

## Breads of the World: Ethiopia

Presented 6/20/2017 by Varsha Pathare

Ethiopian Injera is a flat, airy, slightly fermented round bread that is an accompaniment to Ethiopian food. Made of teff, it is slightly spongy in texture and pliable. The proper way of making injera is a two- to three-day process.

Teff is an ancient grain that originated in Ethiopia and Eritrea between 400BC -100BC. It's similar to millet and quinoa, but much finer. Teff is the

world's smallest grains; they're about the size of a poppy seed and range in color from white to red to dark brown. Teff is gluten free, full of nutrients, high in protein and comes packed with a great combination of eight essential amino acids. It has high amount of calcium (1 cup of cooked teff offers about the same amount of calcium as ½ cup of cooked spinach), manganese, phosphorous, iron, copper, aluminum, barium, thiamin and vitamin C (which is not normally found in grains). The iron from teff is easily absorbed. Teff contains resistant starches and has a relatively low glycemic index, which can help diabetics regulate sugar levels. It's low in sodium and saturated fat.

Traditionally, injera serve the function of a plate and spoon. After they're cooked they're stacked and served with stews and vegetables on top of them. You break a piece of injera and use it to scoop the meat or vegetable. After you're finished, you can eat your "plate," the bottommost injera that has soaked up all the sauces.

### Ethiopian Injera (with teff flour; gluten free)

*Makes about 6 injera, depending on size of pan*

#### Ingredients:

- 1½ cups teff flour
- 2 cups warm water
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Oil for pan

#### Special equipment:

- Nonstick skillet with a lid



Directions:

1. Place teff flour in a large glass bowl, add water and stir well. Cover with a cheesecloth or loose-weave towel and let it sit for 1 day or 24 hours in a warm place. Do not stir the batter, just let it be.
2. After 24 hours, the batter should look fermented. Every batch looks a bit different but it should look somewhat like the photo above.
3. Heat a large nonstick skillet on medium hot and coat very lightly with oil.
4. Stir baking powder and salt into the batter. Your batter will deflate when you stir it.
5. Pour enough batter in the skillet to cover the entire bottom evenly and cover with a lid. It is important to trap the moisture in the pan or the injera will crack.
6. After about 2 to 3 minutes, check the bread. You should see the top dry out and edges dry. Traditionally, the injera is not flipped, but I flip it and let cook for about a minute on the other side.
7. Remove from heat, place on a plate and repeat until you use up all the batter.

**Injera** (with wheat flour)

*Makes about 6-8 injera, depending on size of pan*

Ingredients:

2 cups self-rising flour

½ cup whole wheat flour

½ teaspoon baking powder

1½ cups (10 ounces) club soda

2 cups water

Oil for pan

Special equipment:

Nonstick skillet with lid

Directions:

1. Combine flours and baking powder in a bowl. Add club soda plus about 2 cups water. Mix into a smooth, thin batter.
2. Heat a large nonstick skillet on medium-high and coat lightly with oil.
3. Pour enough batter to cover the entire bottom of the skillet evenly. Cover the skillet and let cook.
4. After 1-2 minutes, lift lid and check. You should see the top dry out and edges dry. Traditional injera is not flipped, but I flip it and let it cook for about a minute on the other side. I do this to make sure it is cooked thoroughly.
5. Remove from heat, place on a plate with parchment or waxed paper between injera to prevent sticking. Repeat until you use up all the batter.

**Interested in exploring Ethiopian cuisine? Try these WI restaurants:**

Buraka, 1210 Williamson St, Madison, WI 53703, [www.buraka-madison.com](http://www.buraka-madison.com)

Alem Ethiopian Village, 307 E Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53202, [www.alem-ethiopianvillage.com](http://www.alem-ethiopianvillage.com)

Ethiopian Cottage Restaurant, 1824 N Farwell Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53202, [www.ethiopiancottagerest.com](http://www.ethiopiancottagerest.com)