



Citrus and Currant Holiday Loaf

My Holiday Kitchen Helper

This loaf is my holiday kitchen helper. It fills the house with a sweet, citrusy smell. That smell means celebration is coming.

I love the plump raisins and bright orange peel. They look like little jewels in the dough. Doesn't that smell amazing? It tells everyone a treat is on the way.

A Little Story About Patience

Baking teaches you to wait. The dough needs two long rises. I use that time to tidy up or watch the birds.

Once, I rushed it. My loaf was small and dense. I still laugh at that. Good

things need their own sweet time. This matters. Rushing rarely makes anything better.

Why Warm Milk Matters

That warm milk wakes up the yeast. Think of yeast as tiny sleeping bugs. Warmth tells them it's time to get to work.

Too hot, and you'll hurt them. Too cold, and they'll sleep in. A thermometer helps. Do you have a favorite kitchen tool you always use?

The Fun Part: Kneading

You can use a mixer. But I like to feel the dough. It starts sticky and messy. Then it becomes smooth and soft in your hands.

Fun fact: The word “panettone” means “big bread” in Italian! Adding the butter takes patience. It will look slippery at first. Keep going. It will all come together.

Sharing is the Best Part

Let it cool completely. I know, it's hard to wait! Slicing it warm makes it gummy. The wait is worth it.

This bread is for sharing. A slice with tea tells someone you care. Food made with time is a gift. What's your favorite food to share during the holidays?

Your Turn to Bake

Now you have the recipe. And you know the little secrets. The warm milk. The patient waiting. The joy of sharing.

This matters. Making something from scratch connects you to generations of bakers. Will you try adding a different dried fruit, like cranberries? Tell me how it goes in your kitchen.

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Golden raisins	¾ cup	
Orange zest and juice	2 tsp zest plus 2 tbsp juice	Divided use
Warm milk	¾ cup (110°F)	
Light corn syrup	3 tablespoons	
Large eggs plus yolks	2 large eggs + 2 large yolks	Divided use
Vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	
Almond extract	½ teaspoon	
All-purpose flour	2 ¾ cups (13 ¾ oz / 390g)	
Instant or rapid-rise yeast	2 ¼ teaspoons	
Salt	1 teaspoon	
Unsalted butter	8 tablespoons	Softened, cut into 8 pieces
Candied orange peel	3 oz (85g)	Finely chopped



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Instructions

Step 1: Start with your raisins and orange juice. Pop them in a bowl and microwave until steamy. Let them sit and get plump. It takes about 15 minutes. This makes them so juicy and sweet. Doesn't that smell amazing already?

Step 2: Now, whisk your wet ingredients together. Use that orange zest, milk, corn syrup, eggs, and extracts. In your mixer, combine the flour, yeast, and salt. Slowly add the wet mix while the machine runs. Knead until it forms a shaggy dough. (A quick tip: make sure your milk is warm, not hot, to keep the yeast happy.)

See also Raspberry Chocolate Noel Brownies

Step 3: Time for the butter. Add it one soft piece at a time. Let the mixer do the hard work. It will become a smooth, shiny dough. Then, add your candied orange peel and those plump raisins. Mix until every bite will be fruity. What's your favorite citrus fruit? Share below!

Step 4: Turn the dough onto a floured counter. Give it a few gentle kneads by hand. Form it into a tight, neat ball. Place it in a greased bowl and cover it. Let it rise until it's doubled. This takes about two hours. I always use this time to tidy up.

Step 5: Grease an 8-inch cake pan. Pat the dough into a big disk. Fold the edges in to make a square, then flip it. Cup your hands and shape it into a smooth ball. Place it in the pan, seam-side down. Cover it and let it rise again. It should peek over the pan's edge.

Step 6: Heat your oven to 350 degrees. Beat one egg and brush it over

the dough. This gives it that beautiful golden shine. Bake it for 15 to 20 minutes. You'll start to smell the wonderful holiday scent. I still smile when that aroma fills the kitchen.

Step 7: Now, rotate the pan and tent it with foil. Keep baking until the inside is fully cooked. A thermometer should read 190 degrees. Let it cool in the pan for just 15 minutes. Then, move it to a rack to cool completely. (The waiting is the hardest part, but it's worth it!)

Creative Twists

This loaf is wonderful as written. But sometimes, a little change is fun. Try one of these twists for your next bake. They each add a special touch. My grandkids love helping me pick a new version.

Swap the raisins for dried cranberries. They add a lovely tart, red speckle.

Add a handful of dark chocolate chips. Melty chocolate with orange is magic.

Sprinkle coarse sugar on the egg wash. It gives a delightful sweet crunch.

Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This loaf is perfect for a cozy morning. Slice it thick and toast it lightly. Spread with soft butter or mascarpone cheese. For a festive plate, add some fresh berries. They look so pretty next to the golden bread. A simple dusting of powdered sugar works too.

For drinks, I love a cup of strong black tea. It cuts the sweetness just right. For a special evening, a small glass of sweet dessert wine pairs beautifully. It feels like a celebration. Which would you choose tonight?



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Keeping Your Holiday Loaf Happy

This loaf stays fresh on the counter for three days. Just wrap it tightly in plastic. For longer storage, the freezer is your friend. Wrap the whole loaf or slices in plastic, then foil. It keeps for a month. To reheat, warm slices in a 300-degree oven for ten minutes. It brings back that just-baked smell.

See also Chocolate Olive Oil Noel Cake

You can make the dough ahead. Let it do its first rise, then shape it. Pop the shaped dough in the pan. Cover it well and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, let it warm up and finish rising. Then bake! This helps on busy holiday mornings.

I once forgot a loaf on the counter for a week. It became a rock! Now I always freeze extra. Storing food well means no waste. It also means a sweet treat is always ready. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Is your dough not rising? Your kitchen might be too cold. Find a warm spot, like near the oven. I remember when my dough just sat there. I moved it to a sunny chair, and it puffed right up! This matters because a good rise makes the bread light and airy.

Is the top browning too fast? Tenting it with foil is the trick. Do this after the first 20 minutes of baking. It lets the inside cook without burning the top. This ensures a perfect, golden crust every time.

Are the fruits sinking to the bottom? Toss them in a little flour first. This helps them stay put in the soft dough. It makes every slice look and taste wonderful. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Can I make this gluten-free?

A: I have not tried it. A gluten-free bread flour blend might work. Follow the package instructions closely.

Q: How far ahead can I make it?

A: You can bake it fully 2-3 days ahead. Or freeze it for a month. See the storage tips above!

Q: I don't have candied orange peel.

A: That's okay! Use extra orange zest. Or try dried cranberries instead of raisins for fun.

Q: Can I make two loaves?

A: Yes, simply double all the ingredients. You will need two pans. It's perfect for sharing.

Q: Is the almond extract necessary?

A: It adds a lovely holiday scent. But you can use all vanilla. The bread will still be delicious. **Which tip will you try first?**

A Final Word from My Kitchen

Baking this bread fills your home with joy. The smell of orange and yeast is pure happiness. I hope you enjoy making it as much as eating it. Every baker has their own little stories. I would love to hear yours.

Fun fact: The word “panettone” means “big bread” in Italian!

Thank you for spending this time with me. Please tell me all about your baking adventure. **Have you tried this recipe?** Let me know in the comments below.

See also Raspberry Almond Christmas Torte Cookies

Happy cooking!

—Elowen Thorn.



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HOLIDAY
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Citrus and Currant Holiday Loaf

Author: Elowen Thorn

Cooking Method:[Baking](#)



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Cuisine: [Italian](#)

Courses: [Dessert Breakfast](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**

Prep time: **45 minutes**



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Cook time: **55 minutes**

Rising time: **4 minutes**

Total time: 5 minutes

Servings: **1 loaf**



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Calories: **320 kcal**

Best Season:**Summer**

Description

A festive and aromatic Orange and Raisin Panettone, a classic holiday

loaf filled with golden raisins, candied orange peel, and bright citrus flavors.

Ingredients

- ▢ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup golden raisins
- ▢ 2 teaspoons grated orange zest plus 2 tablespoons juice
- ▢ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup warm milk (110 degrees)
- ▢ 3 tablespoons light corn syrup
- ▢ 2 large eggs plus 2 large yolks, divided
- ▢ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ▢ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract
- ▢ 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (13 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces/390 grams) all-purpose flour
- ▢ 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons instant or rapid-rise yeast
- ▢ 1 teaspoon salt
- ▢ 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces and softened
- ▢ 3 ounces (85 grams) finely chopped candied orange peel

Instructions

1. Combine raisins and orange juice in small bowl. Cover and microwave until steaming, about 1 minute. Let sit until raisins are softened, about 15 minutes.
2. Whisk milk, corn syrup, 1 egg and yolks, vanilla, almond extract, and orange zest in 2-cup liquid measuring cup until combined. Using stand mixer fitted with dough hook, mix flour, yeast, and salt on medium-low speed until combined, about 5 seconds. With mixer running, slowly add milk mixture and knead until cohesive dough forms and no dry flour remains, 3 to 5 minutes, scraping down bowl and dough hook as needed.
3. With mixer still running, add butter 1 piece at a time until

incorporated. Increase speed to medium-high and knead until dough pulls away from sides but still sticks to bottom of bowl, about 10 minutes. Reduce speed to low, add orange peel and raisins (plus any juice remaining in bowl), and knead until fully incorporated, about 2 minutes.

4. Turn out dough onto lightly floured counter and knead until smooth, about 1 minute. Form dough into tight ball and transfer to greased large bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise at warm room temperature (about 70 degrees) until doubled in size, about 2 hours.
5. Grease 8-inch cake pan. Pat dough into 12-inch disk on lightly floured counter. Working around circumference of dough, fold edges of dough toward center to form rough square. Flip dough over and, applying gentle pressure, move your hands in small circular motions to form dough into smooth, taut ball. Transfer ball, seam side down, to prepared pan. Cover loosely with greased plastic and let rise at room temperature until center is about 2 inches above lip of pan, 2 to 2 1/2 hours.
6. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly beat remaining egg and brush over dough. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes.
7. Rotate pan, tent with aluminum foil, and continue to bake until center of loaf registers 190 degrees, 30 to 40 minutes longer. Transfer pan to wire rack and let cool for 15 minutes. Remove loaf from pan and let cool completely on wire rack, about 3 hours. Serve.

Notes

Use an instant-read thermometer to make sure the milk is the correct temperature. If using a traditional 6 by 4-inch paper panettone mold, which you can find online or at kitchen supply

stores, extend the baking time in step 7 by 10 minutes.

Keywords:Panettone, Holiday Bread, Citrus, Raisin, Loaf