




Peter's
Pan

MILK LOAF

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In many European countries, there are various traditions surrounding the use of bread during the Easter holidays. Traditionally the practice of eating Easter bread or sweetened bread traces origins back to Byzantium and the Orthodox Christian church. The recipe for sweetened bread may date back as far as the Homeric Greek period based on anecdotal evidence from classical texts that mention this type of special food. It is also widely known that sweetened bread desserts similar to panettone were a Roman favorite.

Let me share my favourite milk loaf recipe inherited by my mother. It's so easy to buy one at the closest supermarket but you just can't replicate the smell of the fresh loaf baking in your oven. It fills your house with a warmth and makes my family and friends come in my kitchen for their first slice packed with jam. It's more than just a loaf, it's happiness, it's a connection.

You can slice it up for sandwiches, toasts, dip it in your favorite soup, eat it alongside your breakfast, lunch, or dinner. You can do whatever you want with it and it will be good.

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Ingredients:

■ 500g strong white bread flour / ■ 320g lukewarm full fat milk / ■ 25g softened butter / ■ 25g caster sugar / ■ 10g salt / ■ 7g easy bake dried yeast

Method:

Put both type of flours, the sugar and yeast in a bowl, whisk to combine, add salt whisk again. Mix the egg and milk together, then pour the egg and milk mixture into the bowl.

Use large spoon to mix everything together, and knead briefly to bring all the ingredients together.

Get your mixer with kneading hook attached, knead at low speed for about 3 minutes. Then turn it up a notch and knead for another 7 minutes.

Oil inside of the mixing bowl with about a teaspoon of rapeseed oil and tip the dough back in. Cover with kitchen foil and leave to rest in a warm place until at least double in size. This should take at least one hour.

Tip the dough back onto the lightly floured work surface. Fold it inwards several times to knock out the excess air. When the dough is ready, divide dough into 6 equal pieces. Press the dough and roll into an oval shape.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Let the dough rise in warm place until almost double in size, about 1 hour. Beat egg and water together to make egg wash. Brush loaves with egg wash.

Put the dough in the oven and bake at 200°C for 10 minutes, decrease the temperature to 180°C and bake for 25-30 minutes more, or until the bread is golden brown. Place baking sheet on wire rack. Cool completely before slicing.

