

## Russian Black Bread

This loaf dates back at least 50 years or so in North America and this recipe follows the original in its use of just about everything in the cupboard. Of course, I always wonder if they really bake something like this in Russia.

### Ingredients

Two Loaves	Ingredient	One Loaf
5 cups, 680 g	Bread flour, 51%	2 ½ cups, 340 g
4 cups, 540 g	Rye flour, 40%	2 cups, 270 g
1 cup, 126 g	100% bran cereal or pumpernickel flour, 9%	½ cup, 63 g
2 Tbsp, 19 g	Yeast, 1.4%	1 Tbsp, 9 g
1 ½ Tbsp, 21 g	Kosher salt, 1.6%	¾ Tbsp, 11 g
1 Tbsp	Caraway seed	¾ Tbsp
1 Tbsp	Fennel seed	½ Tbsp
2 tsp	Ground fennel	1 tsp
2 tsp	Instant espresso powder or instant coffee crystals	1 tsp
¼ cup, 28 g	Dutch process cocoa, 2%	2 Tbsp, 14 g
¼ cup, 59 g	Vinegar (preferably malt vinegar), 4%	2 Tbsp, 30 g
4 Tbsp, 56 g	Butter, melted, 4%	2 Tbsp, 28 g
½ cup, 170 g	Molasses, 13%	¼ cup, 85 g
3 ¾ cups, 889 g	Water, warmed to 105-115 degrees, 66%	1 ¾ plus 2 Tbsp, 444 g

In a large bowl mix together the dry ingredients. Add the vinegar, melted butter, molasses and water then stir with a large spoon until well mixed. Stir vigorously another 15-30 seconds then cover and allow to rise at room temperature for 2 hours or refrigerate immediately.

When ready to bake, preheat the oven, baking stone and steam pan to 425 degrees. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and divide in half if making two loaves. Shape each loaf into a boule then place on a peel or baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest for 30-45 minutes while the oven warms up.

Remove the plastic wrap, score the loaves, then slide the loaves onto the baking stone. Pour a cup of water into the steam pan, turn the oven down to 400 degrees and bake for 50 minutes. Remove to a cooling rack and allow to cool completely before slicing.