



Seeded Rye Bread

Jennifer could not resist sharing her favorite bread recipe with us. Also known as New York Rye or Jewish Rye, the scent is so overwhelmingly mouthwatering that many eager noses have been burned just to get a whiff.

(Also known as New York Rye and Jewish Rye)

Yields 2 large loaves

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups rye bread pieces (see Preparation)
3 cups Rye Sour (see below)
1 package dry yeast
1 Tbsp salt
2 Tbsp caraway seeds
4 cups bread or unbleached flour, approx.
1 egg, beaten, mixed with 1 Tbsp water

Preparation:

Soak in water half a dozen crusty slices of a previously baked loaf of rye (store-bought is fine). Squeeze dry. Set aside 1 ½ cups for this recipe; the balance can be refrigerated or frozen for later use.

Using the plastic dough blade, place the bread pieces and the sour in your food processor work bowl. Pulse several times to make certain the two are thoroughly blended. Add the yeast, salt, and 1 Tbsp caraway seeds. Pulse, and leave for a minute or two for the yeast particles to dissolve.

Add the flour, ½ cup at a time (pulse quickly after each addition), until the batter becomes solid and is carried around the bowl by the force of the blade.

Keep the machine running and knead for 45 seconds. If the dough is too dense for your machine (this is likely for smaller mixers), turn it out onto a floured surface and proceed by hand.

Place the dough in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and leave at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Punch down the dough and turn out onto a floured work surface. Divide into 2 pieces and form either round loaves or long plump ones. Place the loaves on a baking sheet that has been dusted with cornmeal.

Cover the loaves with wax paper and put aside to rise for 30 minutes to proof three-quarters in volume (not the usual full proof of double in volume).

Preheat the oven to 450° (if using a convection oven, 400°) 20 minutes before baking, and prepare 1 cup hot water to pour into a pan on the bottom shelf a few minutes before putting in the loaves. This will create the steam needed for a beautiful, crisp crust.

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Cut the top of the loaves into a pattern with a razor blade or sharp knife. Try a tic-tac-toe design or diagonal cut across the top. Brush with the egg-water mixture. Sprinkle with remaining caraway seeds.

Place in the hot oven. Midway through baking, turn the loaves around so they brown evenly. The loaves will bake to a deep brown in about 40 minutes. Turn one loaf over and tap the bottom crust to determine if it is done. If it is not hard and crusty, return to the oven for 5 to 10 minutes.

Place on a metal rack to cool.

[Ed: Try not to burn your nose as you inhale the luscious scent.]

Rye Sour

(Yields 8 cups)

Ingredients:

2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
4 cups rye flour, stone-ground preferred
3 1/2 cups hot water (120° -130° degrees)
2 packages dry yeast
1 Tbsp caraway seeds
Length of cheesecloth

Preparation:

Tie the onion pieces into a bag made with the cheesecloth. Put aside.

In a large bowl measure the rye flour and water. Stir to mix. Sprinkle on the yeast and work it into the rye mixture. Add the caraway seeds.

When the mixture is thoroughly blended, push the onions down into the center of the sour. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and put aside overnight (no more than 24 hours). Do not refrigerate.

Lift out the onions, scrape the sour off the cloth, and discard the onions.

The sour can now be used as part of the sponge in all sour rye breads, or refrigerated for later use. (May be kept alive in the refrigerator for several weeks with occasional stirring and feeding.)

Recipes adapted from Bernard Clayton's New Complete Book of Breads. Copyright © 1995 Bernard Clayton, Jr. Tested for The Gilded Fork™ by Donna Marie Zotter.

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