

Cook's Illustrated Banana Bread

Ingredients

- 1 3/4 cups (8 3/4 ounces) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 5 large very ripe bananas, peeled (almost 2 pounds)
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
- 2 large eggs
- 3/4 cup packed (5 1/4 ounces) light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 8 1/2 by 4 1/2-inch loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray. Whisk flour, baking soda, and salt together in a large bowl.

Place bananas in a microwave-safe bowl; cover with plastic wrap and cut several steam vents in plastic with paring knife. Microwave on high power until bananas are soft and have released liquid, about 5 minutes. Transfer bananas to fine-mesh strainer placed over medium bowl and allow to drain, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes (you should have 1/2 to 3/4 cups liquid).

Transfer liquid to medium saucepan and cook over medium-high heat until reduced to 1/4 cup, about 5 minutes. Remove pan from heat, stir reduced liquid into bananas, and mash with potato masher until fairly smooth. Whisk in butter, eggs, brown sugar, and vanilla.

For a printer-friendly version of this recipe, please [click here](#):

Pour banana mixture into flour mixture and stir until just combined with some streaks of flour remaining. Scrape batter into prepared pan. Sprinkle granulated sugar evenly over loaf.

Bake until toothpick inserted in center of loaf comes out clean, 55 to 75 minutes. Cool bread in pan on wire rack for 15 minutes, then remove loaf from pan and continue to cool on a wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Makes 1 loaf.