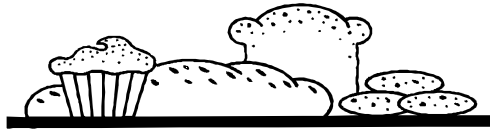


Herbal Breads



One of the first foods I turn to when the weather starts to cool is a slice of bread with butter on it. Add herbs to the mix and eating is as good as it gets!

Try one of the following breads as the ultimate in comfort food during the fall and winter months.

If you're wintering over scented geraniums indoors, they will enhance store-bought biscuit dough used in the following recipe. Try them with some rose jelly or another herbal jelly that will compliment the leaves.

Quick Scented Geranium Biscuits

12 to 14 scented geranium leaves (rose varieties, lemon varieties or the fruit or spice varieties)

1/4 cup butter or margarine

1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed

1 tube refrigerated buttermilk biscuits (8 to 10 per tube)

Wash geranium leaves and pat dry. Cut out the heavy center vein of each leaf and discard. Finely chop the tender portions of the leaves. Place butter or margarine in a 9-inch cake pan or pie plate. Place in oven to melt butter, but don't let it burn. Add brown sugar to pan and stir to combine with melted butter. Return pan to oven to melt sugar and allow mixture to bubble. Again, watch closely so it doesn't burn.

Remove pan from oven and sprinkle the chopped geranium leaves over the butter-sugar mixture. Separate biscuits and place on top of chopped geranium leaves. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes, or until lightly browned. Remove pan from oven and immediately invert biscuits onto serving platter. Serve warm. *(From The Best of Thymes by Marge Clark)*



Herb-Ricotta Tomato Quick Bread

2 cups unbleached or all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 cup tomato juice
1 cup low-fat or nonfat ricotta cheese
2 large eggs, or 1/2 cup fat-free egg substitute
1/2 cup oil-marinated sun-dried tomatoes, drained and minced
1/4 cup canola oil
1/4 cup minced fresh herbs, such as basil, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, oregano, chives, or lovage (or 2 tablespoons dried). Note: it's best to select 3 to 4 herbs.

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Coat a 9 by 5-inch or 8 by 4-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray and lightly dust with flour.

Sift flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and pepper into a large bowl.

In a medium bowl, combine tomato juice, cheese, eggs or egg substitute, tomatoes, oil, and herbs; mix thoroughly. Add liquid mixture to flour mixture, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack, then remove from the pan. Yield: 1 loaf. Serve with salads, egg dishes such as quiche, fish, or use as a sandwich bread. (*From: The Herbal Palate Cookbook by Maggie Oster and Sal Gilbertie*).

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