

Manchet Bread

Only for the wealthy, Manchet bread was a white bread. Stoneground flour would be sifted through a muslin bag to remove the coarse bran and husk, and then re-sifted through a double muslin bag to remove some of the finer bran. This flour was known as white flour, but it was not as fine as modern commercial white flour.



For modern use, a medium sieve can be used to do the job of the muslin bag. Use 1mm and 0.5mm sieves to mimic the effect of the muslin in removing bran.

Ingredients

- 500g “white” flour
- 1 tsp ground sea salt
- Half litre warm water (30-40°C)
- Fresh brewer’s yeast

The brewer’s yeast needs to be mixed with water and sugar (or honey) for 20 minutes before using, so that it starts to ferment. Mix the flour and salt, add most of the water and the yeast mixture and kneed. Prove for an hour then knock back the dough and kneed thoroughly. Form into a round loaf shape and allow to prove for at least 30 minutes. Bake in a hot oven (220°C) for about 23 minutes. Cool for at least an hour before eating.

In Tudor times this type of bread was generally served at the high table only as it was considered too rich for the constitution of the poor.

