

Tea Breads



In my mother's Betty Crocker cookbook (written in the 1950s) they were generally categorized as Quick Breads and then further categorized as Tea Breads. I still have that cookbook. You can buy a First Edition online for \$147. Mine is not a first edition but it's special to me and I have saved it for decades.

I was raised on banana nut bread. There were always what I called "dead bananas" in the fruit bowl. My mom or I would whip up a batch of banana bread and in just over an hour we'd have a loaf that could feed all seven kids a nice slice as a treat or as a quick breakfast. We'd spread cold butter on top and let out yelps as we dug in.

When I was older and on my own, that banana bread fed me on more occasions than I care to admit. While I ran our training company, my husband was on the road a LOT. He traveled from city to city conducting seminars. When I was bored in the evenings, I might whip up a loaf of banana bread while I watched the news or a sitcom. At least I felt I was being productive. My favorite part was taking that bread to the office the next morning and knowing our employees would feast on it.

Mark, our top salesperson, got into the act, too. Turned out, he

liked making banana bread. He started to bring his in and we formulated an informal contest of sorts. We'd see who could make the craziest banana bread. The whole premise was to change up the ingredients. When I was a kid you had plain banana bread, or you had banana nut bread. And not just any nuts. NOOOO. They had to be walnuts chopped just right, not too small, and not too big. Mark and I went nuts alright. We put in all kinds of nuts. Pecans, macadamia. Nothing was off-limits. Sometimes there were no nuts. Chocolate chips stepped in (My husband loved that.). He'd put a nice, thick slice in the toaster oven on weekends and crisp it up. Then he'd slather butter and then peanut butter on top and make his way through his banana bread with a cup of coffee. He had to eat that with a fork! Mark and I tried other seasonings too. Banana cinnamon is nice. You name it, we tried it. No one kept a voting schedule. Mark and I were friendly competitors.

Tea breads don't have to be just banana though. In just that one Betty Crocker cookbook there are recipes for all kinds of tea breads. And lots of nut versions (all walnut, of course). Imagine things like apricot nut bread, date nut bread, orange nut bread, prune nut bread, cranberry cheese bread, and even pumpkin bread.

Pumpkin Bread brings me to today. Everyone loves (it seems) the taste of pumpkin. Even Starbucks releases their pumpkin-flavored coffees a little earlier each year. It's sort of like when Costco has Christmas toys on display in September!

I am offering a lower-carb pumpkin bread today that can also be made as a sweet potato bread version. Why not!? If you can make sweet potato casserole with marshmallows, why not a tea bread made with sweet potato puree? Pumpkin's cousin.



Pumpkin or Sweet Potato Bread

Now that I've been perfecting lower-carb tea breads I don't feel so guilty having a slice. Besides, they are small.

Enjoy!

Cheers,