

Really good rye bread

Ingredients

- 600ml/20fl oz strong beer
- 20g/¾oz fresh yeast
- 400g/14oz rye flour
- 2 tbsp yoghurt
- 2 tbsp caraway seeds
- 1 tbsp black treacle
- 1 tbsp salt
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus a little extra for greasing
- 800g/1lb 12oz strong white bread flour
- polenta, for dusting
- 1 free-range egg, beaten



Method

1. First make the starter, warm the beer until it is tepid. Crumble the fresh yeast into the beer and leave for 15 minutes. Stir in the rye flour and the yoghurt. Set aside for 24 hours.
2. It will now be bubbly and smell sour. Mix in the caraway seeds, treacle, salt and olive oil.
3. Now add the white flour to make a dough. Put the dough in a mixer with a dough hook attachment and mix until a firm but elastic dough is achieved. The bread can be kneaded by hand, but it will take a good 10 minutes.
4. Oil a bowl, put the dough in the bowl and cover with a tea towel. Leave for an hour or until doubled in size.
5. Preheat the oven to 210C/190C Fan/Gas 6½. Grease two baking trays and sprinkle with polenta.
6. Half the dough and form into two round loaves. Put the loaves on the prepared baking trays, score the top of the loaves with a knife. Brush with the beaten egg and dust with polenta.
7. Put a little water in the bottom of the oven to make steam, this will give the bread a better crust. Bake for 40-50 minutes or until golden-brown and cooked through.

Notes

In terms of flavour this is on another level. It's slow maturing bread, quite heavy but works a treat. It has a sweet and sour taste but with the caraway, yoghurt and beer it has a really complex flavour.