

Saltbush Soda Bread

Season: All

Makes: 1 large loaf

Fresh from the garden: muntries (optional), saltbush, sea rosemary (optional)

Recipe source: Adapted from a recipe by Rebecca Sullivan and Damien Coulthard (www.warndu.com)

Soda bread is quick, simple bread that doesn't need yeast to rise. The saltbush adds a delicious aromatic, salty and slightly earthy flavour to this loaf. Muntries are a small, crunchy fruit with a spiced apple flavour and sea rosemary can be found growing along the Australian coast and has a sweeter, lighter flavour than traditional rosemary. If you can't access sea rosemary or muntries, try using other bush tucker ingredients like bush tomato or wattleseed.

Equipment:

metric measuring scales, jug and spoons
tea towel
chopping board
cook's knife
mortar and pestle
large bowl
wooden spoon
fork
baking tray
baking paper
pastry brush



Ingredients:

340 g wholemeal self-raising flour
340 g plain flour, plus extra for kneading
3 tsp ground dried saltbush leaves
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
pinch of salt
580 ml buttermilk*
2/3 cup muntries (optional)
1 tbsp saltbush seeds, for topping
1 sprig sea rosemary, finely chopped (optional)
olive oil, to drizzle

* If buttermilk is unavailable, add 35 ml vinegar or lemon juice to 545 ml milk. Stir and let stand for 5 minutes.

What to do:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Prepare all the ingredients based on the instructions in the ingredients list.
3. Place the wholemeal self-raising flour, plain flour, saltbush, bicarbonate of soda and a pinch of salt into a large bowl and stir to combine.
4. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients and pour in the buttermilk and muntries (if using). Mix quickly with a fork to form a soft dough. Add a little more buttermilk if the dough is too dry or a little more flour if the dough is too sticky.
5. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead briefly (don't over-knead or it will be hard as a rock when baked).
6. Form the dough into a round loaf and use your hands to flatten it slightly.
7. Place the loaf onto a baking tray lined with baking paper. Cut a cross in the top of the loaf and lightly brush with olive oil. Sprinkle with the saltbush seeds and sea rosemary (if using).
8. Bake for about 45 minutes, or until the soda bread loaf is golden brown and sounds hollow when you knock the bottom.