



Diane Balda's Amaretto Bread

Ingredients:

2 (¼ ounce) packages of active dry yeast
½ cup honey
½ cup warm water (110°)
⅔ cup milk
⅓ cup of amaretto
6 tablespoons of unsalted butter, melted
2 eggs
1 teaspoon of salt
2 teaspoons of vanilla
Grated zest of one large lemon
4¼ - 4¾ cups of bread or all-purpose flour
1 cup golden raisins
1½ cups of finely chopped toasted almonds
2 tablespoons of sugar

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, dissolve the yeast and a teaspoon of the honey in warm water. Let it stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes. Add the remaining honey, milk, amaretto, butter, eggs, salt, vanilla, lemon zest and 2 to 2½ cups of the flour.

Beat at medium speed with mixer four minutes. Stir in raisins, 1 cup chopped almonds and enough remaining flour to make a stiff batter. Cover with a slightly damp towel and set in a warm place free of drafts. Let rise until doubled in bulk, about 1½ hours.

Generously grease two (8" x 4") loaf pans. Sprinkle bottom and sides of pans with remaining ½ cup of chopped almonds.

Stir down batter. Turn into prepared loaf pans, smoothing tops. Sprinkle one tablespoon of sugar over the top of the batter in each pan. Cover pans with buttered waxed paper or plastic wrap. Let rise until doubled in bulk, about one hour.

Preheat oven to 350°. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until bread sounds hollow when tapped on top. Remove from pans and let the loaves cool on a rack.