



SOURDOUGH BREAD

(the easy way!)

TOOLS FOR BAKING SOURDOUGH

Decent size jar with lid to keep your starter in
Mixing Bowl with lid/cover (I use a shower cap)
Smaller bowl approx. 22cm to use as a Banneton (overnight shaping bowl)
Electronic scales – everything is measured in grams
Sharp knife/blade for scoring
Rice flour for dusting
Dutch Oven or similar
Baking paper
Timer

INGREDIENTS

50g sourdough starter
350g water - from the tap
500g plain flour
10g salt

- Firstly, you will have to make sure your starter is “fed” and active.
- This means, the night before or early in the morning you will need to “feed” your starter with 50g plain flour and 50g water.
- Its ready to use when it doubles in size and has tiny bubbles all over the top. Another way of testing it is doing the “float test”. Basically, fill up a glass with water, take a tiny bit and if it floats, then its ready to go.

METHOD

- Mix all of these together roughly, cover and let sit on the bench for one hour.
- Gently grab a side of the dough and fold to the centre, stretching the dough at the same time, continue all around the dough until it forms a nice ball. This usually takes about 20 folds. Cover and leave for 30 minutes.
- Perform the same folding technique, stretch and fold, four or five times around the dough... cover and leave for 30 minutes. Do this step three more times. This is helping the gluten to form.
- Once the dough is holding a nice ball shape after the last “stretch and fold”, just leave on the bench to prove. Depending on the temperature in your home, this can take as little as 4 hours or if you started mixing later in the day and its cold, you can leave it out overnight. (This is also when its ready to use as PIZZA BASE) You will notice big bubbles forming on the surface, this is a great sign and probably ready to shape into a loaf.
- Tip out the dough onto a floured surface and shape into a round ball, tucking the bottom under with each turn, kind of use your left hand to tuck, as you turn anticlockwise with your right hand. This will make sense when you do it!!
- Once you are happy with the shape, you need to “TENSION” the dough. Do this by dragging across the bench, turn slightly and drag again. This will make the top of the dough nice and tight. It may have air bubbles come to the surface, that’s fine. You can pinch them with your finger to pop any big ones.
- This is when you need your bowl (22cm is perfect) with a tea-towel dusted with rice flour ready. Carefully place your shaped dough, top side down, into the bowl and cover. The rice flour is gluten-free and stops the dough from sticking.
- Put it in the fridge overnight.
- You can leave the dough like this for up to three days. The longer you leave it, the more “sour” it will become.



OPTIONS

- Spread out into a large rectangle oven tray and sprinkle with olive-oil, rosemary, olives, garlic and sea-salt... FOCACCIA...
- Divide the mix above into 3 to make standard size PIZZA ... Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, depending on the topping. Less oily toppings take less time. Lasts in the fridge up to a week in freezer bags!

NOW YOU ARE READY TO BAKE

- Next morning, you are ready to bake your creation... How exciting!! Turn your oven up to the highest setting and get a Dutch Oven or Casserole dish with lid ready to bake in.
- Tip out your dough gently onto parchment paper, dust with plain flour and score the top of the dough. This allows the dough to expand whilst cooking. You can score it however you like, one 2cm slash, at a 45 degree angle works well, across from one side to the other, or five straight across the top. Be as creative as you like!
- Bake for 40 minutes with the lid on... then a further 10 to 15 minutes, depending how brown you like it.
- Hopefully it springs up in the oven, but don't worry if it doesn't, it will still taste great.
- As hard as it is, you need to let the bread cool before cutting. The "crumb" is still forming as it cools, otherwise it will be "gluey"



There are so many different styles of baking Sourdough. I found many of the instructions more like a science experiment with very involved processes and hard-to-understand terminology eg: autolyse, hydration ratio, lamination etc.

I like to keep it simple and hopefully logical.

The thing is, even if it's not the prettiest, it will still taste fabulous and remember, you have made it with your own hands and put love into it.

Happy Baking!

Love

Liz



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