

MOLLY WINZENBERG'S BANANA BREAD

I love the way that banana bread smells when it's baking. I love the way that the recipe for it has become so familiar that I *almost* don't have to look at it. I love that the ingredients are always on hand as long as you have those bananas at the ready. Mostly, I love that the girls love to make it with me and I feel so much like a "mom" when we are making it together, and even more like a "mom" when we're sitting together eating warm, steaming, fragrant slices of it with glasses of cold milk in the middle of the afternoon. Molly's Banana Bread is a simple, wonderful version of this classic loaf. It's my go to recipe when I need a bit of comfort. The recipe calls for chocolate chips and crystallized ginger, and it's great with both, one or the other, or without the edition of either which is how I find myself making it most of the time.

Ingredients.

6 tablespoons (3 ounces) unsalted butter, melted and then cooled slightly
2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup sugar
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1/3 cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
2 large eggs
1 1/2 cups mashed banana (from about 3 large ripe bananas)
1/4 cup well-stirred whole-milk plain yogurt (not low or nonfat)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions.

Set a rack in the center of the oven, and preheat to 350F. Grease a standard-sized (about 9 by 5 inches) loaf pan with cooking spray or butter.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt. Add the chocolate chips and crystallized ginger and whisk well to combine. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, lightly beat the eggs with a fork. Add the mashed banana, yogurt, melted butter, and vanilla and stir to mix well. (The same fork works fine for this.)

Pour the banana mixture into the dry ingredients, and stir gently with a rubber spatula, scraping down the sides as needed, until just combined. Do not overmix. The batter will be thick and somewhat lumpy, but there should be no unincorporated flour. Scrape the batter into the loaf pan and smooth the top.

Bake into the loaf is a deep shade of golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, 50 mins to 1 hour. If the loaf seems to be browning too quickly, tent with aluminum foil.

Cool the loaf in the pan on a wire rack for 5 minutes. Then tip out onto the rack, and let it cool completely before slicing - unless you absolutely can't help yourself, in which case, dig in.

RECIPE BY MOLLY WIZENBERG - Transcribed by KACIE MCMACKIN
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