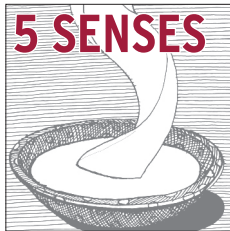


**BREAD**



**5 SENSES**

**À LA  
CARTE**

## Naan-e Barbari

According to Zoroastrianism, a widespread religion in the ancient Persian Empire, it was the prophet Zarathustra who taught his followers how to cultivate cereals from wild grasses and thus laid the foundation for agriculture and a sedentary lifestyle. While it is true that agriculture was first developed in the Middle East, in the so-called Fertile Crescent, that was thousands of years before Zarathustra was worshipped.

Once the first agricultural societies were established, one of mankind's most important staples began taking over the world: bread. Its original form, flat bread, was produced by mashing the grain, turning it into mush by adding water, and then frying thin, flat cakes on hot stones. The discovery of sour dough revolutionized the art of bread baking: when dough is left unattended for some time, it picks up natural yeasts from the air and thus starts to ferment, resulting in an airy bread that is easier to digest than unleavened bread.

Flat bread is still eaten all over the Middle East in many different varieties. This Persian flat bread is traditionally eaten for breakfast with tabriz, a cheese similar to feta, along with a cup of tea.

### For 6 flat breads:

4 cups (500 g) flour  
⅔ oz (20 g) fresh yeast  
½ stick (50 g) soft butter  
7 fluid ounces (200 ml) milk  
1 egg yolk  
1 tablespoon sesame seeds  
1 tablespoon nigella seeds  
1 teaspoon salt  
a little cream  
butter  
water



### Instructions:

Pour ½ cup of lukewarm water in a bowl, crumble in the yeast, and add salt and 1 tablespoon of flour. Cover and set aside to proof in a warm place for 15 minutes.

Stir in the butter and the milk. Sift about ⅔ of the remaining flour and add to the dough. Cover the bowl and let rise for another 1½ hours, keeping covered.

The dough should have doubled in volume. Now knead the dough for 15 minutes, gradually adding the remaining flour. Then let rest for 1 more hour.

Preheat the oven to 480°F (250° Centigrade) and grease a baking sheet with butter. Knead the dough briefly, cut it into 6 portions, and roll the portions into balls. Sprinkle your worktop with flour and, using a rolling pin, roll out each ball until you have a 12-inch circle.

Place the first bread on the baking sheet. If you wish, you may now carve a decorative pattern into the bread using a knife. Mix the egg yolk with the cream and brush the surface of the bread. Sprinkle on the sesame and nigella seeds and place the baking sheet in the oven on the top rack. Bake for approx. 3 minutes, turn the bread, and bake for another three minutes. After removing from oven, place the next flat bread on the baking sheet and continue as described above.

Note: Crush a few strands of safran in a mortar with a pinch of sugar, dissolve it in a little milk, and leave to seep for 15 minutes. During this time the lactic acid will draw out the safran aroma. Add to dough.

