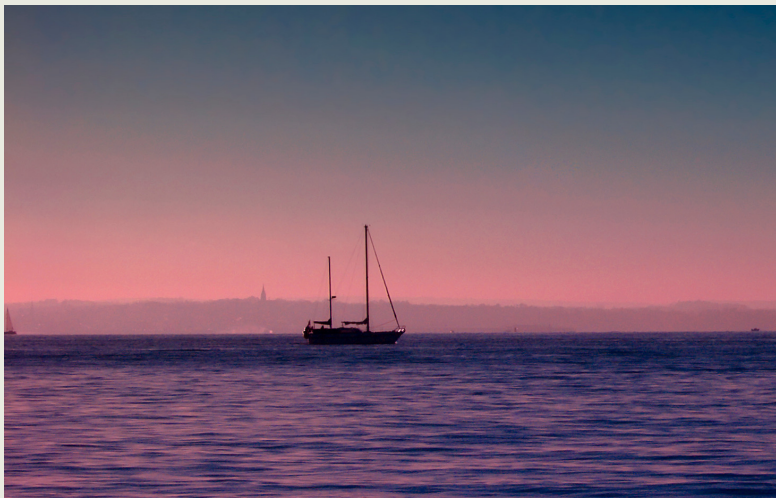


In John's Gospel we hear Peter's and Jesus's dialog at this breakfast following the Resurrection:

*"Peter, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." "Feed my lambs." "Peter, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." "Tend my sheep." "Peter, do you love me?" "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." "Feed my sheep."*

*John 21: 15-1*

The first breakfast is about the feeding of God's people, all of God's children. It is about the feeding of all, including the last, the least, the lonely, and the lost. They, and we, are God's people. He loves them, and so may we. "Feed my sheep," were Jesus's words to Peter at dawn in Galilee. "Feed my sheep" also are Jesus's words to us in Advent.





## In the Kitchen, December 16

*Scrambled Eggs with Goat Cheese*

*Turkey Breakfast Sausages*

*Sautéed Sweet Plantains*

*Maple-Cranberry Bread Pudding*

*End the day with a nourishing breakfast. A small amount of creamy, luxurious goat cheese turns simple scrambled eggs into something special. Well-spiced ground turkey mixed with apples for moistness makes a healthy sausage accompaniment, as do the sautéed sweet plantains. The plantains will add lots of potassium as well as vitamins A and C to your diet. Be sure to sprinkle the plantains with a bit of cinnamon. The plantains will smell and taste heavenly. The maple-cranberry bread pudding needs to bake for about half an hour, so you may want to put it in the oven first while you start on the rest of your breakfast dinner. The pudding is custardy, mildly sweet, and gets a bit of zing from the tart cranberries. Serve it warm with some non-fat vanilla yogurt and a drizzle of maple syrup if you like.*







## Scrambled Eggs With Goat Cheese – Serves 4

*These dressed up scrambled eggs make a fast, nutritious meal—for breakfast, brunch, or dinner. The green onions add nice color and flavor to the eggs, and the creamy goat cheese gives them a little tang and a different, slightly earthy flavor. If you want to increase the vegetables in your dinner without adding to the clean up time, toss a couple of handfuls of spinach on top of the cooked eggs before sprinkling on the goat cheese. When you cover the pan to soften the goat cheese, the residual heat will wilt the spinach.*

*1 tablespoon of Smart or Earth Balance (or butter)*

*8 eggs*

*4 green onions, chopped*

*1/8 teaspoon of salt*

*1/8 teaspoon of pepper*

*¼ cup of low fat milk*

*¼ - ½ cup of crumbled goat cheese*

*2-3 handfuls of fresh spinach, washed and dried (optional)*



*Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, green onions, salt, pepper, and milk. Add the Smart Balance to the pan and let it melt. Swirl the pan a little to coat it with the Smart Balance. Pour the egg mixture into the pan. Let the eggs cook a little and, when beginning to bubble, gently pull the outer edges to the center of the pan, forming large curds and letting the liquid part run to the outer edges. Continue to cook and stir the eggs gently for a few minutes or until the eggs are barely set. Remove the eggs from the heat, sprinkle them with the spinach, if you like, then the goat cheese. Cover the pan for a couple of minutes before serving to help the spinach and cheese soften.*



## Turkey Breakfast Sausages – Serves 8

*These sausages came about when I couldn't find my usual turkey breakfast sausage links at the local grocery stores. The ground turkey breakfast stuff I did find in plastic rolls was high in fat, salt, and about double the price of regular ground turkey. So, I improvised. The breakfast patties have all the usual breakfast sausage spices, including fennel, which adds a nice sweetness. A chopped apple keeps the lean patties moist. You can make the patties just before you want to serve them, but I've found that the flavor improves if you prepare and refrigerate the sausage mixture the night before you want to cook them.*

*16-20 ounces of lean ground turkey (93 percent lean)*

*1 teaspoon of rubbed or ground sage*

*½ teaspoon of salt*

*¼ teaspoon of pepper*

*½ teaspoon of fennel seed*

*½ teaspoon of dried thyme*

*1/8 teaspoon of garlic powder*

*1/8 teaspoon of ground allspice*

*2 tablespoons of dried onion flakes*

*½ teaspoon of dried parsley flakes*

*1 medium apple, cored and chopped*



*In a large mixing bowl, combine all the ingredients well. Refrigerate the mixture overnight, if possible. When you're ready to cook the sausages, heat a large nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Coat the pan with nonstick cooking spray or mist it with olive oil. Form the sausage mixture into 16 small or 8 large patties and cook them for 4-6 minutes on each side or until cooked through. If you'd prefer, you can place the patties on a baking sheet coated with nonstick cooking spray and bake them in the oven at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes, flipping them over midway through. The sausages will not brown much if you cook them in the oven.*

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## Sautéed Sweet Plantains – Serves 12

*Plantains are starchier than bananas and need to be cooked. For this dish, the skins of the plantains should be black—or nearly so. The fully ripe plantains are sweet, delicious, and loaded with vitamins. Think of them as an alternative to sweet potatoes.*

*5 or 6 medium very ripe plantains, sliced cross-wise into ½-inch pieces*

*3 tablespoons of sugar*

*¼ teaspoon of salt*

*1 tablespoon of butter or Smart Balance*

*1 teaspoon of cinnamon (optional)*

*Combine the plantains, sugar, and salt. Melt the butter or Smart Balance in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the plantains (in batches, if necessary) one layer deep and sauté for 5-6 minutes or until nicely browned. Sprinkle on the cinnamon, if you're using it, before serving the plantains.*







## ~~DRAFT~~ Maple Cranberry Bread Pudding – Serves 4

*If you have left-over bread and cranberries, this is the breakfast dish for you. It's fast to fix and warm and comforting on a cold winter evening or morning. The cranberries are definitely tart, but a little maple syrup sweetens them and adds extra flavor. Serve the pudding drizzled with additional syrup, if you like, and dollops of fat-free or low-fat vanilla yogurt.*

*3 eggs*

*1¾ cups of low fat milk*

*1 teaspoon of vanilla extract*

*¼ teaspoon of salt*

*¼ cup of maple syrup*

*2 cups of whole grain bread, crumbled (about 6 slices, depending on the size)*

*1 cup of cranberries, washed and picked over*

*¼ cup of chopped walnuts (optional)*

*Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and coat a 1½ - 2-quart baking dish (or 8 x 11-inch pan) with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, vanilla extract, salt, and maple syrup well. Stir in the bread and cranberries and pour the mixture into the prepared dish, smoothing it out evenly. Sprinkle the top with the walnuts, if you're using them. Bake the pudding for 25-30 minutes or until the center is set and the top is brownish. Let the pudding stand for about 5 minutes before serving it.*





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## December 17

*...the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."*

*Numbers 11: 4-6*

Not long after the venture with Moses across the Red Sea bed and into the vast and arid desert, the Hebrew people were remembering days then past. Keeness of memory and the specter of hunger were fresh with them. The Hebrew people's lament: In Egypt we had melons and cucumbers to eat"—and fish, leeks, onions, and garlic. Most likely the Hebrews had other foods as well. They may have been generations into captivity and burdened by slavery, but starvation was not an immediate concern.

Draw nigh, draw nigh Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear;  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall be born for thee, O Israel!  
(J.M. Neal, 1857)

