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Oatmeal Protein Bread

Makes 2 large loaves

(12 slices per loaf; Per slice: 260 calories, 8g protein, 43g carbs, 5g fiber, 6g fat)

Ingredients:

1 cup rolled oats
1/4 cup quinoa
1/4 cup chia seeds
2 cups water (for cooking the grains)
1-1/2 tablespoons (2 pkgs) active dry yeast
2 cups warm water (110-115°F)
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter
3/4 cup molasses, light
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup flax meal
1/2 cup wheat germ
3 cups whole wheat flour
4-5 cups bread flour
Butter, for brushing tops of baked loaves
To get the crust soft, brush tops with butter

Directions:

1. **PRECOOK** the grains in a medium saucepan by measuring 2 cups of water, adding the rolled oats and quinoa. Bring to a boil, allow to cook over heat for 1-2 minutes, then turn off the heat, **STIR** in the chia seeds. **COVER** and let set for 20 minutes or until the grains are tender. Allow to cool.
2. **ADD** another 2 cups of warm water (110-115°F) to the bowl of a stand mixer, or a large mixing bowl. **SWIRL** the water with a spoon, **SPRINKLE** in the yeast on the water's surface while it's still moving. **ALLOW** the yeast to hydrate and bloom by leaving it undisturbed in the bowl for 5-10 minutes.
3. **MEASURE** the butter, molasses, and salt into the yeast mixture. **ALLOW** the butter to soften and melt. (Cutting the butter into small cubes will facilitate quicker melting.)
4. **MIX** the flax meal, wheat germ, and the whole wheat flour together in a small separate bowl until distributed evenly. **ADD** to the butter-yeast mixture in two batches stirring well after each addition. (Use your stand mixer's paddle blade for this step, or if mixing by hand, a wooden spoon and a strong arm.)
5. **ADD** the cooled, cooked grains to the developing bread dough. **ENSURE** that the cooked grains have cooled to a warm temperature and are no longer hot so that the yeast stays active. (To speed up the cooling, spread the cooked grains on a tray or plate; the temperature should be around 110-115°F). **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.**



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6. ADD four cups of the bread flour a cup at a time reserving 1 cup for the kneading process. STIR after each addition. SWITCH to the dough hook after the addition of the second cup of bread flour, or when the dough becomes thick.
7. CONTINUE mixing the dough until a dough ball forms and elasticity develops. The dough maybe fairly sticky still at this point.
8. DUST a kneading surface lightly with flour. TURN the dough out onto the surface. GATHER the dough and begin to KNEAD by using the palm of your hand to push the dough away. FOLD the dough over, TURN a quarter turn, PUSH away, FOLD, and TURN, etc. KNEAD the dough for 5-7 minutes. CONTINUE dusting the surface and hands with flour to keep the dough from sticking. The dough's character will change during the process from a blob to a nice, elastic dough ball.
9. PLACE the kneaded dough into a large, oiled mixing bowl for the first rising. COVER the bowl with a towel or plastic wrap to minimize any drafts and place in a warm corner of the kitchen. ALLOW the bread to rise until doubled – about 1 to 1-1/2 hours depending on conditions. (If desired, place the dough in the refrigerator overnight for a “slow-rise” process.)
10. PREPARE two 9-inch loaf pans by buttering the sides and bottom well. PUNCH the risen dough down and KNEAD a few times to deflate the dough. DIVIDE in half (or thirds if using smaller 8-inch loaf pans). ALLOW the bread to rise until nicely domed.
11. PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. PLACE the risen loaves into the oven and BAKE for 50-60 minutes. The bread is done when a thump on the top returns a hollow sound. Also, remove the loaf from the pan and check the bottom with a similar thump. Alternatively, check the inner temperature of the loaf by inserting a thermometer into the side of the loaf; it should register 185°F.
12. REMOVE the bread from the oven placing the pans on a cooling rack. COOL in the pans for 5 minutes, but no longer. REMOVE the loaves from the pan and continue cooling on a rack. BRUSH the top of the loaves with a little butter to keep the top crust soft. WRAP well when completely cooled.