

CHOCOLATE BANANA CHOCOLATE CHIP BREAD

I first saw this bread on a friend's Facebook page. It looked amazing. I prefer sweet breads baked in mini loaf pans because they cook faster...ultimately with a soft, thin crust instead of a hard, thick crust. Mini loaf pans also enable me to freeze the bread, saving the goodies for later meals, and for gift-giving. I found that the bread wasn't moist enough so I added a little bit more banana, along with mayo and melted butter.

Use an adult dinner spoon to scoop the cocoa powder from the container into the 1-cup measuring cup....otherwise, you will use too much cocoa powder and the resulting bread will be bitter.

You may use bananas ripened on the counter, or the overripe, frozen bananas in your freezer – or both. If you use previously frozen bananas, be sure to drain a little bit of the water that comes out. LOAF PAN BAKING TIME for previously frozen fruit can take 10 to 15 minutes longer.

All ingredients should be at room temperature.

Recipe adapted from thesisterscafe.com.

Makes 7 to 8 mini loaf pans, or about 42 muffins.

For muffins, line pans with paper line and fill about $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Bake at the same temperature for approximately 25 to 27 minutes.

INGREDIENTS

Set 1

- 3 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 c. unsweetened cocoa powder, loosely spooned into a 1-cup measuring cup
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. baking soda

Set 2

- 4 c. smashed bananas (smashed and drained then measured)
- 2 ripe bananas with not too much browning on the skin, smashed

Set 3

- 2 c. granulated sugar
- 4 large, whole eggs
- $\frac{2}{3}$ c. vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. melted, unsalted butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. regular, full-fat mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract

Set 4

- 2 c. semi-sweet chocolate chips

Tools: 8 mini loaf pans, half-sheet pan or rimmed baking pan, large bowl, medium bowl, rubber spatula, electric mixer, 1-cup measuring cup, 1/3-cup measuring cup, tablespoon, non-stick spray, toothpicks, cooling racks

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

1. Spray the mini loaf pans with non-stick spray. Arrange them on a low-rimmed baking sheet such as a half-sheet pan. The rim will prevent the loaf pans from sliding off the baking sheet. Set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, salt, and baking soda. Mix well and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, beat the sugar, eggs, oil, melted butter, mayonnaise, and vanilla extract until well combined. Beat in the previously frozen bananas just until it is incorporated.
4. Sift the dry ingredients into the bowl of wet ingredients. Beat at low speed just until barely mixed.
5. Add the chocolate chips and the two smashed, ripe bananas. Use a rubber spatula to finish mixing the batter.
6. Use a 1-cup measuring cup to portion 1 cup of batter into each loaf pan. Use a 1/3-cup measuring cup to portion more batter into each loaf pan. Divide any remaining batter into each loaf pan with a tablespoon.....or fill muffin pans.
7. Bake in a preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes. **Bake 25 minutes for muffins.**
8. Check on the bread. If it looks cooked on top, insert a toothpick into the center of one of the loaves in the front. Remove the toothpick. If the toothpick looks dry when pulled out, and there are barely any crumbs, the loaves are done. If the toothpick is wet, bake another 5 minutes for loaf pans and repeat the toothpick check. If baking muffins, recheck after one minute.
9. Cool the entire sheet of loaf pans on a wire rack for 10 minutes. If baking muffins, wait one minute then use a small spoon to transfer muffins to cooling racks.
10. Remove each loaf from the individual pan and cool completely on wire rack.
11. Wrap each loaf in two sheets of plastic wrap. Store 3 loaves per freezer gallon bags and freeze till needed. Muffins will keep well in freezer containers; place wax paper loosely on top of the muffins to minimize formation of ice crystals.
12. Thaw loaves at room temp (about 70 deg. F.) the night before you need it.

Recipe courtesy Paula Quinene of www.PaulaQ.com.