



*Updated December 2023*

This is the transcribed original recipe handed down from my mother Barbara Ashworth Harris. I've seen similar recipes in cookbooks and online, but never this identical one. Every year she made several large batches of this bread between Thanksgiving and Christmas because she developed quite a loyal following for her cranberry bread among family and friends. Both would often drop strong hints around the holidays about loving her cranberry bread so the demand was always high. Making this bread was usually a family activity with my brother, sister, and me working as a production line, which usually resulted in a dozen loaves or more, which we would then gift wrap and deliver personally.

### **Barbara Harris's Original Cranberry Bread Recipe**

#### **Combine dry ingredients:**

4 Cups sifted flour  
2 Cups sugar  
3 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. salt

#### **Liquids:**

Juice & grated rind of 2 oranges (I now use commercial grated rind – 1 tsp.)  
4 Tbsp. Shortening

2 eggs, well-beaten

Add enough boiling water so liquids = 1 1/2 cups

Stir liquids into dry ingredients quickly, stirring just enough to blend thoroughly.

Fold in:

2 cups chopped nuts

2 cups chopped cranberries

Put mixture into 2 loaf pans (well-greased!). For well-rounded loaves, use back of spoon to force mixture up into the four corners. Bake at 350 degrees for 50- 60 min.

# Harris Family Cranberry Bread

## Step-by-Step Baking Instructions for Four Loaves

This is my Mother's recipe doubled with a few minor clarifications and improvements.

Assemble all your ingredients and utensils if you're the planning type. Otherwise plunge in.

1. Set your oven for 350 degrees.
2. Grease four bread pans approximately 5" x 9". Be sure to grease the corners of the pans well.
3. Measure 1/2 cup of shortening and liquify it in the microwave oven. Let it sit.
4. Measure and mix eight (8) cups of white flour, four (4) cups of cane sugar, two (2) tablespoons of baking powder, two (2) teaspoons of baking soda, and two (2) teaspoons of salt. Stir the dry ingredients until they're blended well and dig a hole in the middle to the bottom of the bowl. The hole makes it easier to mix the liquids a few steps from now (Steps 9 and 10). Set aside.
5. Use a food processor to flash four (4) cups of pecans. Seven or eight flashes are sufficient. Pecan pieces work well, too, and don't require processing. Set aside in a pan or bowl.
6. As with the pecans, flash four cups of washed, fresh cranberries. Clean the food processor of **ALL** the cranberry pieces otherwise they can change the color of the bread. Set aside in a pan or bowl.
7. Wash and cut up five to seven medium whole oranges. Run all oranges through the food processor until you have four (4) cups of puréed orange baby food. You want the oranges as liquid as possible. Set aside in a four cup measuring cup. If your oranges are shy of four cups, supplement with hot water until you have exactly four cups.
8. Crack four large eggs and put the whites and yolk in a bowl. At this point, all your ingredients are ready to be mixed.
9. Use a mixer or fork to beat the yolks and whites until they are well-blended. Pour the eggs into the middle of the hole of the flour.
10. Add the liquid oranges into the middle of the hole on top of the eggs.
11. Use a large spatula or wooden spoon to fold the dry and wet ingredients. Doing this will avoid the atomic bomb flour cloud a mixer will detonate. Once the ingredients are pretty well mixed, begin using your electric mixer on a low speed or continue to mix by hand. Increase mixer speed as the batter changes.
12. Take your time and be sure the ingredients are thoroughly mixed. Give the sugar time to dissolve. The bottom of the mixing bowl can hide pockets of dry ingredients (another reason to create a hole in the dry ingredients). When the sugar is fully dissolved, the dough will become shiny.
13. Reheat the 1/2 cup of melted shortening in the microwave oven and add to the dough. Again, take your time and be sure the dough is mixed thoroughly.
14. Add the pecans and continue to mix until you'll don't see much brown (i.e., pecans).
15. Add the cranberries and mix at slow to medium speed until the dough is consistently blended. Too much mixing at this point will give the cranberries a chance to "bleed" and change the yellow dough to gray. Don't over mix the cranberries! If in doubt, stop mixing.

16. Put the dough evenly in the four bread pans. I use a large cupped spatula and a medium regular flat spatula in tandem (scoop and scrape) to do this. Use a flat spatula to force the dough into the corners of the pans. A few "laps" around the edge of each pan should suffice.
17. Place a few cranberries and pecans on the top of each loaf.
18. Place the pans in the oven and set the timer for about 1 hour and 6 minutes. This will vary from oven to oven and location so use this as a starting point for your own experimentation.
19. When you think the bread is done, remove loaves one at a time and test each for doneness by inserting a shish-kabob stick at an angle towards the center. If the stick is dry and clean of dough, move on to the next loaf. If the stick feels sticky, return the loaf to the oven for two to three minutes. Repeat if necessary.
20. When all loaves are done, let them cool in the pans for 15 to 20 minutes.
21. Carefully remove the loaves from the pans by using kitchen towels as mitts to turn the pans upside down into a clean towel in your hand and then placing each loaf on a cooling rack. Loaves will cool in about three hours.
22. Slice thick. Toast. Butter. Revel.

Good luck,

Jeff Harris

*Updated December 2025*