

Buttermilk Soda Bread



This modern recipe is inspired by the early modern belief that dairy produce and grains were good for sleep. Buttermilk is the by-product from churning butter (see our separate recipe for this). Milky drinks were a regular sleep aid in the early modern period together with various crops such as wheat, barley, and oats. These ingredients are also known to be good for sleep today as they contain tryptophan, an amino acid that helps produce the sleep hormone melatonin. As overly processed bread may have less sleepy benefits, we have added wholemeal flour to the plain white flour in this quick and easy soda bread recipe.

Ingredients:

170g plain flour
170g wholemeal self-raising flour
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp salt
½ pint of buttermilk

Mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda, and salt in a large bowl then make a well in the centre. Add the buttermilk into the well then quickly stir into the flour to make the dough.

Flour your clean workspace and then knead the dough for roughly 30 seconds only. Soda bread doesn't like being handled too much.

Shape your dough into a nice round loaf shape, flour a baking tray, and put your dough on the tray. Cut the dough on top in a cross shape and bake for 30 mins in a pre-heated oven at 200C or Gas Mark 6. Tap the base of the loaf and if it sounds hollow, it's done. If not, bake for a little longer.

