

Nigel's Stone Ground Whole Wheat Bread

6 cups Weatherbury stone ground whole wheat bread flour (Maxine, Appalachian or Glenn)

Just under 2 cups lukewarm water

Generous 1/3 cup honey

3 tablespoons melted butter

2 tablespoons dry yeast (or 2 packages)

1 ½ teaspoons salt

Dissolve the yeast in ¼ cup of the warm water. Mix the honey, salt, oil and the rest of the warm water. Combine with the yeast. Place in mixing bowl. Add 4 cups flour. Mix at speed 2 (Kitchenaid) for 15 seconds. Add flour ½ cup at a time until the dough clings to the dough hook. Mix for 2 minutes.

Place the dough in a buttered bowl, cover and let rise for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Punch down.

Divide the dough in half. Roll out to about ¼ inch thick, pressing out all bubbles. Fold the sides of the dough into the middle so that they overlap by 1 inch or so. Roll the dough again so that it is as wide from folded side to folded side as your baking pan. Moisten your hands with water and lightly pat the dough so that it is just slightly tacky. Roll the dough up like a carpet. Pinch the seam and lay seam side down in a buttered bread pan. The cylinder should fit lengthwise but should not touch the sides of the pan. Repeat with other piece of dough. Cover until bread is about double in size (~45 minutes to one hour).

Preheat the oven to 350°. Place a cookie sheet (with raised edges) on the top shelf of the oven. Bake the bread on the bottom shelf for 45 minutes.

For softer crusts, once the bread has cooled (if there's any left!), put the loaves in a plastic bag .