

NO-KNEED BREAD | SHERREL HOLLIS

I think a bread recipe is especially helpful during these apprehensive times. Depending on where you shop, essential items like bread can be scarce, especially the really popular brands. Here's a four-ingredient recipe I found a while back on the NY Times cooking app from columnist Mark Bittman. I have made this twice. After it cools, you can cut half of the loaf to freeze.

PREPARATION

In a large bowl combine flour, yeast, and salt. Add 1 5/8 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.

The dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

Using just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel or parchment paper with flour,

or cornmeal; put the dough seam side down on the paper or towel and transfer the dough (with the paper/towel lining) to a really big bowl. Dust with more flour, or cornmeal. Cover the top with another parchment /cotton towel and let the dough rise in the bowl for about 2 hours. When it is ready, the dough should be double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, or ceramic) in the oven as it heats. When the dough is ready, carefully remove the pot from the oven. Slide your hand under parchment/towel and turn dough over into pot,

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups all-purpose flour	1 1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp instant yeast	cornmeal as needed

seam side up. Shake pan once or twice if the dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove the lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

