

Pumpkin Bread

1 large can (or 2 regular cans) pumpkin
4 c sugar
1 c oil
1 t salt
4 t baking soda
2 t cinnamon
1 t ground cloves
1 t nutmeg
5 c flour

Mix ingredients thoroughly. Grease and flour bread pans. Bake at 325 for 1 1/2 hours or until firm. Mini loaf pans take about 45 min. to 1 hour. Regular loaf pans usually take about 1 hour and 45 minutes, but it varies depending on the oven and the pans. Makes 2 regular loaves.

*I do it in the order listed or sift together flour, baking soda, salt, and spices and add slowly at the end. I also borrow my MIL's Bosch mixer for this. I've done it with a hand mixer, but the batter gets *very* thick and I have to resort to using a wooden spoon (and hopefully dh's help!) toward the end. It does take a little practice to know when to pull the bread out. It should be firm and not mushy when pressed in the center, but you don't want to overcook it and have the bread dry or burnt. The result is a very moist delicious bread that doesn't need butter or anything else with it.

People beg me to make this for them every year! I wait for it to cool completely, wrap it in saran wrap and then put it in a brown paper lunch bag that we've decorated with fall stamps. The finishing touch is a card I've printed in Print Shop with the recipe on one side and a poem or quote about fall, Thanksgiving, friendship, or family on the other side. I've also made it for Christmas gifts. The only complaint I get is that I usually only make it around Thanksgiving and Christmas. (I'm early this year.)

We spent the whole day yesterday making 8 batches and sending it through the oven. I got 9 large loaves and 26 mini loaves. They will go to neighbors, family, and friends now or get stuck in the freezer to give later. It freezes very well, and the freezer actually helps loaves that got cooked a little too long and turned out dry.