



Irish Brown Soda Bread with Nettles

By Susan Spungen

Makes one large loaf

Clíodhna's recipe was given to me in metric, so I am putting the grams first in this recipe. I highly recommend weighing your flour (as always!) but especially for this one. I am giving you approximate volume amounts for the flour, but know that you may need to hold back a little bit of the buttermilk, and be prepared to add more if needed. The dough should be soft and a little bit sticky. You'll need to flour your counter, your hands, and the baking sheet or skillet. Use a bench scraper to transfer the dough from the counter to the baking sheet or skillet. If you want to use dulse,

start with 10 grams of dried dulse, soak in water until pliable, blot dry, and chop finely. If you want to use scallions, use 1 cup thinly sliced scallions (about 1 bunch).

- 225g/1 ½ cups plus 3 tablespoon all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 225g/1 ½ cups plus 2 tablespoons whole-wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, slightly softened
- 450 ml/ 1 ¾ cups buttermilk
- 2 ½ ounces trimmed nettles, blanched, shocked, blotted dry, and finely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 cup snipped chives

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1. Heat oven to 450°F. Combine both flours, salt, baking soda, and sugar in a medium bowl, and whisk to combine thoroughly. Cube the butter and add to the dry ingredients. Incorporate it, using your fingers to flatten the butter pieces.
 2. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture, and pour in 1 ½ cups of the buttermilk. Stir together lightly with a wooden spoon until all the flour is moistened. Add the remaining 1/4 cup if needed. The dough should be quite soft and a little sticky. Add the nettles and chives, and lightly knead with your hands to incorporate,

3. working the dough as little as possible.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface, and dust the top generously with flour. Shape into a circle, and pat lightly to flatten somewhat. Use a bench scraper to transfer the dough to a floured baking sheet or iron skillet.
5. Use a knife to make a cross cut on top of the bread, about 1 inch deep. Poke each quarter once or twice with the point of the knife to "let the fairies out."
6. Bake 20 minutes then reduce oven temperature to 400°F. Continue baking for another 20 minutes. Lift up the loaf with a spatula and tap the bottom. It should sound hollow.
7. Transfer to a wire rack to cool slightly before serving.