

RECIPES for Days of Unleavened Bread

Be prepared for the spring festival season.

by Ambassador College Editorial Department

HERE we publish a *series* of recipes for the Days of Unleavened Bread. Many of you who live in or near a large town will probably find no problem in purchasing unleavened bread. But it is always wise to have handy certain recipes you can immediately turn to when you want to bake your own bread, cakes and biscuits. These recipes will help all the members of the family to enjoy the Festival of Unleavened Bread more.

What is leaven?

Leaven is a raising agent. Anything that causes *flour* or cereal foods to rise and become light and puffed up is leaven.

Baker's yeast, dried baker's yeast, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda are the usual examples.

Since we are learning a principle by eating unleavened bread at this time we should not try to get around the spiritual meaning and use other methods of incorporating gas or air into our floury foods. For example: Stiffly beaten egg whites will puff up cakes. Yorkshire puddings and choux pastry are raised by the steam produced in the mixture, and puff and flaky pastries rise by the expansion of the air trapped in the layers.

All these things are not leavened in the ordinary sense, but are best avoided in our own baking to remind us of the principle.

Some Problems Answered

1. Products containing yeast extract or brewer's yeast are not leavened. For example: yeast tablets, Marmite, Barmene, Ovaltine or soup powders. This form of yeast is 'dead' and cannot produce gas to raise anything.
2. Horlicks contains bicarbonate of soda and should *not* be used.

3. We must throw away yeast that is in the *process* of making drinks like ginger beer, but once the process is finished, the beer is bubbly but does not contain a leavening agent.

4. Whipped cream may be used since cream is not a flour or cereal.

5. Pasta and rice swell up with water and are not puffed up with air.

6. Most dog biscuits and animal foods are not leavened, but some fancy, crunchy pet foods may contain a leavening agent.

7. Some baby foods such as rusks contain leaven.

8. When checking through the pantry and stores, be careful to remove all packet foods containing leaven, tinned puddings, bought cakes, biscuits and cake mixes, self-raising flour, brown bread-crumbs and packet stuffings. Check the freezer too for items such as icecream cake and crumbed fish fingers.

9. Cream of Tartar on its own is *not* a leavening agent.

Ryvita, Jewish Matzos crackers, Mapleton's "Country Life" biscuits and Peak Frean's "Vita Weat" are the best bought unleavened bread. It is not necessary to buy great variety or large quantities for just seven days as many good things can be baked at home. (Some Ryvita sold in Ireland is leavened.)

Try your favourite home-made biscuit recipes and just miss out the leavening agent.

Short pastry, crumbles, pancakes, matzo meal dumplings and a variety of biscuits are but a few of the many dishes to use during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

SOME SIMPLE RECIPES FOR UNLEAVENED BREAD

Plain Thin Bread

- ½ lb. plain wholemeal flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons oil *3 tbsp*
- 1 egg yolk (optional) *whole egg*
- Water

Method:

1. Mix flour and salt.
2. Mix egg yolk and oil and add to flour with sufficient water to form a stiff dough when well mixed. Do not knead too

much — just enough to make dough smooth or the biscuits will be tough.

3. Divide the dough into 3 or 4 portions and roll out thinly on a floured board. *Fork to score it!*

4. Bake on a lightly oiled baking sheet in a hot oven 400°F. or Reg. 6 till pale brown and crisp. *8/10 mins*

5. Break into suitable pieces.

Wholewheat Crisps

- 4 oz. butter
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons double cream
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 8 oz. wholewheat flour (approx.)

Method:

1. Cream butter, salt and oil together till rather soft.
2. Add cream and mix in.
3. Using a fork or wooden spoon stir in flour until a smooth firm ball is formed which leaves the sides of the bowl.
4. Place roundish pieces of the mixture (about size of a walnut) onto a baking sheet (no greasing necessary) and press fairly thin with a wet fork.
5. Bake at 350°F. or Reg. 5 till just brown round edges. Cool immediately on a wire rack.

Variation — Wholewheat Cheese Crispies

Add 1½ oz. finely grated cheddar cheese and 1 tablespoon milk to the butter and oil and cream mixture, plus a pinch of cayenne pepper, pinch dry mustard and a shake of white pepper. Proceed as before.

As the mixture takes in the flour it may be easier to mix and knead gently with the fingers.

Plain Oatmeal Biscuits

- 4 oz. oatmeal
- 3-4 oz. plain flour
- 3-4 oz. butter/oil/vegetable margarine
- ½ level teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar (more if sweeter biscuit is preferred)

Method:

1. Rub fat into flour and salt.
2. Add oatmeal and sugar.
3. Mix to a stiff paste with the beaten egg and water (use knife).
4. Knead till smooth.
5. Roll out on a floured board to ¼" thickness. Prick well.
6. Cut into 1½" - 2" rounds or fingers 1" - 2½".
7. Bake on a lightly oiled tin at 350° F. or Reg. 4 for 15-20 mins.
8. Cool and store in an airtight tin.

Plain Biscuits With Variations

- ½ lb. plain flour
- Pinch salt
- 5 oz. butter or soft vegetable margarine
- 4 oz. caster sugar or moist soft brown sugar
- Beaten egg to mix.

Method:

1. Mix flour and salt and rub in the butter till finely crumbed.
2. Add sugar and mix to a stiff dough with beaten egg.
3. Turn onto a floured board and knead till smooth then follow 4 or 4a.
4. Roll into a round sausage 2" in diameter. Roll in greased greaseproof and chill in the refrigerator till firm. Cut slices 1/6" wide with a hot knife and place on a greased baking sheet OR
 - 4a. Put dough into a polythene bag and chill for 30 mins. Roll out fairly thinly and cut into about 30 2"-biscuits. Place on greased baking sheets and prick with a fork.
5. Bake in the centre of a moderate oven for 15 - 20 mins. (or until pale golden). Cool and store in an airtight tin.

Variations*Almond Biscuits*

Follow basic biscuit recipe and add 2 oz. ground almonds with the sugar and ½ teaspoon almond essence with the egg.

Walnut Biscuits

Add 1½ oz. finely chopped walnuts with the sugar and ½ teaspoon vanilla essence with the egg.

Lemon or Orange Biscuits

Add 1 level teaspoon finely grated lemon or orange peel with the sugar.

Currant Biscuits

Add 2 oz. currants with the sugar.

Spice or Cinnamon Biscuits

Sift 1½ level teaspoons of mixed spice or cinnamon with the flour.

Coconut Biscuits

Add 2 oz. desiccated coconut with the sugar and ½ teaspoon vanilla essence with the egg.

Chocolate Flake Biscuits

Add 2 oz. grated plain chocolate with the sugar.

Cream or Jam Sandwich Biscuits

Bake biscuits and then sandwich together with jam or butter cream and dredge with icing sugar.

Rich Shortbread

- 4 oz. softened butter
- 2 oz. caster sugar
- 5 oz. plain flour (white or 81%)
- 1 oz. semolina or rice flour
- Extra sugar (caster)

Method:

1. Cream together butter and sugar.
2. Using a wooden spoon, work in the flour and semolina or rice flour.
3. Draw mixture together and press into a lightly buttered and floured 7" sandwich tin. Prick well all over and pinch edges or decorate with a fork.
4. Bake in centre of a moderate oven (300° F. or Reg. 4) for about 50 minutes (or until pale straw coloured).
5. Leave in tin five minutes then cut into 8 portions. Dredge with extra caster sugar.
6. Remove from tin when cold and store in an airtight tin. Serve for tea or with fruit salad, fruit fools etc.

Flapjacks

- 4 oz. butter
- 4 oz. golden syrup
- 3 oz. soft brown sugar
- 8 oz. oatmeal

Method:

1. Put butter, syrup and sugar into a saucepan and warm over low heat till melted. Stir in oats and mix well.
2. Spread into buttered swiss-roll tin approximately 8" x 12" and smooth top with a knife.
3. Bake in a moderate oven 350 °F. or Reg. 4 for 30 minutes.
4. Leave in tin 5 minutes then cut into 24 fingers. Cool and store in airtight tin.

Peanut Crisps

(Makes 24 Crisps)

- 2 oz. plain flour
- 2 oz. butter
- 1 oz. caster sugar
- 2 oz. soft brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2 oz. peanut butter
- 1 standard egg

Method:

1. Cream together butter, sugars, vanilla and peanut butter until quite soft.
2. Beat in the egg.
3. Stir in flour.
4. Drop teaspoons of mixture onto ungreased baking sheets.
5. Bake in centre of a moderate oven (350 °F. or Reg. 4) for 10-12 mins.
6. Cool on a wire rack. Store when cold.

Date Crunch

Serve cold for tea or hot as a dessert with custard or cream.
Date crunch is also good with milk puddings

- 4 oz. dates
- ¼ pint water
- 4 oz. rolled oats
- 1½ oz. plain flour
- 3 oz. butter (or oil and butter)
- 1½ oz. brown moist sugar

Method:

1. Chop the dates and stew in the water till soft.
2. Allow mixture to cool.
3. Rub butter (and oil) into oats and flour.
4. Add sugar and mix well.
5. Press half the oat mixture firmly into a greased sandwich tin.
6. Spread date mixture over this and cover with remaining half of oat mixture.
7. Smooth over and press lightly and evenly.
8. Bake at 375 °F. or Reg. 5 for about 40 mins. Serve hot or cold.

Nutty Oat Crispies

- 4 oz. oil
- 4 oz. butter
- 6 oz. brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon syrup or honey
- 2 tablespoons boiling water
- ½ lb. plain flour
- 4 oz. oats
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 tablespoon desiccated coconut (optnl.)
- 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts (optnl.)

Method:

1. Cream together oil, butter, sugar and vanilla essence.
2. Add syrup or honey and water.
3. Mix in flour, oats and nuts to form a soft consistency which will form balls about the size of walnuts. (If too soft add a little more oats.)
4. Place balls of mixture on a greased sheet and press a little. Bake for 10-15 minutes at 350 °F. or Reg. 5.

Passover Dumplings

(Jewish Knaidlach)

- 2 eggs
- 4 tablespoons melted chicken or turkey fat or oil
- 4 tablespoons water
- 1 level teaspoon salt
- 5 oz. matzo meal (fine or medium)

Method:

1. Beat together the eggs, fat, water and salt.
2. Stir in matzo meal to make a stiff mixture.
3. Chill one hour.
4. Form into balls and cook for 30 minutes in boiling, salted water, hot soup or stew.

Potato-Matzo Crispcakes

(Jewish Mandlen)

To serve 6-8 as an accompaniment to soups or stews

- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2½ oz. fine or medium matzo meal
- 1 oz. potato flour or dried instant potato
- Oil for deep frying (or pan fry with up to ½" oil)

Method:

1. Beat eggs and salt.
2. Stir in meal and potato flour.
3. Drop the mixture by teaspoons into hot oil. Fry till brown on both sides.

These can be made ahead of time and crisped in a hot oven before serving.

Cheese Pastry

Use for straws, biscuits or savoury flan cases

- 4 oz. plain flour (81% extraction or white)
- ¼ level teaspoon dry mustard
- ¼ level teaspoon salt
- Small pinch cayenne pepper

- 2½ oz. butter
- 2 oz. very finely-grated Cheddar cheese — dry and stale if possible
- Yolk of 1 standard egg
- 2-3 teaspoons cold water

Method:

1. Sift together flour, mustard, salt and pepper into a bowl.
2. Cut butter into flour then rub in till finely crumbed.
3. Add cheese and mix lightly.
4. Mix to a very stiff dough with the egg yolk and water using a round-ended knife.
5. Knead lightly and quickly then roll out to ¼" thick.
6. Cut into rounds, fingers or straws and rings. Bake in hot oven for ten minutes Reg. 6 or 400°F.

Digestive Biscuits

- 7 oz. wholemeal flour
- 1 oz. oatmeal
- ½ level teaspoon salt
- 2 oz. brown sugar
- 3 oz. butter or oil
- 6 tablespoons milk or water

Method:

1. Mix flour, salt and oatmeal in bowl.
2. Rub in butter or oil finely.
3. Add sugar.
4. Mix to a stiff paste with milk (use knife).
5. Turn onto floured board and knead well.
6. Roll out thinly.
7. Cut into about 24 rounds with 2½" cutter or cut into squares.
8. Bake in centre of oven at 375°F. or Reg. 5 for 15-20 mins.
9. Cool on a wire rack and store in an airtight tin.

Potato Hotcakes

(Jewish Latkes)

Serve for breakfast or supper. Serves 8 persons

- 3 eggs
- 1 pint grated potatoes (drained)
- 4 tablespoons grated or very finely chopped onion (optional)

- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons matzo meal or wholemeal flour
- Oil and butter mixed for frying.

Method:

1. Grate peeled potatoes and fill a measuring jug. Drain liquid.
2. Beat eggs and add potato, onion, salt, pepper and meal or flour.
3. Heat some of the oil and butter in a pan and drop in the mixture by the tablespoonful.
4. Fry till browned on both sides. Keep pancakes hot and serve with fried eggs, hot saltbeef etc.

Baked Cheese Cake

CRUST (for 12 servings)

- 6 oz. wholewheat flour
- 2 oz. moist brown sugar
- 3 oz. melted butter
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (optional)

1. Mix flour, sugar and cinnamon together and mix in the melted butter.
2. Press the mixture into an earthenware or oven glass dish lined with foil.
3. Bake in a moderately hot oven till just coloured — 10 minutes. (This thin crust easily overbakes.)

FILLING

- 9 oz. or three pkts. Philadelphia Cream Cheese
- 8 oz. cottage cheese — sieved
- 1 teaspoon true vanilla essence
- 6 oz. caster sugar
- 4 eggs

1. Mash together the cheeses, sugar and vanilla with a wooden spoon (or in a mixer).
2. Add the eggs one at a time and blend well.
3. Pour into the prepared crust.
4. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 325 °F. or Reg. 3 for 25-30 mins. or until just firm.

TOPPING (optional)

- ½ pint sour cream
- 1½ tablespoons caster sugar
- A few drops vanilla essence or lemon juice

Stir these ingredients until smooth and then pour onto the cheesecake when cooled a little. Return to the oven at Reg. 5 or 6 (400 °F.) for 5 or 6 minutes for the topping to set.

Cool and then chill well before serving. Will keep for 3 to 4 days in a refrigerator. The cheesecake improves with keeping.

(For large quantities of cheesecake it is easy to allow 3 eggs and 4 oz. caster sugar to every pound of mixed cream and cottage cheeses. Flavour with vanilla and/or grated lemon rind and lemon juice.)

Rich Fruit Cake

- ½ lb. butter or soft veg. margarine.
- ½ lb. moist dark sugar
- 4 eggs
- ½ lb. 81% plain flour (or wholemeal)
- 1 tablespoon black treacle
- ½ teaspoon each of cinnamon, nutmeg and mixed spice
- 1 grated rind of lemon/orange
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- ½ teaspoon almond essence
- ¾ lb. raisins (dark stoneless) can include some stoned raisins
- ¾ lb. sultanas
- ½ lb. currants
- 3-4 oz. finely chopped mixed peel
- 4 oz. chopped walnuts and almonds
- (Make total of fruit to 2-2½ lbs.)

Method:

1. Line a 7" or 8" square tin or a 9" round tin with greaseproof paper.
2. Wash fruit carefully — leave moist but not wet.
3. Cream butter and sugar till fairly light in texture.
4. Beat in whole eggs one at a time.
5. Add essences and treacle.

Recipes for Unleavened Bread

6. Add flour and spices and lemon rind. Stir very evenly — do *not* beat.
7. Add all fruit and mix well — gently!
8. Add a tablespoon of warm water if texture is too stiff — should be stiff dropping consistency.
9. Spoon into lined tin and level off.
10. Bake in middle of oven — Reg. 3 (300°F.) for ½ hr., then 275°F. for the rest of the time — 3½-4 hours. This cake must be baked slowly.
11. Cool in tin.
12. Remove paper, pierce with a fine skewer, pour over 1-2 gills of rum or brandy. Wrap in foil. Store in a cool dry place for 6 weeks at least.

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