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by Liz Robb

Banana and cinnamon loaf



Ingredients

225g self raising flour
1 level teaspoon of baking powder
Pinch of salt
Cinnamon
150-175g golden caster sugar
85g butter
2 large eggs
3 medium ripe bananas, about 275g peeled weight
1 teaspoon of light brown sugar

Preparation

- 1 1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees, 160 degrees fan oven. Lightly grease and line a loaf tin with baking parchment.
- 2 2. Sift the flour into a bowl and combine with the baking powder, salt and a heaped teaspoonful of cinnamon.
- 3 3. Into a separate large bowl, pour the caster sugar. Add the softened butter, cut into small pieces, and then cream them together until they are well combined.
- 4 4. Break the eggs into a small bowl and whisk. Add a little of the beaten egg into the sugar and butter mixture and beat together. Then add some of the flour mixture and beat that in. Repeat this process until the egg and the flour mixture are thoroughly combined with the butter and sugar. If the mixture becomes too stiff, just add a teaspoon of milk to loosen it a little.
- 5 5. Peel and chop the bananas into very small pieces. Add the pieces to the mixture and stir until they are mixed in well.
- 6 6. Tip the loaf mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the top to level it out.
- 7 7. Combine the brown sugar with a teaspoon of cinnamon, then sprinkle it over the top of the loaf.
- 8 8. Bake in the preheated oven for 50-60 minutes, testing with a skewer to see if it is cooked through and making sure the top is firm to the touch. Leave to cool on a cooling rack for 10-15 minutes.
- 9 Variations:
- 10 There are many versions of recipes for banana loaf, so here are some ideas if you'd like to ring the changes. Or experiment and try out your own ideas!
- 11 - You can substitute the self raising flour for plain flour, and add another teaspoon of baking powder. Or try using wholemeal flour rather than white.

- 12 - Add a teaspoon of nutmeg to the cinnamon in the cake, or use a few drops of vanilla essence instead.
- 13 - Add your favourite dried fruit to the banana or, for a really moist cake, use 100g of desiccated coconut.
- 14 - Drizzle icing onto the top of the cake, and perhaps decorate it with banana chips.
- 15 - If you don't mind a bit of extra sugar, a handful of chocolate chips added with the chopped banana is really yummy!

Cooks Note

This delicious banana loaf is surprisingly light and moist, and the sweetness of the bananas means that the amount of sugar used is not too high compared to many other cakes. And it's so easy to make!

Bananas are a favourite fruit for all age groups, so convenient and full of goodness. They are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals, especially high in potassium which can contribute towards maintaining a healthy heart and lower blood pressure. And the good news is that, although they are naturally sweet tasting, they have a low GI value too!

I often end up with overripe bananas left in the fruit bowl at the end of the week; this is the perfect recipe to use them up.
