

Cooking Corner



Figs Give Lemony Quick Bread A New Twist

(NAPSA)—Moist and chewy with a natural sweetness, figs join forces with tangy fresh lemons to deliver an exceptionally flavorful quick bread. Easy to make and versatile, quick breads are wonderful throughout the year. Dried California figs, packed with a wide array of essential nutrients, enhance many quick bread recipes. Coarsely chopped or thinly sliced, dark purple Mission and golden Calimyrna figs can be easily substituted for most dried fruits in bread recipes. One-half to one cup of dried figs also makes a great addition to banana bread and other fruit and nut breads.

Lemon Fig Bread with Almond Streusel calls for soaking Mission and Calimyrna figs and incorporating the flavorful liquid into the batter. The result is a fruity, moist, dense bread bursting with sweet fig flavor. Serve slices of Lemon Fig Bread lightly toasted for breakfast or topped with a small scoop of lemon sorbet for dessert.

New to making quick breads? Here are a few tips:

- Read through the recipe before you start and organize your ingredients.
- Combine dry ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Add liquid ingredients to dry ingredients.
- Don't overmix.
- Chop figs with a knife lightly sprayed with nonstick cooking spray to reduce sticking.
- Keep loaves of quick breads in airtight wrap or container; they will keep for several days at room temperature.
- Freeze extra loaves.



Figs add sweet flavor and moist texture to the breads.

Lemon Fig Bread With Almond Streusel

- 1½ cups (9 oz.) Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and chopped
 - 1 cup boiling water
 - 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled or vegetable oil
 - 1 large egg
 - 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - ½ teaspoon baking soda
 - ½ teaspoon salt
 - ½ cup chopped, toasted almonds (optional)
- Almond Streusel recipe follows

Generously coat 9x5-inch loaf pan with nonstick spray. Adjust oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 350°. Place figs in medium bowl.

Cover with boiling water; let sit 30 minutes. Drain figs, reserving liquid. Return liquid to bowl; whisk in melted butter, egg and lemon zest. In separate large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, soda and salt. Mix liquids into dry ingredients, stirring just until blended. Stir in figs and almonds. Scrape batter into prepared pan. Sprinkle streusel evenly over top. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes, until pick inserted in center comes out with just a few crumbs attached. Cool 10 minutes in pan. Run sharp knife around edge of pan and remove bread from pan to wire rack to cool completely. Wrap airtight and store at room temperature or freeze. Makes 1 loaf (16 servings).

Almond Streusel: In small bowl, combine ½ cup chopped almonds, ½ cup all-purpose flour and 3 tablespoons packed brown sugar. Stir in 3 tablespoons melted unsalted butter.