

Celeste's Sunflower-Oatmeal Bread

Makes 3 small round loaves

- 1 1/4 cups warm water (105° to 115°F)
- 1 tablespoon (1 package) active dry yeast
- Pinch of sugar
- 1 1/4 cups warm buttermilk (105° to 115°F)
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 3/4 cups raw sunflower seeds
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 large egg, at room temperature, lightly beaten
- 4 to 5 cups unbleached all-purpose flour or bread flour
- Rich Egg Glaze (page 52)
- Rollled oats, for sprinkling

Celeste was my baking assistant for years. She is a sculptor and has the temperament of a true artist, and makes outstanding bread. She was inspired to make this bread one day. I loved the subtle blend of grains and wrote the ingredients down.

1. Combine the warm water, yeast, and sugar in a small bowl. Stir to dissolve and let stand at room temperature until foamy, about 10 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, combine the buttermilk, honey, molasses, and butter.
3. In a large bowl using a whisk or in the work bowl of a heavy-duty electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine whole-wheat flour, oats, sunflower seeds, and salt. Add the buttermilk mixture, yeast, and egg. Beat hard for about 3 minutes. Add the flour, 1/2 cup at a time, until a soft dough that just clears the sides of the bowl is formed.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for about 5 minutes, dusting with flour only 1 tablespoon at a time as needed to prevent sticking. The dough will be smooth and springy.
If kneading by machine, switch from the paddle to the dough hook and knead for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and springy and springs back when pressed. If desired, transfer the dough to a floured surface and knead briefly by hand.
5. Place the dough in a greased bowl. Turn once to grease the top and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise at room temperature until doubled in bulk, about 1 1/2 hours.
6. Gently deflate the dough. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Grease or parchment-line a baking sheet and sprinkle with oats. Divide the dough into 3 equal portions. Shape the portions into round loaves. Place on the baking sheet. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rise until doubled in bulk, for about 30 minutes. Brush with the Rich Egg Glaze and sprinkle with oats.
7. Twenty minutes before baking, preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the baking sheet on a rack in the center of the oven and bake for 40 minutes or until brown and loaves sound hollow when tapped with your finger. Transfer the loaves immediately to a cooling rack. Cool completely before slicing.