

This is a great way to use up kefir which is a bit sour and it has literally the same benefits as sourdough, in fact it may have more since kefir is the most probiotic food on the planet and this is a long ferment time so there will be lots of magical microbial activity going on. Kefir bread has to be the easiest fermented bread you can make! If you make kefir regularly then you can make this bread, all you need is a cup of well fermented kefir.

I generally use a mix of organic wholemeal spelt & strong white bread flour, 2 tablespoons ground flaxseeds and a handful of seeds but you can use any strong bread flour. I just like to get my diversity points in!

I have made this with both dairy and soya homemade kefir and it always turns out really well, beautifully risen with a lovely soft crumb and a nice sour tang, almost like sourdough. It does need a relatively long ferment time, around 24 hours at room temperature, followed by another couple of hours in the tin or an overnight chill in the fridge. So not the kind of bread you can rustle up quickly! But in my opinion the best things are worth waiting for, and this bread really couldn't be simpler to make, and the wait is totally worth it!

The texture is lovely and soft and it keeps really well too. You can also use gluten free flour making this an excellent gf choice. It makes great toast and freezes well too!

Shop bought kefir does not work! I bought a bottle of plain kefir to try, the dough was not active, resulting in a flat, dense bread with a horrible gummy crumb!

There is no comparison between shop bought and home made and this proves it! Home made kefir can have upwards of 40 live probiotic strains of bacteria and yeast, compared to a maximum of 15 in a shop bought one! There are still benefits to drinking shop bought kefir but don't waste your money trying to make bread with it!

Here is my recipe!

Ingredients

- 4 cups strong bread flour
- 1 cup plain kefir
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tablespoons ground flaxseeds (optional)
- Handful of seeds for the top

Method

1. Simply mix everything in a large mixing bowl, cover and leave at room temperature for 24 hours.
2. Transfer to a well oiled 2lb loaf tin, sprinkle the top with mixed seeds, recover & leave either at room temperature for another couple of hours or transfer it to the fridge overnight. The dough should be almost at the top of the tin.

3. Remove covering and bake in a preheated oven at 200C/180C Fan Oven/394F for 40 to 45 mins.
4. It should sound hollow when you tap the bottom.
5. Allow the bread to cool before you slice it.
6. Enjoy!

Fruit & Nut Festive Version

Made a wee festive version of my Kefir Bread! I literally can't get enough of it! It's so delicious with so much flavour and the nuts add a lovely crunch too!

This bread freezes really well, sliced, then toasted for a perfectly healthy wee snack! It incorporates all the festive flavours of orange, ginger, cranberries and cinnamon! If you don't have stem ginger then you can just leave it out! This literally is the easiest fermented bread you will ever make!!

So here is my recipe!

Ingredients

- 4 cups strong bread flour
- 2 tablespoons ground flaxseeds (optional)
- 1 cup of kefir (homemade dairy or non dairy)
- 1 cup of warm water
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup or stem ginger syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 50g dried cranberries
- 50g walnuts
- 2 tablespoons stem ginger, chopped (optional)
- zest of an orange

Method

1. Simply mix all the ingredients in a big mixing bowl, using a wooden spoon.
2. Cover with a tea towel or shower cap.
3. Leave at room temperature for 24 hours
4. Transfer to a lightly oiled 2 lb loaf tin
5. Recover and leave a further few hours.
6. Bake in a preheated oven at 180C Fan Oven/ 200C standard oven for 45 to 50 minutes.
7. The loaf should sound hollow when tapped on the bottom, if not then just return to the oven without the tin for a further 10 minutes or so.
8. Allow to cool then slice and enjoy with some organic butter or vegan butter.