**Whole Wheat Banana Bread**

Recipe from *Healthy Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day*, by Jeff Hertzberg, M.D. and Zoe Francois; Published by St. Martin's Press / Thomas Dunne Books  
  
4 cups white whole wheat flour  
2 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 1/2 tablespoons granulated yeast or 2 packets  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
1/4 cup vital wheat gluten  
1 1/2 cups lukewarm water  
1/2 cup neutral- flavored oil  
1/2 cup honey  
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract  
2 cups very ripe banana puree  
2 cups walnut pieces (optional)  
Egg wash (1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water) for brushing on top crust  
Raw sugar for sprinkling on top of loaf  
  
1. **Mixing and storing the dough**: Whisk together the flours, yeast, cinnamon, salt and vital wheat gluten in a five quart bowl, or a lidded (not airtight) food container.  
  
2. Combine the liquid ingredients with the banana and optional walnuts and mix with the dry ingredients without kneading, using a spoon, a 14-cup processor (with dough attachment), or a heavy-duty stand mixer (with paddle). You might need to use wet hands to get the last bit of flour to incorporate if you're not using a machine.  
  
3. Cover (not airtight), and allow the dough to rest at room temperature until it rises and collapses (or flattens on top), approximately two hours.  
  
4. The dough can be used immediately after the initial rise, though it is easier to handle when cold. Refrigerate it in a lidded (not airtight) container and use over the next 7 days.

5. **On baking day**, lightly grease an 8 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch nonstick loaf pan. Dust the surface of the refrigerated dough with flour and cut of a 2 pound (cantaloupe-size) piece. Dust the piece with more flour and quickly shape in into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter-turn as you go.  
  
6. Elongate the loaf into an oval and place the loaf into the loaf pan; your goal is to fill the pan three quarters full. Allow the loaf to rest, loosely covered with plastic wrap, for 1 hour 45 minutes (60 minutes if you are using fresh, unrefrigerated dough).  
  
7. **Thirty minutes before baking time, preheat the oven to 350F**, with a baking stone placed on the middle rack. The baking stone is not essential for loaf pan breads; if you omit it, the preheat time can be as short as five minutes.  
  
8. Just before baking, use a pastry brush to paint the top crust with egg wash and sprinkle it with walnuts or sugar. Place the pan on the stone or on a rack in the center of the oven. Bake for about 45 to 50 minutes, until richly browned and firm.  
  
9.  Remove the bread from the pan and allow it to cool on a rack before slicing or eating.