



INGREDIENTS

- 75g salted butter, plus extra for greasing and serving
- 200g pitted dates, chopped
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 cup water
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon bicarb soda

Date & Walnut Roll

If I'm baking, it has to be super-easy - like this delicious roll that I don't even need to get the electric mixer out for. I remember my Aunty Dorothy making these when I was a child, her daughter Gail often had slices in her lunchbox and I thought they were very fancy because they were round. The secret is a round loaf tin with removable ends (the size isn't critical as the mixture doesn't need to expand to completely fill it); hold the bottom lid in place if lifting the tins to spoon the mixture in as the lid may slip off (yes, I learnt that the hard way!). You'll need two tins for this recipe as it's hard to make in a smaller quantity, but the rolls keep for up to a week in an airtight container, or you could give the second one to a friend. This is perfect with a cup of tea or coffee, but also pretty good with a nutty oloroso Sherry, or an Australian fortified wine in that style, like Seppeltsfield DP38 Rich Rare Apera.

Makes about 16 slices

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
2. Grease 2 roll tins (20cm x 8cm).
3. Place butter, dates, sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat and stir frequently until sugar dissolves and butter melts.
4. Increase heat, bring to the boil, transfer to a mixing bowl and set aside, stirring often to cool it down.
5. When cool, stir in walnuts and egg.
6. Sift combined flour, baking powder and bicarb soda over the top and fold in.
7. Spoon mixture evenly into the tins and replace lids.
8. Stand tins upright on a baking tray and place in oven for 40 minutes.
9. Remove from oven and set aside for 10 minutes.
10. Remove lids and stand rolls upright on a wire rack to cool.
11. Serve sliced, warm or cold, topped with plenty of butter.