

Cranberry Oat Bread

3/4 cup quick cooking oats
1 1/4 cups buttermilk
1 1/2 cups whole wheat pastry flour (or all-purpose)
1/3 cup packed light brown sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
2 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup dried cranberries (or other small dried fruit)
1/4 cup chopped pecans, optional

1. Combine the oats and buttermilk in a medium-sized bowl. Stir to mix well, and set aside (only until it's needed in the next step- if you wait too long, too much of the liquid will have been absorbed).
2. Combine the flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl, and stir to mix well. Add the buttermilk mixture and vanilla, and stir just until the dry ingredients are moistened. Fold in the fruit and nuts.
3. Coat an 8x4 inch loaf pan with cooking spray. Spread the batter in the pan, and bake at 325° for 40-42 minutes, or just until a toothpick inserted in the center of the loaf comes out clean. (Alternately, you can turn this into 12 muffins, baked at 350° for 18 minutes.)
4. Remove the bread from the oven, and let sit for 10 minutes. Turn the loaf onto a wire rack, and cool before slicing. Serving suggestion- this bread is great toasted and spread with cream cheese.