

Anson Mills

1922-C Gervais Street - Columbia, South Carolina 29201 • tel. (803) 467-4122 • sales@AnsonMills.com

Boston Brown Bread

Time: 15 minutes to put together, one hour to bake

Brown bread descends from thirded breads, rustic farm breads made of coarse grain meals and mineral rich sweeteners—hearty, rural fare that fortified against cold temperatures and calorie depletion, following in the tradition of foods related to work.

This recipe features three exceptional products from Anson Mills: sweet, crunchy coarse cornmeal; fragrant, tweedy graham flour; and a spicy Italian heirloom rye. Most brown bread is sweet and flabby—you can taste the molasses, but none of the grains. Not so here: this bread is remarkably moist, but pleasantly scratchy at the same time, rich, vaguely tart, and absolutely wild with flavor. It is a superb companion to baked beans, of course, but toasted, buttered, and taken with a cup of black tea laced with milk, it makes a simple and profoundly satisfying repast. Cream cheese? Yes! Jelly? Yes! Even peanut butter glides deftly over this bread.

Equipment Mise en Place

For equipment you will need a medium saucepan, a large mixing bowl, a whisk, 2 8-ounce coffee cans (or a 1-pound coffee can), a rubber spatula, a thin metal spatula, a small roasting pan, and a cooling rack.

Ingredients

Vegetable spray

2 cups (1 pint) whole milk

¼ cup packed (2 ounces) dark brown sugar

½ cup (5.7 ounces) light molasses

1 teaspoon fine sea salt

5 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Abruzzi Rye Flour

5 ounces (scant cup) Anson Mills Graham Flour

5 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Coarse White or Yellow Cornmeal

1 tablespoon baking soda

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 cup raisins (6.5 ounces)

Baking Remarks

Since Colonial days brown bread has been steamed in a mold. The two 8-ounce coffee cans we call for here create a pretty presentation for this bread. But coffee cans, like everything else, have expanded of late: nearly all of them lining the shelves are chubby 1-pounders! It is with some embarrassment that we acknowledge ordering 2 8-ounce espresso cans online, then dumping the coffee and keeping the cans!

A single one-pound coffee can with a parchment or foil collar tied around its circumference near the top to accommodate overflow also works perfectly well, as does a 2-quart pudding mold.

Anson Mills

1922-C Gervais Street - Columbia, South Carolina 29201 • tel. (803) 467-4122 • sales@AnsonMills.com

Directions

1. Adjust a rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 350 degrees. Bring a kettle of water to a boil on the stove and remove it from the heat. Spray the inside of 2 8-ounce coffee cans with vegetable spray and set them aside.

2. Heat the milk, brown sugar, molasses, and salt in a medium saucepan over low heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves and the molasses is fully incorporated, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Combine the rye, graham flour, corn meal, baking soda, and powder in a large mixing bowl and whisk well. Pour the milk and molasses mixture into the dry ingredients and stir with a wooden spoon until no lumps remain. Divide the batter evenly between the two coffee cans, cover the cans with pieces of foil sprayed with oil, and place them in a small roasting pan. Return the kettle briefly to the heat and pour water into the roasting pan until it comes about half way up the sides of the cans. Place the pan in the oven. Steam the breads until they have risen and are firm, at least an hour. Remove the roasting pan from the oven and transfer the 2 cans to a cooling rack. Cool the bread in the cans 5 minutes, run a thin metal spatula around the inside of each can to make sure the loaves are loose, then ease each loaf out of the pan. Cool the breads on racks. Wrap tightly with foil when they are completely cool. This bread will keep up to a week at room temperature.

Makes 2 round loaves