

# Nova Scotia Oatmeal Bread



Margaret Atwood still makes this tasty loaf, a favourite of her mother's, who was from Nova Scotia, where, Margaret says, "There are always lots of molasses and oats." A 1930s East Coast wife would have used her bread bowl, a sturdy wooden spoon, and lots of elbow grease. A stand mixer with a bread hook works well, too.

## INGREDIENTS

**1½ CUPS** rolled oats  
**2 TSP** salt  
**2 CUPS** boiling water  
**1 TBSP** shortening, butter, or oil  
**¾ CUP** molasses (or date molasses)  
**1 PKG** active dry yeast (equal to 2¼ tsp)  
**½ CUP** warm water  
**1 TSP** sugar or honey  
**4-5 CUPS** all-purpose flour  
Melted butter for brushing the tops of loaves

## MAKES 2 LOAVES

## METHOD

In a large mixing bowl, stir together the rolled oats, salt, boiling water, shortening, and molasses. Let cool to warm.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix the sugar in the warm water and stir in the yeast. Let stand 10 minutes until the yeast bubbles to the surface.

Thoroughly mix 2 cups of flour into the rolled oats mixture, then add the remaining flour, one cup at a time, alternately with half the yeast mixture, to make a fairly stiff dough.

Cover with a floured tea towel and let rise in a warm place (an oven with the light on) until the dough rises double, about 2 hours. Stir down and turn onto a floured counter.

Knead the dough lightly until it springs back and doesn't stick to the hands. Divide in half and shape into two loaves. Place the loaves, seam side down, in greased loaf pans, cover with a floured tea towel, and let rise double, about an hour.

Bake at 350°F for about 45 minutes or until the loaves are brown and pull away from the sides of the pans.

Cool the loaves on a rack. While still warm, brush the tops with melted butter.

