

Pane con Cicole Bacon Bread

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups bread flour
- 2 cups semolina flour
- 1 packet dry yeast
- 2 to 2 1/2 cup lukewarm water
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 TBSP salt
- 1 TBSP pepper
- 2 heaping TBSPs lard (better if from drippings in making cicole)
- 3 TBSPs olive oil
- 3 cups Cicole (or more to taste), process described below



DIRECTIONS

- To make cicole, you'll need to dice fresh pork fat trimmings (ask your butcher to save you some), best if there is a bit of meat on the trimmings.
- Rinse under cold water then drain and place in a large pot.
- Place enough water to reach just under the cicole level in the pot.
- Bring pot to a simmer on medium-low heat.
- Add 4 bay leaves and 2 tps salt. Stir.
- Continue cooking, stirring occasionally to avoid sticking, until all water has evaporated and cicole are getting golden brown.
- Drain cicole, reserving fat drippings to use in cooking/baking.
- Using a potato ricer, squeeze additional fat from cooked cicole.
- Place dry cicole in a bowl and add salt and pepper to taste.
- Stir well and set aside.
- Place the two types of flour in the bowl of a stand mixer with a dough hook.

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DIRECTIONS (CONT.)

Bacon Bread continued....

NONNA'S TIPS

- Dissolve yeast in a cup of lukewarm water and teaspoon of sugar.
 - Add to the flour and begin mixing on low speed.
 - Add oil, lard, salt and pepper and additional cup of lukewarm water.
 - Mix on low speed for one minute.
 - Add cicole and continue mixing until all ingredients are well combined and a soft and smooth dough ball is achieved.
 - If dough is too stiff, add more water.
 - When dough is ready, remove bowl from stand mixer and cover with plastic film first and dry towel next.
 - Place in warm area to rise.
 - Dough should double in size in about 1 1/2 to 2 hours.
 - When dough is ready, take a small amount at a time and place on a clean, flowered surface and shape into a small loaf (6"x2.5").
 - Place loaf on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.
 - Repeat until all dough is used.
 - Cover loaves with film and towel and place in warm area for about an hour to rise again.
 - Preheat oven to 375F.
 - When oven is hot, remove covers from loaves.
 - Bake for about 40 minutes or until golden brown.
 - Makes 8 small loaves.
- Making cicole sounds harder than it really is. It's really about chopping pork trimmings and cooking them until fat is rendered. Once you squeeze the cicole, you are left with delicious bits to use in recipes and clean, pure lard that is better than Crisco in your recipes. In fact, use some of it in this recipe.
 - You can keep lard in clean glass jars, refrigerated until ready to use. In olden times, lard was kept in sterilized jars on a pantry shelf...no preservatives added.
 - If you feel making cicole is too much for you, substitute with either bacon bits or crispy sausage bits.