

Pictish Bread

Baroness Eithni ingen Talorgain, OL, OP, Pyxis
eithni@gmail.com

This is a recipe that I developed through trial and error, using only ingredients I was reasonably confident were available in Pictish Scotland.

Pictish Bread

1 packet yeast
1 teaspoon honey
2/3 cup hot water

2 cup flour
2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
2 tablespoons oil
hot water to mix

Mix, adding water or flour as needed.
Knead on a floured surface.
Allow to rise a bit. Knead again.
Allow to rise until almost doubled.
Bake until cooked through and lightly browned.



Flour: I use stone ground spelt, an early form of wheat that was available to the Picts and that is currently available in many health food stores. It is low in gluten, so it does not have all the same properties as modern wheat flour, particularly, it is harder to get a dough that will rise nicely.

Yeast: While I would love to use a wild yeast, I have not yet obtained one from Scotland and so use a special commercial yeast formulated for use with whole wheat.

Eggs: The Picts certainly had chickens! See photo above – there's a chicken on Tarbat 3!

Oil: Flax was definitely grown for linen and, while its use as a foodstuff is harder to document, it is possible. Rapeseed oil (modernly marketed as canola oil) is another possibility. You could also try substituting lard.

Baking: I have used an oven at 400°F until done (depending on the size of the roll or loaf), an oiled Dutch oven, and also the spiral Viking pan (reproduction made by Master Danr of Nordskogen).