

WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

Makes 2 loaves

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from one of my own recipes.

Whole wheat flour contains the bran and germ that are lost when milling white flour. It is therefore more nutritious with minerals, vitamins, and fiber. The bread, however, can be more dense and heavy. For a lighter loaf I use half white flour and add vital wheat gluten to improve elasticity. Kneading the dough longer builds up the glutens. Potato water (from boiling potatoes) adds starch to reduce the bread's tendency to crumble. The result is a nutritious, delicious, and tender whole wheat bread.



Ingredients:

- 1 pound (454g) (scant 3¼ cups) whole wheat flour
- 1 pound (454g) (scant 3¼ cups) all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons vital wheat gluten (available in many grocery stores)
- 1 tablespoon instant or active dry yeast
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 bottle (12 fluid ounces/355 ml) beer or 1½ cups (355ml) water
- 1 cup (237ml) potato water*, or water
- ¼ cup (60ml) water, plus possibly 2 or 3 tablespoons more
- 1 tablespoon salt (2 teaspoons if using whole butter)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter (or use whole butter and reduce the salt above), at room temperature.

Directions:

Combine the two flours with the vital wheat gluten and mix well.

Combine the liquids and warm to about 110°F (43°C).

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the liquid with the yeast and sugar. Add about half the flour and mix well to form a sponge. Let sit for 10 minutes to activate the yeast.

Attach the bowl to the stand mixer and attach the dough hook. With the machine running on low (#2 on my mixer), add the salt and the remaining flour, a scoop at a time, combining the mixture before adding more flour. Knead the dough in the machine for 12 minutes. It should be moist and slightly sticky. A tablespoon or two of water can be added if the dough seems too dry.

Cut a deep whole into the dough and add the butter, sealing the dough over it. Knead the butter into the dough. It will break up initially, but continuous kneading will bring it back together. Transfer to a large greased or oiled bowl (or clean the mixer bowl and use it) and cover with plastic. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, more than an hour.

Punch the dough down, deflating it, and divide into two equal portions. Shape into loaves and place in greased loaf pans. Cover with plastic and let rise again, about 45 minutes.

Heat oven to 375°F (191°C) and bake the loaves 35 to 45 minutes.

Transfer the loaves to a cooling rack and let cool thoroughly before slicing.

*Potato water is water saved after boiling potatoes. It contains starch, which is useful for bread making.

The step-by-step photos were removed. See the video for the preparation.