

Breads and Muffins

“Good bread is the great need in poor homes, and often times the best appreciated luxury in the homes of the very rich.” A Book for A Cook, The Pillsbury Co. (1905)

“Give us this day, our daily bread...and wouldn't be grand to have butter too.” -the author.

“Breadbaking is one of those almost hypnotic businesses, like a dance from some ancient ceremony. It leaves you filled with one of the world's sweetest smells... there is no chiropractic treatment, no Yoga exercise, no hour of meditation in a music-throbbing chapel, that will leave you emptier of bad thoughts than this homely ceremony of making bread.” - M.F.K. Fisher, The Art of Eating

About Bread

The Importance of Bread

It may be impossible to judge the quality of a restaurant until the meal is consumed but lousy bread is the quickest indicator of a lousy restaurant. Truly great bread can make up for a not so great restaurant especially if they have good olive oil or great butter in accompaniment. Great bread is a harbinger of superior food to come. There are as many types of bread as their countries of origin. Two countries, Italy and France consistently set the world's expectations at very high levels with extraordinary varieties of superb breads. Whoever said “man does not live by bread alone” was most likely not a Parisian or a Roman.

This book gives over to many recipes for making bread. But even if you never bake a loaf, there is no Godly reason to go through life deprived of wonderful bread. In many areas of the Unites States, rural area markets with bakeries are cooking frozen loafs of bread from California. If you asked them, they will sell you a frozen loaf that only takes 15 minutes to bake at home.

If you are in a hurry, go buy a good loaf. A baker must have the time to do a good job - patience is a virtue. Bread making requires some planning. Reading this section is when you are in the thinking-planning stage. You will need time to purchase good ingredients and time to consider what you want to accomplish.

Backgrounder - Flour in Pizza and Bread

What could be simpler than the flour, the liquid and the yeast. Yikes! How can things get so complicated when starting with only three ingredients? (We can worry about sugar and salt later but many breads have neither.) There is selecting yeast, measuring, adding the flour, proofing, liquids, kneading, rising, resting, shaping, slashing the top, executing a wash, preparing the oven, using baking tiles, creating steam and baking. Hmmm that's 14 things but wait what kind of flour, ash content, how much and what kind of yeast, what is wet enough? Hey where are you going? Wait, don't loose heart. As complex as the process is in steps, man has been perfecting bread making dating back some 6000 years now. So YOU won't be starting from scratch!

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Most of the manufacturers of flour offer recipes for bread. All of these recipes are tried and true. I won't lie to you, becoming a "master baker" requires some practice and exactly the right ingredients. Fortunately, there are bread fanatics all over the internet and Jeffrey Steingarten food critic for Vogue and author of numerous books of keen wit and schooled insight such as [The Man Who Ate Everything](#) and [It Must've Been Something I Ate](#) who have done a lot of homework for us.

The three most important ingredients are flour, yeast, and patience. If you're in a big hurry, chances are that you can jump in your car, head down to the supermarket, and secure a good loaf and return home in under an hour. I used to live in California where a profusion of great bread was available. Unless you have the good fortune the living next to a baker chances are few that you can access a loaf that is still warm from the oven unless you manage to bake it yourself. So when I bake, it is usually to form a loaf that can't be purchased locally. Like burning meat on the barbecue, there something primordial and satisfying about

making bread.

Making bread is a lot easier the more you learn. I also think that most books, while serving to provide recipes for a seasoned bakers, are wholly inadequate for a novice baker. Herein lies the problem: while many recipes will turn out an adequate loaf of bread, many recipes will not turn out an understanding. Without understanding, the baker's bound to the rigid confines of the recipes. They will have little or no clue why the crust might not be perfect or too thin, how to change ingredients, how to make the bread more chewy, have a soft crust, large holes, fine-grain, or better flavored. But more importantly, without some help, one might be forced to only learn through trial and error.

In making bread, there are a lot more things that will go right than go wrong. Bread recipes on the Internet are abundant. In fact there are more of them than you have time to bake in a lifetime. If you're a novice bread maker, then pay close attention and don't assume that any ingredient, step, duration, or detail is unimportant.

Water is Water

Commercial yeasts are tolerant of the amount of chlorine found in tap water but some natural yeasts are not so tolerant. If you boil water for 15 minutes it will help drive off the chlorine however, a new chemical, chloramines is replacing standard chlorination in many cities like San Francisco. I use bottled drinking water if better water is not available. Milk may also be used. The addition of milk contributes to the nutritional value of the bread with milk proteins. Milk promotes crust browning and is NOT suitable for very high temperature baking where it may brown the crust excessively before the bread is half done. The ratio of water to flour is typically 0.81, or 13 ounces of water per pound of flour.)

Oil

Oils tenderize dough while increasing elasticity and producing a more tender crumb when added **in moderation**. Excessive fat or oil will shorten the gluten strands making the bread harder to rise and the texture crumbly. If using oil, one tablespoon oil or fat per 4 cups flour is a good proportion. I use olive oil in some of the recipes but mostly for coating the bowl used for the first rise or oiling the bread hook so the dough does to stick to it.

Yeasts

Nothing can beat the performance of commercial yeasts for preparing a quick bread. However, **the quality of bread has little or nothing to do with quick**; in fact, the opposite seems true. The research I have done favors the use of natural yeasts for a whole bunch of reasons:

- natural fermentation produces more nourishing conversion of flour components and improves the flavor and character of bread

- the bread tastes better
- naturally fermented bread remains fresh longer

Dr. Jacques de Langre, founder of the Celtic Sea Salt Company has this to say about yeasts in his article [Naturally Leavened Bread](#):

“There are two methods for leavening bread and they differ totally in the way they act on the flour, as well as on the taste and nutritional effect of the resulting bread and, in the end, on the health of the consumer. The aim of bread fermentation is to transform the various nutrients freed by the milling of the grain and to modify them for optimum assimilation during digestion.”

Dr. Langre goes on to explain that commercially yeasted breads have less conversion of phytic compounds which are reported to impair the absorption of minerals and trace elements such as calcium, zinc, and iron in humans. While bread made using natural leavening, the phytic acid compounds are reduced a further 49% to safe levels.



Saccharomyces cerevisiae (*S. cerevisiae*), a one-celled plant that is a variety of fungus, is the main yeast in many natural sourdough yeasts followed by the *Candida milleri*, *Candida humilis* (San Francisco fame), *S. exiguus*, and *Issatchenkia orientalis*. Strains of the yeast genus *Saccharomyces* have been used in bread manufacture for at least 6000 years. *S. cerevisiae* is also useful as a brewer's yeast to ferment sugars to alcohol in the brewing of beer. Several studies have been carried out on the micro-biology of sourdoughs in different geographical areas. Each sourdough can be considered a microhabitat in which yeasts and lactic bacteria exist together in dynamic equilibrium. The yeasts are responsible for the leavening the bread, while the lactic bacteria provide for the souring of the dough. The combined metabolic activity of the yeast and the lactic bacteria lead to the final bread flavors and characteristics and to a prolonged shelf-life. The dominant species in homemade sourdoughs can differ from each other even in kitchens on the same street let alone geographical area. The feeding and treatment of sourdough mixtures exerts a strong selective pressure on the yeasts present, thereby determining the dominance of some species over others. Never the less *S. cerevisiae*, *C. humilis*, *C. milleri*, *I. orientalis* and *S. exiguus* yeast are all suitable for bread-making. It has been estimated that less than 1% of yeast have actually been identified so it's entirely possible that the strains developed in your kitchen may be somewhat unique.

Where are the yeasts? How do you make a starter?

Yeast may be found in the liquid residue produced in the olive oil extraction process, on the outside of Keffir limes, from turbid beer, from the skins of organic unwashed grapes including concord grapes, on barley and hops, skins of bananas, the husk of wheat and in many organic whole grain unbleached flours (wheat and Rye), and, most importantly, floating around your kitchen. To make a sourdough starter you either need to start with a starter packet, get some sourdough from a generous friend's kitchen, or simply make a happy place to capture some wild yeast that will promote its growth and offer a happy home. Take ½ cup each of unbleached unbromated whole wheat or rye flour mixed with unbleached unbromated white flour and mix very well getting lots of air into the mixture in a glass or ceramic bowl with a cup of bottled water. Set this aside in your kitchen, away from the cat, dog, and preferable near a window that is high off the ground where lots of air circulates. Let the container stay uncovered for a week or so. Check it daily for bubbles and replace any lost water. When it starts to bubble, you're in business. Raising a starter is like raising a child; it takes some nourishment and care. Once you have a "live culture", you must feed it regularly. When you just getting it started, feeding should be every 12 hours. Discard half of the starter while adding back a half a cup of flour. Adding a little salt retards activity while adding more food, (water and flour), speeds up activity. The longer you have this, generally, the sourer it becomes. If you fail to feed it regularly, it may start producing acetone smells which means you gone too far. Once established and vibrant, the yeast starter can go into the refrigerator where it

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will require weekly feedings.

Measuring potency to assess leavening capability of the starter



After feeding the yeast, set the timer on your stove for 1 hour and come back to inspect the rise. For the yeast to be successful you'll want to get to the point with your starter that, once fed, it doubles in size in about an hour or two. When you reach this point you have a successful bread leavening batch.

Recommended Yeasts

SAF Red Instant Yeast

- An all-purpose, professional-grade brewer's instant yeast

- No need to proof, just add to flour

SAF Gold Instant Yeast

- A professional-grade yeast designed especially for doughs high in sugar (sweet breads)

- No need to proof, just add to flour

Flour

It is impossible to make great bread without using great flour. Flour is the main star. Flour with little or no character will make bread with little or no character. Candidate flour for breads are mostly hard and soft winter wheat varieties with 11%-12% protein levels and contain no bleach, no bromate, and no chemicals of any kind. Ash count is a measure of its mineral content. The higher the ash count, the more minerals are present in the flour. Self-rising flour with its added baking powder (and often salt) is not usually used in breads. In artisan baking applications, higher ash often plays a positive role interacting with yeasts and thought to enhance flavor as well with counts to 0.53 and 0.55. Vendors of bread flour formulate bread flour that attempt to mimic artisanal flour found in Italy and France. They charge more for this flour but they are worth every penny. By reading some research, one might think hard flour is those that is high in protein and gluten but that's an incomplete description. The feel of soft flour is softer than hard flour. Hard flour produces more bite as well. The US grows two types of wheat: hard and soft. Both have winter and spring crops, each of which produce red and white varieties. Hard wheat is high in protein and grows best in colder climates. (Durum wheat, the hardest kind of wheat, thrives in locations like Montana and Manitoba. Soft wheat is low in protein and grows plentifully in the Carolinas, where winters are usually mild and dry. Candidate flours include:

King Arthur Organic Artisan Flour

11.3 Protein, 0.54 Ash A certified-organic, all-purpose flour produced from hard red winter & spring wheats, with a protein level of 11.3%. Ideal for European-style hearth breads.

King Arthur Sir Galahad Artisan Bread Flour

11.7 Protein, 0.48 Ash. Enriched Milled entirely from American premium hard red winter wheat to produce traditional, more flavorful baked goods, hearth breads and pizza for artisan bakers with uncompromising standards.

King Arthur's Sir Lancelot Hi-Gluten Flour

14.2 Protein, 0.52 Ash • Enriched The finest 100% spring wheat high-gluten flour with unmatched absorption and performance for baked goods requiring extra strength.

King Arthur Flour's Type 65

(Protein 12% • Ash 0.55) King Arthur Flour's Type 65 is milled from a wheat blend that emphasizes the flour's overall performance making this the ideal flour for quality oriented bakers. This higher ash content contributes more color to the flour and results in a higher mineral content which aids fermentation and the development of flavor. This flour, while suitable for a wide

variety of hand crafted breads, will truly enhance breads using pre-ferments and/or natural leavening.

KA Italian-Style "00" Flour

Between 0.4 and 0.45 ash, 8.5% protein, made from soft red winter wheat, KA American clone of Italian 00 (00 means ground as fine as possible) flour is perfect for pizza, pasta, focaccia, and grissini (bread sticks). Makes an extremely supple, extensible dough. Ideal for light-as-air, tender pizza and other flatbreads. This is a substitute for all-purpose flour. When used with milk it is often used for Piazza Bianca – white pizza.

King Arthur European-Style Artisan Bread Flour

11.7% protein, 0.48 Ash. European-style artisan flour, a blend of winter and spring wheat enhanced with a touch of ascorbic acid and white whole wheat, makes an easy to work with, mellow dough, and bread with superb flavor. This is the style of medium-protein flour French and Italian bakers use for their signature hearth breads. I like this one a lot.

Pasta flour is discussed in the pasta section -see [page 195](#).

Graham Flour

Graham flour combines separately ground wheat endosperm with a courser grinding of the bran and wheat germ, creating a coarse textured brown flour with a nutty and slightly sweet flavor that bakes and keeps well. This flour is often used to make graham crackers and pie crusts, and breads and biscuits. King Arthur describes their graham flour as: "Whole wheat pastry flour is milled from low-protein soft wheat, producing a flour with a mellow 9% protein. Whole wheat pastry flour is milled from low-protein soft wheat, producing a flour with a mellow 9% protein. Use it in cookies, pie crusts, and hearty cakes"

Getting Started

Making bread is a lot like life; there are some surprises, and like life, learning to deal with the situation, is part of the growing process as a chef. The remediation section below will deal with specific problems and most problems have a remediation method.

When making bread, there are several ways to begin. The most conventional is to mix regular dry yeast with warm water and sugar and when it is dissolved and has sat for 10 minutes "proofing" (showing that it is active) then add it to the flour and other ingredients in the bread recipe. This is the quickest but least desirable method if attempting bread of a superior character. There are several forms of pre-fermentation that allow the yeast to develop before being added to the other ingredients. These are the more desirable methods although they take some time. To many artisanal bakers, the mineral content of the water is important for taste. In yeast breads, a higher water content results in more CO₂ bubbles, and a coarser bread crumb.

One form is a levain, a mixture of more flour than bottled water held in a jar that is vented. The use of some whole wheat or rye flour gives the yeast more "hold." The yeast gives off CO₂ but requires oxygen to survive. Periodically lift the lid and stir to help drive off the CO₂. A levain is fed at regular intervals by more additional flour and water. A levain a week old has time to develop a complex and fairly sour flavor. If the surface is bubbling the yeasts are active otherwise add more flour and bottled water.

A Italian term biga is a stiff mixture of bottled water, flour and yeast, used as a pre-fermentation or starter and is best if 12 to 18 hours or older. It too benefits from the inclusion of some whole wheat flour. The inclusion of rye is often used in the starter as rye flour has a higher sugar content than wheat causing rye to ferment quickly.

A poolish is a more liquid pre-fermentation, composed of roughly equal amounts of flour and bottled water, with yeast added. It ferments in 4 to 8 hours but can be allowed to go longer where some formula call for 14-16 hours at 70F (longer time if 60F). It adds a nutty taste to the bread. There will be bubbles on the surface, and the poolish will be much larger in volume. The poolish is then mixed in with the rest of the ingredients, and mixed to a dough at a desired temperature of around 76F~78F.

When using the electric mixer, it is a good idea to spray or otherwise coat the mixing paddle or dough hook with a film of oil or cooking spray. Many of the recipes called for in this book have high water content which produces a better bread with chewy character. These breads are difficult to almost impossible to knead by hand. While the dough blade of your food processor may be up to the task of kneading the dough and is not an ideal instrument as it can only handle a small capacity and secondly, the blade tends to cut through the dough rather than knead it. A sturdy home mixer equipped with a dough hook works reasonably well.

Too much flour will produce a fine grained bread with less character than an optimum ratio of flour to liquid. A dough that is initially quite sticky will become more manageable after its first rising.

The role of salt in bread making is important. In fact it seems quite extraordinary that exactly the right amount of salt to make

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bread taste good also is the right amount to retard yeast growth just the right amount such that glutens have time to develop while sufficient amount of yeast is still around for a proper rising. Can you see the hand of Divinity in the fact that naturally ground flour salt and water, and a little time, will produce naturally fermented bread just with the yeast to be found on wild grain.

Commercially, bakers prefer to weigh their ingredients so as to eliminate some the variability in bread making. They, of course are dealing with large volumes of flour and water. The home chef, after several bread making occurrences, will come to understand the water balance. If you're going to make an error here, make it on the side of stickier wetter dough. "Too wet" dough is easiest to remedy by adding flour.

When the bread ingredients first come together let them rest for 20 minutes before the first kneading. During this time the flour hydrates which helps promote better yeast formation as it takes a moist avenue on which yeast travel. You can simply let the bread ingredients rest in the bowl of your mixer covered with a wet towel where the first kneading will occur. This is a good approach as the flour water mixture may initially be quite sticky until such time as the glutens and developed and done their magic. Too often home baker may be tempted to use enough flour such that the dough isn't sticky but the result would be a brick-like loaf better suited as a doorstep than something to eat. A lot is heard about "adding all the flour a dough will hold" which could be interpreted to make a cannon ball. In reality, a simple test is used during the second kneading. If your palm pressed into the dough still sticks to the dough after being in place for ten seconds then work in a touch more flour.

Ratios

A ratio of 3 cups of bread flour to one cup of water will produce a 1 ½ pound loaf of bread which is a fairly standard size. Dough should be on the wet side. Slightly wetter bread dough is more ductile and rises faster. After the first rising, these dough are generally more manageable. Professional bakers weigh their ingredients as the water content of flour changes. I don't really bother any more. I start with the amount of flour I want and an approximate amount of water. Initially, ALL of the dough I mix are too wet. Then I add more flour until I get the desire consistency. For the sake of recipe development I am more precise but take the amount of water on advisement. What matters is the dough should be sticky at first and after the first rising less sticky but not necessarily completely stick-free.

First Mix Resting Period - Autolyse

After the ingredients are first mixed, as stated earlier, ingredients need to rest for at least 20 minutes. The French have a word for this, its called *Autolyse*. This allows the water to penetrate the flour and help yeast distributed itself in the mixture. You can simply leave everything in the mixing bowl and cover the bowl with a wet towel. Whole grains and coarsely ground grains require a longer period to absorb water, even a hour is not too much.

Kneading

After the resting period is over, switch to the dough hook attachment. Oil hook so the dough does not stick to it. If processing a large batch of dough, divide it into more manageable pieces and knead them separately, one at a time.

We knead bread in order to "develop the gluten" in the bread. Long strands of gluten give the bread increased surface tension that helps it hold its shape and helps the dough hold its bubbles. A bread dough is achieved that can expand as carbon dioxide is produced and expand, yet will resist stretching enough to keep the loaf from bursting or stretching too thin. So gluten is what makes bread spongy and chewy. When using a high powered mixer, the amount of kneading required is reduced due to the vigor and force of the machine. Knead with dough hook until the dough resists. A slow kneading speed avoids overheating the dough. While it is not very likely hand-kneading would over work the gluten, a machine can. Excessive kneading could make the bread tougher than desirable. During the second kneading, knead with the dough hook until dough is shiny and elastic.

Optional refrigeration time

At this stage, the dough may be refrigerated for a day. The extra time may be useful for creating character in the bread. At the temperature of the refrigerator everything grinds to snails pace. To resume, remove the dough from the refrigerator and follow the steps below for the first rise. This will take appreciably longer because the dough must return to room temperature before the yeast resumes its full activity.

First Rise

Liberally grease the entire inside of a large bowl with olive oil. Empty the dough into the bowl and roll the dough around so as the coat the entire surface with a film of oil. Cover the bowl with a wet towel and allow the dough to rise in a warm place. This is where the patience comes to play. There is no rushing this step.

How Many Rises Are There?

Generally, there are only two rises. After the first rise, the dough is kneaded again then left to rise to the desired size where upon it is baked. This is not always the case, several recipes called for three rises where the third rise is followed by baking. Each recipe will be specific. The roll of kneading is very important – see kneading.

Baking

All crusty breads are baked in ovens with high humidity. The best way of getting a hot and steamy oven is to preheat a pan to put on the bottom shelf and fill it with a 2 pints of boiling water. (In a gas oven, the pan can go on the bottom of the oven.) When I want to really crunchy crust I will spray the loaf with a mist of water. Rustic crusty breads having only flour, water, salt, and yeast as ingredients are baked in very hot ovens typically 450 F or hotter. Breads baked with milk solids, lecithin, pectin, sugar, egg additives are typically baked between 350 and 375 Fahrenheit to avoid burning the outside of the bread.

Final Baked Color

The color of the loaf darkens with baking time and temperature as does the moisture content. My recipe for pane casareccio di Genzano will produce a standard colored loaf at 205 F final temperature while a deep reddish brown at 220 F final temperature.

Folding wet doughs

As the dough ferments it loosens up, thus forming flatter loaves. With a slightly extended fermentation and extra folding, the loaves hold their shape better due to increase surface tension. Use a scraper if the dough is really sticky, use your non-scraper hand to pull and shove the dough around and the scraper to fold it over on itself.

Surface Treatments

The outside of the dough may be dusted with whole-wheat flour, ground bran or other flours for a desired effect. For a shiny bread crust, brush the top with a mixture of 1 beaten egg and 1 tablespoon of milk before baking. To glaze the tops of rolls, brush with a mixture of 1 tablespoon sugar and ¼ cup milk before baking. For a soft, well-browned but not shiny crust, before baking brush the loaf with a tablespoon of melted butter. For a crisp, shiny crust, bake the bread for 20 minutes, then remove from the oven and brush with an egg white that has been beaten with a tablespoon of water. Return the bread to the oven to finish baking. **Caution: If high temperature (400+) baking is used, avoid milk or eggs as the bread's exterior will burn.**

Shaping

During the final rise, breads take on the shape of the container they are in, or, if unrestrained, slump out to a large pancake. If baking a loaf in the loaf pan, the bread is allowed to rise to fill and mushroom the container for a nice vaulted loaf, or the pan loaf is filled with shape sectional pieces of dough (often cylinders or balls) that, as they rise, join, and thereby form a distinctive appearing loaf. Many commercial forms are available to the home baker. I have used two pieces of tin pipe for forming loaves. *Couche* is the French word for “couch” or “resting place.” In the bread baking world, a *couche* is a piece of heavy canvas that is dusted with flour and used to support freestanding loaves, such as rolls and baguettes, while they are proofing. Wetter doughs may be proofed in forms called a brotform, brotformen or banneton, these bread molds are used for the rising of the dough. The basket coils and flour dusting provide a beautiful shape and decor for a traditional hearth loaf.

If you suspend a floured muslin cloth in a bowl, it makes a nearly ideal couche for a round loaf without it pancaking to a flat mass. An inverted bowl cap above can serve to prevent loss of moisture while rising.

Additives

In the following tables are various additives to bread and their typical purposes. The list is by no means exhaustive and the effects of adding these in combination may change the way the bread needs to be baked or how much water is required, the final texture of the bread and/or crust or how the dough is kneaded.

Availability codes for flour source or manufacturer:

AZ – Amazon, KK – Kitchen Krafts, KA - King Arthur Flour, WF – Whole Foods Markets, GS – Grocery Store, HF – Health food Store, BF - Barry Farm Foods

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Ingredients in Breads

Avl = Availability codes

Bread Additive Improver	Function/ Remarks	Quantity	Avl
ammo-nium car-bonate	Aka Baker's Ammonia. Leavening agent called for in some cream puff, cookie, and springerle recipes. Makes extra-crisp cookies or crackers. Use in old-fashioned recipes calling for it (or for hartshorn). Unlike baking powder or soda, Bakers' Ammonia (ammonium carbonate) leaves no unpleasant alkaline off-flavor in baked goods. It is not used for cakes or other large items because the ammonia gas cannot evaporate from these items. You will notice an odor of ammonia while baking, but this will quickly dissipate and the baked product will not have an odor or taste of ammonia.	Use like baking powder in cookies or crackers	KA, KK
Ascorbic Acid (Vita-min C)	Creates an acidic environment for the yeast which helps it work better. It also acts as a bread preservative. With just a touch of ascorbic acid, your Artisan breads, the yeast will work longer and faster. SAF-Instant Yeast Red Label already includes acidic acid.	1/8 teaspoon per 2 pounds of flour	KA AZ
Barley malt syrup	improved shelf life	~	KA AZ
Buck-wheat flour	a low-gluten gray flour that's great in pancakes and pastas. baked goods heavier and stronger tasting	Replaces up to half of the wheat flour in any recipe	KA, WF GS AZ
Buttermilk	Buttermilk helps the yeast work quicker. It also softens the texture of the bread. Like with any acid addition it also helps keep the bread fresher longer. Add a half to one teaspoon of baking soda to offset the tartness of the buttermilk, if desired. The tartness is reminiscent of sourdough bread.	½ Cup Replace part of the liquid in the recipe.	KA
Cake Flour	Cake flour makes for a softer more tender bread. It also makes a good addition to pizza dough as it helps make rolling out the dough easier.	¼ of the flour called for in the recipe (no more).	KA AZ
Cheese, powdered	bread, bread sticks, crackers and pizza.	~	KA AZ
Dough Relaxer	A combination of all-natural, gluten relaxing ingredients. It's useful so you don't have to fight the dough when it is shaped and rolled, because of its gluten strands. However, you can also just relax the dough during shaping by covering it with a towel and letting it rest for 5 - 10 minutes on your countertop.	Add a few table-spoons to your favorite recipe.	KA AZ
Dry Acid Whey	It is the essence of buttermilk with out the milk solids. It helps promote an improved environment for the yeast and also acts as a preservative deterring mold and bacterial growth. When buying Dry Acid Whey (also known as sour whey) make sure has the word "acid" otherwise most likely it is sweet whey which is not what is needed. Acid Whey is obtained during making of an acid type of cheese such as cottage cheese.	1 teaspoon per 2 pounds of flour	KA
Dry But-ter-milk Powder	Adds moisture & subtle flavor to your baked goods (see buttermilk)	1 part powder to 4 parts water.	KA AZ
Dry Eggs Whites	Pasteurized (see egg whites)	~	KA AZ
Dry Eggs Yolks	Pasteurized, for those times when it's more convenient to use dried eggs instead of fresh. (see eggs)	~	KA AZ
Dry Milk	Not to be confused with Instant Non-fat Dry Milk Powder. Milk helps with crust browning, bread moisture, taste and nutritional value. It also helps the dough to relax for those times you want to roll it out or shape it. Dry milk or powdered milk work the same.	1 Tablespoon per cup of flour	KA, GS AZ
Eggs	Eggs add rise, color, texture and taste to bread. Also, if you use the yolk as well you get some of the effects like using lecithin.	1 Egg may replace part of the liquid in the recipe.	~
Fats	Fats help with taste, texture and the moisture of the bread. Most French bread recipes don't contain fat as it takes away the chewiness of the bread. You don't need to be worried about the fat content of most bread. Most recipes use a tablespoon or two and that is for the whole loaf. A single slice is very low in fat.	1 Tablespoon per cup of flour	~

Garlic	Garlic is a flavoring in larger amounts, but in smaller amounts it helps the yeast, and it make the dough easier to roll. Garlic serves as a preservative deterring mold and bacterial growth.	1 teaspoon	~
Gelatin	Gelatin helps with bread texture and moisture. It is also of nutritional value and is good for the hair and fingernails. Make sure to use unflavored gelatin powder; do not reconstitute.	1 teaspoon per 2 pounds of flour. Add with dry ingredients.	GS AZ
Ginger	Ginger is a yeast booster it gives it a “quick-start”, and keeps it working. Because of its astringent properties it also helps keep the bread fresher longer and it deters mold and bacterial growth. It is best to used powdered ginger in your bread.	¼ teaspoon per 2 pounds of flour	~
Kamut Flour	A high gluten grain flour suitable for yeasted breads used alone or in combination with wheat flour. Works well in pasta when used in combination with other flours.	~	KA AZ
Lecithin, powder	Assist in keeping bread fresher longer and helps make a lighter moister bread. Cuts back on use of fat but result may alter both the texture and flavor of the original recipe. Lecithin is derived from soy or egg yolks.	Use 1 to 2 table- spoons per 3 cups of flour	KA AZ
Malt Powder, Diastatic	Active enzymes (mainly amylases and proteases) help yeast grow fully and efficiently throughout the fermentation period. The proteases break the proteins in the flour down into amino acids, which also spurs yeast growth, as well as improving the flavor and aroma in breads. Diastatic malt powder or barley malt extracts are often used in professional bakeries to add nutrition, improve texture/appearance, and promote the keeping quality of the bread. Breads that require second rises (pumpernickel, rye and other hearth breads) can benefit from a dose.	Replace a table- spoon of sugar or sweetener in your favorite bread recipe with a half- teaspoon of diastatic malt powder, or two tablespoons of malt extract. Add ½ to 1 teaspoon per 3 cups of flour	AZ WF BF
Non-Diastatic Malt	Diastatic malt without the enzyme activity capability.	Used as a sweetener.	KA
oat flour	Low gluten, good in quick breads and cookies for moister, chewier, and more crumbly texture	~	KA AZ
Pectin	Pectin adds moistness to the bread and it replaces fat in the bread. This is the same pectin used to make jams and jellies. It comes in liquid and granular form. The granules are easier to work with and store.	1 teaspoon per 2 pounds of flour	KA GS
rice flour	Gluten-Free flour more suited for cookies or cakes	~	KA
scalded milk	Milk contributes better nutrition (extra calcium) and a tenderer crumb. Scalding the milk disables protease, an enzyme that normally slows down yeast growth	~	~
Sea Salt	Higher in minerals	replaces standard salt	KA, WF AZ
Spelt Flour	High gluten grain flour suitable for yeasted breads used alone or in combination with wheat flour. Makes breads heavier. Also useful in pasta	~	WF AZ
Sour Cream	Body and taste to sweet breads	~	~
Sourdough Flavor	King Arthur’s all-natural shortcut to sourdough-flavored bread, pancakes, biscuits which includes all-natural sourdough flavor, pumpernickel flour, and deactivated dry yeast. This product contains naturally fermented lactic acid, vinegar, citric acid, natural flavors, rye flour, corn starch, and inactive yeasts. As this is an acid-donor, baking soda and this would form a leavening agent for pancakes.	“Add by the table- spoonful to your favorite recipe to create or enhance sourdough flavor.”	KA

Breads and Muffins

Vital Wheat Gluten	Vital wheat gluten occurs naturally in all wheat and wheat derived white flours. Gluten is what makes wheat-based bread dough sticky and elastic. This helps the dough hold in the air bubbles created by the yeast so that the dough will rise. Some white flours have more or less than others. In a dry form, it is used to give the yeast a boost because it contains a high amount of gluten forming proteins. Vital wheat gluten only does one thing, it helps improve the rise and texture of bread. With out it you have a rock, door stop, paper weight. Use it in your heavier breads that rise slowly, such as rye, whole grains, or ones loaded with sugar, dried fruit and nuts. Do not add it to regular bread recipes. Some people use it all the time when using a Bread Machine especially when using whole grain or all-purpose flour. Generally, if you are using white bread flour you don't need to add any. However, all-purpose or whole grain flours need Vital Wheat Gluten if bread making.	Use 1 teaspoon per cup of all-purpose or 1- 2 teaspoons per cup of bread flour; 1-½ to 3 teaspoons for every cup of whole grain or rye flours.	KA, GS
wheat germ	makes for a more nutritious bread, grainy, course flavor.	use less than a ratio 1 portion to 8 portions regular flour in bread	KA, GS
wheat or rice bran	All forms of bran add fiber but the rough edges work against forming gluten chains hence can contribute a heavier bread that is hard to rise. Additionally, bran soaks up and retains a lot of liquid.	~	KA, GS
yellow corn flour	Contributes a lighter texture, has beta carotene (Vitamin A builder).	~	GS
Inactive Yeast and Yeast By-products	Brewer's yeast is an inactive yeast, meaning the yeasts have been killed and have no leavening power. It is the yeast remaining after beer making. It is used as a nutrient supplement to increase vitamin B content. Nutritional yeast is a primary grown food crop, which means it is cultivated specifically for use as a nutritional supplement.		HF

Other Additives:

For additional sweetness or character consider: dates, apricots, blueberries, brown sugar, cherries, currants, cranberries, barberries, molasses, raisins, sugar, and honey.

For spices or flavors consider: all spice, balsamic vinegar, bell pepper, caraway seeds, cardamom, celery seeds, chopped bacon, ham, salami, chopped basil, chopped parsley, cinnamon, dried onion flakes, garlic powder, ground almonds, marjoram, onion powder, onion soup mix, oregano, red pepper, white pepper, rosemary, sage, chestnut flour, almond flour, sun dried tomatoes, thyme, and olives.

For interest, crunch and nutrition consider: mustard seeds, poppy seeds, caraway seeds, cracked wheat, flaxseed, pine nuts, sesame seeds, chestnuts, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, practically any seed, and various types of bran.

Remediation Methods

Dough Does Not Rise

If the dough does not rise, make another batch of dough using double the amount of fresh yeast. (Do not get yeast or liquid hotter than 85F) When the new dough is very wet, begin adding in egg size pieces of the inactive dough. Keep the mixture wet to facilitate joining the two doughs. If the capacity of the mixer will obviously be exceeded, pour off half of the new mix into another bowl before starting to mix in the inactive dough. Mix one batch, correct the amount of flour and when it is right, empty it in a oiled bowl to rise. Start on the second half and repeat the process. Now you have twice as much bread, but it's now all active.

Dough is slumping and Will Not Form a Decent Round.

The dough has too much water. Push it down and kneed in more flour. You **cannot** add volumes of flour without kneading well or the loaf may split or cook in layers. Reform a loaf. The additional rising will only improve its character.

Dough is Hard as a Rock or is Very Difficult to Knead

Get a warm bowl of water handy. Dip your hand in the water and knead the bread. Repeat the process until you have worked enough water into the dough that it has become supple and easy to knead.

Forgot to Bake the Bread and the Dough Has Over Risen

Push the dough down and reform the loaf. The additional rising will only improve its character.

Baked Bread exterior Seems Gummy

Put the slice back on the cut loaf and return loaf to hot oven. Bake another 10 minutes or so.

The Baked Crust Is Hard as a Rock

When the bread has cooled some but still is warm, place it in a plastic bag and seal it. Allow bread to rest in sealed bag for several hours. Crust should soften. If still quite hard, wet your hand several times and wipe inside surface of bag. Reseal bag, and leave loaf for several more hours.

Bread Tastes Flat

You forgot the salt. Use salty condiments, cheese or salumi.

Note:

1. Microbiological studies^{1} have been carried out on sourdoughs in different geographical areas were predominantly [80%] type strains of *S. cerevisiae* and that the majority of the sourdoughs was characterized by the presence of more than one strain. That milk changes to cheese, and grapes to wine and flour to bread all by accident would be hard to believe.
2. *Occurrence And Dominance of Yeast Species in Sourdough*, A. Pulvirenti¹, L. Solieri¹, M. Gullo, L. De Vero¹ and P. Giudici Dipartimento di Scienze Agrarie, Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia, and 2DOFATA, sez. Tecnologie Alimentari, Catania, Italy, 24 November 2003

Almond Bread

2 Large eggs, room temperature
¾ Cup milk, room temperature or more
1 ½ Teaspoons each of vanilla extract and almond extract
½ Teaspoon orange extract
4 Teaspoons poppy seeds
2 Cups flour
1/3 Cup oil
1 Cup sugar + 2 tablespoons
1 Teaspoon baking powder
½ Cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
½ Teaspoon salt

Butter a 9 x 5 x 3 inch loaf pan. In a mixer, combine the flour, baking soda, and salt and mix on low speed for about 30 seconds or until blended. Add the softened butter and an egg Mix on low speed until the dry ingredients are moistened. Increase the mixer speed to medium and beat for about one minute. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. On medium, gradually add the remaining egg, extracts and oil. Add enough milk so that a loosen batter forms. Add poppy seeds. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan. Bake at 350 F for 50 to 60 minutes or until the cake is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for about 10 minutes, then remove from pan to cool completely.

Blueberry Muffins

2 ¼ Cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1 ½ Teaspoons baking powder
½ Teaspoon baking soda
½ Teaspoon salt
7 Tablespoons softened unsalted butter
¾ Cup granulated sugar
2 Large eggs
2 Teaspoons vanilla extract
1/3~½ Cup cream
1 ½ Cups blueberries, fresh or frozen

Breads and Muffins

Turbinado sugar as a crunchy topping

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a muffin tin with papers.

Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, with salt in a separate bowl. Set aside until needed.

Cream butter and sugar until light. Scrape down the bowl with a spatula occasionally. Beat in eggs one at a time. Scrape down the bowl. Add vanilla and cream. Mix in dry ingredients on low speed but only till the batter is smooth. It should be thick like mashed potatoes. If too thick, add a bit more cream.

Fold in the berries by hand trying to keep them whole. Optionally, put these in the freezer for 10 minutes ahead of time to firm them up.

Scoop the batter into the prepared muffin cups, using a heaping ¼-cup for each muffin (2/3 full). I like using two spoons as the batter is not free flowing. Sprinkle with top of each muffin with turbinado sugar.

Place muffin pan in oven on middle rack. Reduce heat to 375 F. Bake the muffins for 22 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean and muffins are golden brown. Remove from the oven. Cool in the pan for 5 minutes, then remove the muffins from the pan to finish cooling on a rack.

Blueberry Corn Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

Preheat oven to 400° F. Line a muffin pan with paper liners.

1 cup Kenyon's Stone-Ground yellow corn meal¹
1 cup King Arthur's Organic Select Artisan Flour
1/3 Cup cane sugar
2 Teaspoons baking powder
½ Teaspoons baking soda
¼ Teaspoons salt
1 Cup buttermilk
¼ Pound melted sweet butter
1 Egg
1 Teaspoon pure bourbon or Tahitian vanilla extract
2 Cups fresh whole blueberries

Mix together the flour and baking powder. Add cornmeal, sugar, and salt to the other dry ingredients. In a mixer, beat egg, and then add buttermilk, vanilla, butter, and the dry ingredients. Beat until well combined. Batter should be reasonable thick, add more flour if necessary. Fold in the blueberries.

Fill each muffin cup two-thirds full with batter. Bake muffins until firm and golden, 20 to 25 minutes.

Note:

1. Kenyon Grist Mill Ground Yellow Corn Meal “We've been getting the most flavorful yellow corn from a Long Island farmer, the sweet aroma released when grinding permeates the entire mill! This is perfect for a deep yellow corn bread, authentic polenta, dumplings or hush puppies.” Kenyon's Grist Mill, Usquepaugh, West Kingston, RI 02892

Boston Brown Bread

2 1/3 Cup rye flour
4 2/3 Cup corn meal
1 Cup graham flour
½ Cup of molasses or brown sugar
1/3 Cup sugar
1 teaspoonful of salt
1 Tablespoon Red SAF Instant yeast
Warm water
1 ½ Teaspoon baking soda dissolved in a tablespoon of warm water
Optionally add 1 cup dried currants

Combine flour, instant yeast, molasses, sugar, salt and enough water to form a stiff dough. Let it rise several hours, or over night. Beat in baking soda water mixture. Place dough in several well-greased, deep bread-pans, cover with a damp cloth and let each pan rise again. (Initially, fill pans only half full to allow room for rise.) Cover each baking pan with several layers of heavy tin foil to form a perfect seal. Place pans in a bain-marie with a ½ inch of boiling water and bake in a 300 F oven from three to four hours. Check the water level every hour, add more boiling water if needed. A skewer in the bread will come out clean when done. (This recipe is based on a recipe originally from Palmer House, Chicago.)

Bread Starter, Quick

Also see next recipe for a more flavorful bread starter

- 1 Cup warmed bottled water, 85~90 F
- 1 Tablespoon of SAF Red Instant yeast
- 1 Cup all purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon sugar

Mix well in a small bowl. The mixture should be like pudding so add more water if necessary.

Let stand for 1 hour before using. If using a starter instead of just yeast in a recipe, reduce the water and flour in that recipe by 1 cup each.

Bread Starter, Steve's Not In a Hurry

Bread starter helps bread have character. You may not rush the process if you want the **big** flavors. Think of yeast is like a pet, you have to feed it daily. If you don't treat your pet well he could die.

Use a (medium) bowl or a specialty container made for this purpose that will hold daily feedings of unbleached white flour and water.

- Start with 2 cups warmed bottled water
- 1 tablespoon of SAF Red Instant yeast
- 2 cups rye flour

Mix well. The mixture should be like pudding so add more water if necessary.

If the lid of what your using does not have holes, cover with clear wrap, perforate a few fine holes to let out CO₂. Let starter set on counter for 5 or more days. A glass crock work well for a starter jar and you can see what's happening. I drill the lid with a carborundum drill bit to vent the jar: My wife not found of it and keeps moving the jar to the pantry where it harder to remember to feed the starter regularly. You might have more success in your kitchen with something more attractive and opaque.

Feed each day with a cup of flour and water. Stir and recover.

Cat Head Biscuits and Sawmill Gravy

This simple sawmill gravy gets its name from the logging camps that sprang up in the early 1900s in the South. The days of the logging camps are gone, but this comfort dish as breakfast and the memories linger on.

- 1 Pound bulk pork sausage
- 3 Tablespoons flour
- 1 Tablespoon or more of butter
- 1 Can evaporated milk
- ¼ Cup or more of whole milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Extra melted or softened butter for biscuits

Garnish

Breads and Muffins

Parsley, finely chopped

Pre-heat oven to 450 F.

Follow recipe for Bisquick biscuits on the side of the Bisquick box. Prepare biscuits per recipe and place them not touching each other in a tin pan. These bake in 10 minutes so don't put them in the oven until the gravy is about ready. The biscuits can be any size, if you make them large, they are called "cat head biscuits" because the biscuits are the size of a cat's head.

Fry sausage in a regular pan (not a non-stick) until cooked and crumbly. Set sausage aside. Add flour to an equal volume of pork grease and sticky bits to make a roux. Add extra butter if its needed. Cook, stirring constantly, until flour is just turning a light brown. Take pan off heat, whisk in 1 can evaporated milk and ¼ cup of milk to start, scraping bottom on pan to loose sticky bits. Return to medium heat. The sauce will not be its thickest until it has come to a boil. Place biscuits in the oven. Simmer the gravy. If necessary, add additional milk to thin the gravy. Correct the seasoning adding pepper, white pepper, and crumbled sausage, the adjust salt. Serve over split hot buttered biscuits. Garnish parsley.

Cheddar Scallion Drop Biscuits

Preheat oven to 450 F.

Makes 12 biscuits

2 ¼ Cups all-purpose flour
2 ½ Teaspoons baking powder
2 Teaspoons sugar
1 Teaspoon baking soda
1 Teaspoon salt
½ Teaspoon cream of tarter
1 Teaspoon onion powder
6 Tablespoons (¾ stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
6 Ounces cheddar, coarsely grated (1 ½ cups)
3 Scallions, finely chopped
1 Cup buttermilk

Shift flour, baking powder, sugar, onion powder, cream of tarter, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. Blend in butter with your fingertips until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in grated cheddar and chopped scallions. Add buttermilk and stir until just combined.

Drop dough in 12 equal mounds about 2 inches apart onto a buttered large baking sheet. Bake in middle of oven until golden, 18 to 20 minutes.

Cinnamon Toast

About cinnamon spice and everything nice~

Cinnamon is one of the oldest spices and has been prized since the beginning of civilization. It is said that the emperor Nero burned a kings ransom amount of it at the funeral of his wife, Poppaea Sabina as an indication of his remorse after kicking her and their unborn to death. That's a morbid bit of news before breakfast.

"Any moron can make cinnamon toast" is probably a true statement but it takes a special moron to make it gourmet food and I am just the man for the job. If there were just one thing I was allowed say about cooking (as if I could contain myself for even one second) is that superior ingredients make superior results and if any recipe were simpler and more evident in the results than this, I would be hard pressed to think of one.

2 Slices Italian Ciabatta bread⁴ or sourdough bread cut thin
2 Teaspoons softened European Style sweet Butter²
2 Tablespoons Demerara sugar crystals
4 Teaspoons ground cinnamon³
¼ Cup sugar

In a small cup, combine the sugar and cinnamon and stir or shake until completely mixed as cinnamon sugar.

Use a toaster to very lightly toast the bread. Butter the top side of each slice and add half the cinnamon sugar. Now toast in a toaster oven but just before done, add the remainder of the cinnamon sugar. Bet you can't eat just one.

When it comes to ingredients, you can amaze yourself by doing a bit of research on the internet as to what is the better product in any category. Certainly the neighbor gourmet store has a reasonable facsimile for any of the products mentioned above. Don't use stale old ingredients. I have noticed that even my dog Macho, a discerning boxer of exception breeding, likes his ingredient fresh as possible as he will take tidbits straight from the refrigerator if it is left open long enough. He seems to prefer the solitude of the backyard for assailing the freshness of these morsels as he is yet to show the level of sophistication wherein he dines sitting at the table.

Notes:

1. Demerara sugar crystals - Demerara area of Guyana, South America, from which it originally came). These are larger crystals with some crunch to them.
2. Straus Family Creamery European Style sweet Butter fresh churned in small batches that are rich, sweet and creamy, with 85% butterfat content. Named "One of the top premium butters in America" by Food and Wine Magazine.
3. Unquestionably, the cinnamon most often used by American bakers comes from the cassia type of cinnamon. Indonesia and Vietnam supplies two types: Korintje and Vera. Korintje characteristically has a slightly more intensive color and flavor than the Vera and is rated the better type. In general, Korintje is deep reddish brown and has a sharp cinnamon flavor. If you want to go over the top here, buy the product in stick format then grind and pound it into a powder in a mortar. Vietnamese cinnamon is also excellent and now is readily available.
4. Ciabatta has quite a few holes but despite this is very tasty. For less holes use sourdough.

Corn Bread Western

There are as many recipes for corn bread as cooks. The corn bread recipe uses extra eggs and is slightly sweeter and moister than Northern style corn bread. The Southern style corn bread uses less sugar and adds more milk or even buttermilk. This corn bread is great with soups and bean dishes. We like it with clam chowder. Day old cornbread is great in the morning buttered then fried until browned and then topped with jam. Corn bread recipes are easily modified. "Cornier" corn bread has 1 ¼ cups corn meal to ¾ cup flour ratio, and is often made added vegetable shortening.

- 1 Cup yellow corn meal
- 1 Cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 Cup granulated sugar
- 2 Teaspoons baking powder
- 1 Teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ Teaspoon cream of tarter
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 2/3 Cup milk
- 1/3 Cup cream
- 1/3 Cup melted butter
- 2 Large egg plus 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten

Preheat oven to 425°F. Butter an 8-inch square metal baking pan or cast iron pan.

Combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, cream of tarter and salt in your mixer bowl and mix well. Combine milk, cream in a pyrex cup and heat in microwave until warm. Beat eggs and egg yolk in small bowl lightly then whisk in warmed milk cream mixture. Melt butter and have handy. Add egg, cream and milk mixture to flour mixture while whisking on medium until well blended. Using a spatula, wipe down side of bowl. If mixture is still a bit too thick, whisk in a little warm water. Now pour in melted butter while whisking on medium. Whisk another 30 seconds. Pour into buttered baking pan. Level pan by giving the pan a quick quarter turn.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown and the edges have pulled away from the pan or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Serve warm.

Corn Madeleines

- 1 ¾ Cups cornmeal
- ¼ Cup flour
- ¼ Teaspoon cayenne, or to taste
- ¼ Teaspoon white pepper

Breads and Muffins

- ½ Teaspoon salt
- 2 Teaspoons baking powder
- ½ Teaspoons baking soda
- ¼ Teaspoon cream of tarter
- 2 Tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 Cup whole milk, warmed
- 2 Eggs plus 1 egg yolk, beaten
- 4 Tablespoons butter, melted plus extra for pans
- ½ Cup fresh sweet corn kernels with the cob milk
- All purpose flour for dusting pans

Preheat the oven to 425 F.

Scrape corn kernels from the cobs using a tablespoon. Scrape some of the cob milk into a bowl as well.

Butter a 12-cookie madeleine pan. Dust pan with flour and knock out any excess. Stir together the cornmeal, flour, cayenne, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and cream of tarter. In a bowl, dissolve the sugar in the warmed milk. Add the eggs and the butter to the milk, whisking to mix. Add the milk mixture and the corn kernels to the dry ingredients and stir just until mixed. If too loose, add a little more cornmeal. Use 1 slightly rounded tablespoon of batter for each corn madeleine. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes, or until the bottom of each cake is golden.

Repeat with remaining batter, butter and dusting the pan for each batch.

Cummings Monkey Bread

By Mary Cummings, Laneview School Collective Cookbook. Vicki was a great organizer for the Laneview school's PTA and put together this fund-raiser that self published this Collective cook book. This is a favorite at family breakfast.

Preheat oven to 350 F.

For Rolling

- 1 Cup white sugar
- 1 Tablespoon or more of ground cinnamon
- 4 (12 Ounce) cans refrigerated buttermilk biscuit dough

Topping

- ½ Cup butter
- ½ Cup dark brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon or more of ground cinnamon

Mix cinnamon and sugar together. Cut biscuits into halves, and roll each piece in the cinnamon and sugar mixture. Layer biscuits in a well grease Bundt pan.

Topping

Melt butter, and dissolve the dark brown sugar with ground cinnamon and spoon over biscuits evenly.

Bake in a preheated 350 F oven for 30~35 minutes. Turn out onto a platter, and serve warm. When not too hot, pull apart to eat.

Focaccia Pan Bread

The recipe makes a light, tender focaccia due to the style of flour. When you buy the KA Italian "00" flour a similar recipe is on the bag. Their recipe helped derived this one but this one has been modified to provide a compromise texture. The focaccia bakes in a pan atop parchment paper. In Italy baked focaccia is often served with any combinations of good things on hand from fresh buffalo mozzarella, anchovies, prosciutto, basil and other herbs, or fresh garden tomatoes.

- 3 Cups King Arthur Italian "00" Flour
- ¾ Cup King Arthur French Style Flour
- 1 Teaspoon Ever-Fresh (a mixture of sugar, ascorbic and citric acid)
- 2 Tablespoons finely ground parmesan cheese
- 1 Teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon SAF Red instant yeast

2 Tablespoons extra virgin unfiltered fruity olive oil
1 1/2 Cups bottled water or more if needed (see text)

Top with

2 Tablespoons olive oil
Coarse Kosher or sea salt
2 Sprigs finely chopped fresh rosemary

In a bowl, add 3/4 cup King Arthur French Style Flour, Ever-Fresh, yeast and 1/2 cup of water. Mix with a fork and let sit partially covered (leave a vent hole or two) for an hour or more.

In a mixing bowl, add all of the yeast mixture, 1/2 cup of additional bottled water, the salt, garlic powder, parmesan cheese, olive oil. With a little extra oil, oil the paddle and the hook of the mixer. Using the paddle first, on low speed, start adding the balance of the flour. When it's starting to get thick, switch to the hook attachment. Slowly add the rest of the flour. If it looks like it getting too thick, add more water. We want a slightly sticky dough at this point. Let the dough rest 40 minutes while you cover the mixer bowl with a wet towel.

Meanwhile, using additional oil, lightly oil the inside of a large metal or glass bowl where the dough will be able to double in size as it rises. If it not a warm day, well need to prepare a warm place for the dough to rise. A great place is the oven. Bring to a boil a large pot of water to put in the oven to make the oven warm and moist.

After hydrating and resting the dough, knead it with the hook for 5 minutes with the machine on low. Place dough in oiled bowl, turning it to coat the dough. Cover with a wet towel. Place in warm spot. Let it rise for an hour or until doubled. Remove it from the bowl. The dough should be soft and highly pliable. Knead the dough a few times, and let it rise again (second rising is usually twice as fast as the first.)

Place the dough onto a large shallow parchment-lined baking pan. Using your palms and fingers work the dough to a rectangular shape until the dough is reasonable flat and about a 1/4 inch thick. Brush or rub the dough generously with olive oil, and sprinkle lightly with coarse Kosher or sea salt and rosemary. Cover the focaccia either with a wet towel or an identical baking pan inverted if the pan lip is tall enough not to impeded rising. Let rise in a warm place to rise for about 30 minutes.

Traditionally the chef gently dimple the dough every 2 inches or so with their oiled fingers before baking the bread.

Place pan so it spans two burners on the stove top. Turn burners on to briefly preheat the bottom on the pan for about 30 seconds. Now bake in a preheated 425°F oven until focaccia is golden brown. Remove focaccia from the oven to cool on a wire rack to cool slightly before cutting it into squares.

Hush Puppies

Contrary to popular opinion, this is not instructions for your pooch. The origin of Hush Puppies is thought to stem from the South as far back as the civil war but in reality, the American Indian was frying up corn doggers in bear grease long before the civil war. (Bear grease is not unlike rendered pork fat.) Today hush puppies are thought to be a comfortable shoe having originated in 1958 unless you're from the South, where "gator bits" or catfish are plated up with a parcel of these hot crisp nuggets. In the South, these are eaten "with fish, chicken, ham, pork..." in other words, everything! The proportions of flour to corn meal varies with the recipe so does the use of white versus yellow corn meal. The die hards insist these are not the same without buttermilk, chopped onions and fried in bacon grease.

Lard or peanut oil (4 or more cups)
1 Cup Kenyon's Stone-Ground yellow corn meal
2 Tablespoons of all purpose flour
1 Teaspoon baking powder
1/2 Teaspoon baking soda
1/2 Teaspoon salt
1 Tablespoon each of sautéed chopped shallots, red pimentos
1 Tablespoon sautéed finely chopped jalapeños
1 Tablespoon of chopped skinless fire roasted poblano chills
1 Tablespoon finely chopped Italian parsley
2 Tablespoon finely chopped chives
2 Eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately (use more egg whites for lighter results)
1/2 Teaspoon white pepper
Pinch of red pepper (to taste)
1/4 Cup milk

Breads and Muffins

Preheat lard or oil to 375 F in a steep wall sauce pot. Use a thermometer.

Preheat the oven to 170F. Keep a paper towel covered platter to hold the cooked hush puppies between batches.

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Add in beaten egg yolks. Fold in beaten egg whites. You will form ball of the mixture with two spoons. Try to keep them the same size each time. Drop a few formed spoonfuls at a time into hot (375 F) oil. Let them pop to the surface, roll them as necessary and let them turn golden brown. Place cooked batches in oven on towel covered platter to stay warm.

Serve with a dipping sauce such as warmed red currant or Jalapeño jelly although, in the South, these may be served with whipped honey butter.

Kae's Garlic Bread

Preheat oven to 350 F

- 1 Loaf sliced sourdough bread
- 1 ½ Sticks of softened sweet butter
- Pinch of salt
- 2 Cloves finely minced garlic

Mince garlic very fine, sprinkle with a bit of salt and beat into a paste. Whisk garlic in the butter until very well incorporated. Butter each slice of bread and assemble back into a loaf with each slice pressing up to the next. Wrap in tin foil and put in oven for 20 minutes until it is hot. Serve whole loaf in a bread basket in its tin foil wrapper. Let everyone help themselves.

Ledbetter's Lemon-Poppy Seed Scones

"My boyfriend just introduced me to Ledbetters', a breakfast restaurant in nearby New Milford," writes Lawren Hubal of Monroe, Connecticut. "Every morning, owners Julie and David Ledbetter make scones, and the lemon-poppy seed ones are out of this world. I'd love to make those scones at home."

- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
- 3 tablespoons poppy seeds
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 10 tablespoons (1 ¼ sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 cup (or more) whole milk

Preheat oven to 375°F. Position rack in top third of oven. Mix flour, 1 cup sugar, poppy seeds, baking powder, lemon peel, and salt in processor. Add butter and cut in, using on/off turns, until mixture resembles coarse meal. Whisk egg and lemon juice in medium bowl to blend. Add to flour mixture. Using on/off turns, process until moist clumps form. Add 1/3 cup milk. Using on/off turns, process just until dough comes together, adding more milk if dough seems dry. Using floured hands, gather dough into ball. Flatten into 8-inch round. Cut round into 8 wedges. Transfer scones to large baking sheet; brush with milk. Sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon sugar.

Bake until scones are golden brown and tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Transfer to rack and cool. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.)

Makes 8 scones.

Bon Appétit
March 2002
Julie and David Ledbetter
R.S.V.P.
Ledbetters', New Milford, CT

Melba Toast

Melba toast¹ is a very dry, crisp, thinly sliced toast often served with pate, soups and salads or topped with either melted cheese or pâté.

I watched a French Chef do this on one of Julia shows or was it great chefs of New York; at any rate it is easy.

Slices of sandwich bread of choice. Lightly toast slices in toaster or toaster oven. When these have cooled a bit, lay toasted slices flat. Cut crusts from slices with a very sharp knife so bread edges are not pinched down. A serrated knife works well. Place your hand atop the slice and carefully cut the toasted slice in half so it's half as thin. Sounds hard, but once the bread is toasted, it is very easy. Place toast cut-side up on a cookie sheet and place in hot (425 F) oven to crisp up a short bit more.

Note:

1. 19th Century Famous opera singer Miss Nellie Melba ever worried about her fine figure complained to the great chef Auguste Escoffier that her bread was much too thick. Escoffier returned to Melba's table with a thinly sliced piece of toasted bread, and promptly named it Melba toast in her honor. Nellie Melba's name also live on in Escoffier's famous Peach Melba.

Mexican Sweet Corn Cakes with Tomatillo Sauce

Side dish or appetizer, these are simply very tasty. Inspired by an Elephant bar appetizer which is served on a decorative plate with a corn husk as a boat for two corn cakes a top a tart and tasty tomatillo sauce.

¼ Cup sweet European butter, unsalted
2 Tablespoons corn
½ Cup masa harina or corn flour
3 Tablespoons buttermilk
7~8 Ounces cream-style corn
3 Tablespoons cornmeal
¼ Cup sugar
2 Tablespoons extra heavy whipping cream
½ Teaspoon baking powder
¼ Teaspoon salt

Garnish

Chopped Red and yellow bell peppers, cut into ¼ cubes
Swizzle with chile sauce (recipe below)

Whip butter in mixing bowl until fluffy and creamy. Add masa harina gradually and mix thoroughly. Add water gradually, mixing thoroughly. Add corn kernels and cream style corn until mixed into masa mixture. Mix cornmeal, sugar, heavy whipping cream, baking powder and salt in large bowl. Add butter-masa mixture; mix until blended. Pour mixture into 9 x 13 inch greased baking pan. Cover with foil and bake at 350 F until corn cake is firm, 40 to 50 minutes. (For a drier result, remove cover last 10 minutes) Allow to stand at room temperature a while before cutting into squares. Serve over tomatillo sauce (see page 285) with swizzle of chile sauce (recipe below) and garnish plate with chopped red and yellow bell peppers,

Chile Sauce

½ Pureed red bell pepper or sweet pimento
1 Tablespoon heavy cream
Cayenne pepper to taste
Salt to taste

Puree ½ red bell pepper with ¼ cup of water. Sieve and reduce over low heat until thickened. Add heavy cream. Correct seasoning adding cayenne pepper to taste.

Pane Casareccio di Genzano (Roman homemade bread)

This recipe may seem more like a dissertation on home bread making rather than a recipe. But once you've made this bread the only thing you will refer back to is the simple quantities. You may be inclined to skip the sponge and biga phases altogether.

Breads and Muffins

You could do that, but the bread would not be the same.

Living in Rome as a young man, I came to accept many wonderful things as commonplace. The family's favorite bread was chewy Casareccio, a big ground loaf reddish gray on the outside and the color ivory inside filled with holes. It was the bread of choice for bruschetta and crostini. In the summer, we would eat the sweet red onions from the fields of Rome with the sweet butter from the Appian Way (even though the Romans generally did not eat butter). To my knowledge, this bread is unavailable in the United States. So if you crave it is much as I do, you either have to go to Rome or learned to bake the bread at home. Renowned food critic and author Jeffrey Steingarten, in his book *It Must Be Something I Ate* in the chapter entitled "Flat Out", gives testimony that Pane Genzanese is the best bread he ever baked and when properly prepared, the best he has ever eaten. His book includes his recipe for this bread and it is a very good one. The pursuit of an exact recipe, as it turns out, is akin to a quest for the Holy Grail. The Italians describe reverently the bread is like the world derived from earth, wind, fire and water. The bread is so good there is an annual festive centered around it.

"The origins of this product are rooted in the peasant culture of its zone of production. The bread, which households used to make for themselves, is baked in wood-fired ovens known as soccie. Pane Casareccio di Genzano was already known and appreciated in the 1800's for its particular aroma and fragrance which last up to seven or eight days. It was not until the 1940s, however, that the bread became extremely popular in Rome to which it was brought from Genzano at night and sold fresh the next day by local grocers and bakeries. The bread is shaped into either round loaves or long broad sticks. The area of production is the whole town district of Genzano in the province of Rome." The Italian Trade Commission, New York, NY.

"In 1988 a Consortium was born for the Protection Homemade Bread of Genzano, in the aim of tutelage and promoting it on the market. The adoption of brand IGP – was approved in 1997 - for the observance of very precise rules in order to guarantee the characteristic forms, size, thickness of crust, of color, holes and consistency of the bread texture, fragrance"- From the pages of the Italian government (translated best I could): "Pane Genzano is made from select "0" and "00" flours, natural yeasts, sea salt, and water. By tradition, the production process follows three essential steps: the preparation of the natural yeast that is renewed every day so as to obtain the characteristic smell; the growth of the yeast in containers of wood (never plastic) under the careful supervision of the baker; the baking in the furnace in order to obtain the characteristic rustic bread with thick crust (approximately 3 millimeter) and the inner part flooded with holes which has delighted the pallets of nobles, the Pope and countrymen"

Forest for the Trees

There are many recipes on the Internet for this bread unfortunately all of them are different and most of them are not the true *Pane Genzano*. Jeffrey Steingarten's recipe seems very near the mark with stipulations. The most significant stipulation is that it may be impossible to duplicate the yeast, the water, and the firewood furnaces "soccie" of Rome.

Duplicating the Yeast

I suspect that the wood containers used to ferment the bread starter are loaded with microscopic pores that surely help harbor multiple species of naturally occurring yeasts. I am certain that even if you went to the town of Genzano no one there would give you a sample of their day-old starter. Jeffrey Steingarten's recipe calls for SAF instant yeast. My research indicates that the yeast used in this bread is a naturally occurring one. All varieties of brewer's yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) fall into the "natural" category however, that being said, there are many sub-species, and the actual conditions under which these yeasts are treated (held, fed, type of wheat used) all promote geographic variations¹ in the yeast growth favoring the dominance of certain sub species over others. Even if we started with an identical yeast starter at home, and renewed it every day, it would not remain identical for long, due to conditions HERE! The yeast would become different. SAF instant yeast is an excellent substitute and produces good results each time. Nutritionally, natural leaving has been repeatedly shown to be better for one's health.

The Water of Rome

The water of Rome is highly mineralized and very hard on plumbing pipes. No doubt my sister, with her incredibly long hair, must have used some 20,000 liters of conditioner the seven years we were there. You would think that buying mineral water from Rome would mean getting water with plenty of minerals. This is not the case. The bottled water in Rome is either from springs or local well water and not withstanding carbonation; it is high devoid of heavy mineralization which is what the Roman's prefer over the heavy mineral laden tap water. Fortunately, when we get around to selecting our flour, we will favor artisan flours with certain percentages of ash as a means of compensating for our softer water. The higher the ash count, the more minerals are present in the flour. In artisan baking applications, higher ash often plays a positive role interacting with yeasts and thought to enhance flavor. Additionally, the use of sea salt with its inherent additional minerals will help contribute to a more authentic replica of this bread.

The Flour:

The Pane di Genzano bread of Rome is made with two or three types of refined flour:
00 Highly refined and having a low protein

Pane Casareccio di Genzano (Roman homemade bread)

- 0 Less refined but higher in protein flour
- 1 Even less refined flour

Equipment

- 6 or 8 Quart mixer
- Large spoon
- Paddle and hook attachment for mixer
- Large rising bowl
- 2 Large kitchen towels
- Utility knife razor blade
- 16 Inch baking stone or ceramic floor tile
- Double walled cookie sheet to be used as batten or a wood batten
- Cook's spray bottle with integral pump (normally for oil but filled with bottled water)
- Proofing bowl with muslin towel liner (see figure 2)

Timeline:

Day one

- Make a sponge (1 cup) or
- If natural leavening, bulk up a sourdough starter (2 cups)

Day Two

- Make a biga and if natural leavening, feed sourdough sponge needed for day three

Day Three

- Make dough
- Bake bread

Sponge

- ¼ Teaspoon sea salt
- 2 Cup water
- 2 Cup unbleached unbromated whole wheat flour
- 2 Teaspoon SAF Red instant yeast or if using natural leavening, 1 cup of sourdough starter

If you already have a sourdough starter, bulk it up in preparation for making a really big loaf. You will need 2 cups of sponge. One will be used to make the biga and another will be used on the baking day to help leaven the bread. (See the time line.) Otherwise, prepare the sponge two days ahead of the baking day. Let it sit overnight on the counter in a bowl covered with plastic wrap with several holes. Once the sponge is made, use it the next morning to make the Biga.

Biga

- ¼ Teaspoon sea salt
- 1 Cup King Arthur Sir Lancelot Hi-Gluten Flour
- All of the sponge above
- Olive oil to coat the dough hook and the bowl for the first rising.
- Water as needed

Prepare the one day ahead. Let sit 20 hours in refrigerator, bring out several hours (or more) ahead of when it is needed and allow it to come to room temperature.



Figure 1 Baker Wheat Bran (in Italian: crusca)

Bread Dough (scale as needed)

The biga

1 Pound King Arthur “00” Italian Flour

1 ¼ Pounds of King Arthur Sir Lancelot Hi-Gluten Flour

1 Tablespoon of sea salt

2 to 3 Tablespoons SAF Red instant yeast [depending on the time of the year] (If using natural leavening, substitute a cup of sourdough sponge and reduce this to 1 tablespoon SAF Red instant yeast)

3 Cups of water

Olive oil to coat the dough hook and the bowl for first rising

2 Cups baker wheat bran (crusca, cruschetto) for dusting surface

Optionally, King Arthur Instant Sourdough Flavor

King Arthur Instant Sourdough Flavor adds the sourdough flavor to breads without the long process of creating a sour yeast starter and is based on naturally fermented lactic acid additives. It is used in portion ¼ - 1/3 cup additive to three cups flour.

The wheat bran⁶ may be further processed in a coffee grinder, a batch at a time, and then sifted to make what the Italians refer to as cruschetto which means small wheat bran which is better for this bread and what is used in Rome.

I would imagine 4 tablespoons of yeast might be what was required in the dead of a Roman winter to make the bread rise fast enough to fit the bakers time table in what would be an unheated bakery but our temperature is a lot warmer and I have found 2 tablespoons SAF Red instant yeast more than adequate. If using natural leavening, things will progress slower but the flavors will be better.

This mixture of flour yields a protein value around 12.7 which is slightly less than many American bakeries use but closer to European breads.

Apply a bit of oil on the dough hook and set it aside until ready to use.

Pane Casareccio di Genzano (Roman homemade bread)

A 6-quart mixer is just big enough to mix the dough. Initially, we use the paddle wheel but when the dough begins to become very thick, we switch to the dough hook. When we begin the first kneading, the mixture will be split into two batches so as to be manageable. Dissolve all of the salt into all of the water. Pour the liquid into the mixing bowl of your mixer. If using commercial yeast, add it to the flour and stir it in. Spoon into the water mixer approximately 1 and a half cups of flour. Carefully turn the mixer on LOW! I said carefully because the mistake here will spread a flour-water mixture all over you, the walls, the kitchen counter, and the floor. In this next step, we will break up the biga into small pieces that can be incorporated into the water flour mixture. We take our time with this process, adding small pieces of the biga once the previous piece has been incorporated, adding additional flour as needed to prevent excessive sloshing of the mixture. Take your time. Once the Biga is all absorbed we're ready to add additional ingredients. If using natural leavening, turn the mixer off and add all of the additional sponge. Carefully turn the mixer on LOW! Start adding the additional flour. When the dough starts to become too thick, replace the paddle with the dough hook. Carefully turn the mixer on low, and slowly add flour. If the dough has reached the right consistency stop adding flour. If all the flour is added by the dough is still too wet, add additional flour as required. The dough is at the right consistency when it is still a bit sticky.

Oil a large stainless steel bowl with a bit of olive oil. Empty the dough into this bowl and cover the bowl with a wet towel. Allow the dough to rest until it at least doubles its size. Slower is better and on a cool day this could be 4 hours.



Figure 2 Proofing Bowl with Muslin Towel Liner

Push down the dough in the bowl and divide it into equal pieces. Each piece will be returned to the mixer to be kneaded on low until each piece has become shiny and elastic. (If the dough is too sticky, you may knead in additional flour.) You may also knead the bread by hand. At this point the dough should have its glutes fully developed. To test that you have kneaded the bread sufficiently, take a small ball of dough about the size of a walnut and press it into a thin sheet. Continue pulling it gently to thin the dough to the point it becomes see-through. If the dough is smooth, elastic and does not easily tear apart, then the glutes have developed to the point where the bread will retain its airy pockets in baking.

[The proofing bowl will help maintain the loaves' shape.]

Wash the large stainless steel bowl and cover it with a large smooth muslin towel. Hold a towel in place within an elastic strap. Rub flour into the towel to prevent dough sticking to it. Push

the towel down into the bowl to form a cradle. Try to smooth the towel so it is without creases. Coat the bottom of the towel liberally with the wheat bran. Form the dough into a round shape by folding the edges of the dough out from the center and roll under the loaf. Do this several times until the loaf is smooth and nicely rounded. Dust the loaf very generously with the fine wheat bran then place the loaf smooth side down onto the wheat bran in the center of the proofing bowl. Press some of the wheat Bran along the edges of the loaf. Cover the bowl with a wet towel. Allow the dough to rise until it has doubled its size meanwhile prepare the oven. Remove the extra shelf from the oven. Place the remaining shelf on the bottom rung. Place your baking stone on the bottom shelf. Preheat the oven to 500 F. Place a shallow pie pan on the bottom of the stove floor filled with boiling water to help make a humid oven which promotes a good crust and a good rising. (In Rome, the ovens are much hotter (600+ F) and the bread does not bake as long. The hotter the oven the darker red this bread becomes.)



Figure 3 Loaf Dusted with Bran

Allow the loaf to raise twice its size in its proofing bowl. Spritz the bottom of the loaf with a quick mist of water and dust liberally with wheat bran. The next step is a little messy. Cut a sheet of parchment paper that completely covers the batten. We will turn out the loaf by turning the loaf over onto the lined batten or a double-bonded baking sheet used as a batten. When we do so, the excess wheat bran will spill out onto the counter which is unavoidable. Once the loaf is on the batten, use your hands to restore its shape. Remove the excess wheat bran from the batten. The use a fresh utility knife razor blade to score the top of the bread with ½ inch deep slits spaced 4~5 inches apart which will allow for expansion and prevent the loaf from cracking as it further expands while baking. (I use the intersecting square # see first picture- these cuts are about 8 inch long.) Spritz the loaf with a quick mist of water and further dust with wheat Bran, pressing it gently into the loaf's surface. Now spray the loaf but 20 mists of water all over. Trim down the parchment paper until it is just slightly larger than the loaf. Don't worry about the extra wheat bran on the parchment paper. As the bread cooks the extra wheat bran will burn a bit which helps contribute the characteristic wood-burning stove effect to the bread. Open the oven door. Hold the batten at a 25 degree angle

placing the leading edge of the batten on the far side of the baking stone and shake off the loaf (with its parchment paper) moving the batten forward to deposit the loaf in the middle of the baking stone. Now spray the loaf again liberally with mist of water (avoiding the stone, the oven light and the glass window in the door of the oven.)

Set a timer for 20 minutes. At the 20 minute mark, spray the loaf again liberally with mist of water. Bake another 40 minutes or until the loaf is a reddish dark brown. The instant reading thermometer when plunged into the middle of the bread should read 205 F when the bread is done. For a crunchier crust cook the bread to 215 F.

Using your batten, remove the bread from the stone to a cooling rack where it will be allowed to cool for several hours. When cool, rub your hands over the exterior surface of the loaf to remove excess wheat Bran. When everything goes as planned you will have an exceptionally chewy thick crunchy crust with a wonderfully tasting highly aerated interior. If you bag or wrap the bread while the loaf is stiff cooling and shedding water vapor, the bread crust will soften and lose its crunchiness.

Variations on this Recipe

Basically all the steps are followed at some of the ingredients are varied to provide slightly different results. In Figure 3, the loaf included 20 percent white whole wheat flour and was dusted with red whole wheat flour instead of bran. This loaf was baked until its internal temperature reached 205 F.

As you become a seasoned bread-maker all trepidation will depart. The need to measure anything will fall to the wayside. A seasoned bread maker can feel the dough and tell you if it has too much water or not enough. Typically water is 65 to 69% by weight. If you need to error then do so in favor to more water. Wetter dough allows the yeast to better transform the proteins and improve the character of the results. Because salt retards of yeast activity is not the least uncommon in Italy to have breads that do not contain salt. I recommend the use of salt as it is harder to make GREAT bread without.

Notes:

1. Occurrence and dominance of yeast species in sourdough, A. Pulvirenti², L. Solieri², M. Gullo³, L. De Vero² and P. Giudici²
2. Dipartimento di Scienze Agrarie, Universita' degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia, and
3. DOFATA, sez. Tecnologie Alimentari, Catania, Italy
4. "Autolyse - When water and flour are combined, gluten forms in a random, disorganized matrix that is very weak. As the dough is kneaded, the disorganized bonds are pulled apart and reattached into straight, strong, orderly sheets. This must occur in order to give bread proper structure. But excessive kneading can lead to flavor loss. The autolyse step reduces

kneading time by allowing enzymes in the dough to break down disorganized bonds of gluten. Autolyse helps the gluten form a stronger, more organized network with less kneading.

5. Cruschello – In Italian means small pieces of crusca (wheat bran). Making the wheat bran into very small pieces turns out to be harder than it looks. The material is somewhat elusive. I tried a blender, a food processor and a coffee mill. The coffee mill works the best but it takes forever and only does a little at a time. A sieve is used and the smaller pieces fall through while the coarser pieces go back into the coffee mill. Coffee mills are intended for intermittent duty, so periodically; I needed to let the mill cool off. An alternative method is to simply sieve a large quantity of bran thereby separating the larger crusca from the smaller cruschello after all bran is very cheap. If you know someone with a stone mill you are in luck.

Injera

Injera is also called Ethiopian flat bread which is a slightly sour soft bread often used like a spoon to mop up various seasoned vegetable or meat dishes. Teff is a small grain native from Northeastern Africa with a very mild, nutty flavor. White teff is high in protein, calcium, and iron with great nutritional value.

- 1 Pound white teff flour (Bob's Red Mill)
- 3 Cups of luke warm water
- 1 Teaspoon of yeast
- ½ Teaspoon salt

Combine teff with 3 cups of water along with 1 teaspoon of yeast.
Set aside overnight (24 hrs) for fermentation to take place.

Preheat a non-stick pan.

Bake in a circular shape, same as a large pancake. Only cook on one side. Cook on medium about 2 minutes or until firm.

Take injera out carefully (hot) and set aside on a plate to cool down before eating.

- * If this is your first batch of injera, use a teaspoon of yeast; but if you plan to make injera regularly... then save about 3 soup spoons of the mix for your next injera. This will act as a self rising yeast on your next batch of injera; save it in your fridge it will stay for over a month. This is the same process of saving some of your current dough for your next batch of sour-dough cakes or cookies.

Kae's Parker House Rolls

Pre-heat oven to 400 °F.

- 2 Tablespoons SAF Red instant yeast
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- ½ Cup boiling water (unchlorinated)
- ½ Cup peanut oil
- 3 Cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 Beaten egg
- ½ Stick of melted butter

Combine boiling water, oil, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Stir to dissolve sugar.

Let cool to lukewarm. Add yeast and egg. Stir in enough flour to form a ball. Knead lightly on floured surface until smooth, about 5 minutes.

Grease large bowl. Add dough turning to coat surface. Sprinkle with flour. Let rise until doubled in size. Punch down, knead on floured surface until smooth, about 1 minute. Roll out to ¼ inch thick. Cut out 2 ½ inch rounds using a floured glass rim. Place on un-greased baking sheet ½ inch apart. Brush with melted butter. Fold each roll in half. Cover sheet(s) with a damp towel. Let rise until double in size.

Bake in a 400 °F. oven 10-12 minutes until golden brown.

Note:

1. have changed Kae's original recipe by suggesting yeast and flour types and specifying (unchlorinated) bottled water.

Breads and Muffins

Popovers

Bring ingredients to room temperature. Preheat oven to 450 F. Center up the oven rack. Baking these marvels requires a pop-over pan. Popovers like a moist oven. Place a shallow pan of boiling water on the bottom rack.

3 ½ Cups whole milk, warmed to room temperature (75 F)
4 Cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1 ½ Teaspoons salt
1 Teaspoon baking powder
6 Large organic brown eggs, room temperature
4 Tablespoons melted sweet butter

Recipe is for twelve popovers. If you have a six cup popover pan, it great to have two pans. Popovers will be baked on bottom rack. You should brush the popover pan with melted butter even if it is a non-stick pan, and for this use a ¼ cup clarified butter and a tablespoon of peanut oil.

Milk should be just warm to the touch. Sift the flour, salt, and baking powder together in a bowl.

In a mixer using the wire-whisk, combine the eggs, warm milk, with the melted butter and process on high until well combined. Add flour mixture, a little at a time and process on low to first combine, then on high speed for 30 seconds or until just combined and is free of big lumps. Scrape down the sides of the mixer with a spatula as required. Quickly mix again. Let batter rest for a minute to relax the glutens.

With oven up to temperature and the empty popover pan hot, quickly remove the popover pan from the oven. Quickly and liberally brush each of the popover cups with clarified butter oil mixture to prevent sticking and fill each of the popover cups ½ to ¾ of the way with the batter.

Bake for 15 minutes (no peaking) and then reduce heat to 400 F and bake for another 20 minutes or until the popovers are deep golden brown. Tumble the popovers out into a cloth lined bowl, poking each popover with tip of a knife to release the steam. Serve immediately.

Good with plenty of butter and Kae's strawberry jam.

Hawaiian Electric Company Portuguese Sweet Bread

In the 60's, it would seem that many of the Hawaiian Island people were Portuguese and many of the street vendors sold Portuguese products none more prevalent the Linguisa sausage and Hot malasadas (the original malassadas with two "SS" where originally of course from Portugal.) This recipe is for the Portuguese sweet bread made with potatoes.

1 ½ Tablespoons SAF Red Instant Yeast
½ Cup warm potato water
3 Tablespoons sugar
1 Cup mashed potatoes
1/8 Teaspoon ginger
½ Cup milk
2 Teaspoons salt
6 Eggs
1 ¾ Cups sugar
½ Cup melted sweet butter
8 To 10 cups KA Italian "00" flour

Dissolve yeast in potato water. Stir in the 3 tablespoons sugar, potatoes and ginger. Cover; let rise until doubled. Scald milk; add salt and cool to lukewarm.

In small bowl of electric mixer, beat eggs; gradually beat in the 1 ¾ cups sugar. Stir into yeast mixture. Add butter and mix well. Stir in 2 cups of the flour, then milk. Add 2 more cups of the flour; beat 5 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to make a stiff dough. Place on lightly floured board and knead in the remaining flour until dough is smooth and elastic, about 8 to 10 minutes. Place in greased bowl, turning in grease top. Cover; let rise until doubled. Grease four 9 by 5 by 3-inch loaf pans. On a lightly floured board, divide dough into fourths. Shape each fourth into a loaf; place in prepared pans. Cover; let rise until doubled. Preheat electric oven to 325 F. Bake for 45 minutes or until done.

Makes 4 loaves.

Rhode Island Johnnycakes

The johnnycake is popular for breakfast in Rhode Island with butter and maple syrup or served with stews and roasts when made without sugar.

These are served both thin and crisp or thick with a crusty outside. They may be drizzled with syrup or simply eaten plain. Variation in New England include cakes made with blueberries.

- 1 Cup Kenyon's stone-ground yellow corn meal
- 1 Cup boiling water
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Teaspoon Turbinado sugar or brown sugar
- 1 Teaspoon baking powder
- Start with ½ cup whole milk or buttermilk
- 1 Egg
- 2 Tablespoons melted sweet butter
- 1 Tablespoon peanut oil
- Pinch of ground cinnamon (when making sweet breakfast variety)
- Pinch of ground cloves (when making sweet breakfast variety)
- Pinch of white pepper

Combine dry ingredients in a mixer bowl. Pour boiling water over the meal mixture, whisking to prevent lumps then let the mixture sit for ten minutes. Add milk, egg, melted butter and oil and beat until smooth. The amount of milk will set the consistency of the cake. A dough that is mash potato thick for a thick and crusty result; or a thin batter, for a result more like a pancake.

Preheat a teflon skillet to 375 F. Butter the skillet surface. Pour on the batter and let the cakes gently sizzle on the grill for 6 to 11 minutes or until a golden brown around the rims. Turn over and repeat. Drizzle johnnycakes with butter and serve with your favorite syrup or preserves.

From the West Indies, Southern United States, Australia, versions made with other types of whole grains are also found. In modern versions, corn cakes made with eggs, oil, and baking powder for leavening. Not all of these are sweet. Ashcake, battercake, corn cake, cornpone, hoe cake, hoe cake, journey cake, mush bread, pone, Shawnee cake, jonikin and civil war corn dodgers are variations. Fats range from butter, lard, bacon fat, and oil.

Steve's Herb Bread

This bread is good for antipasto and is moist and flavorful. I often use this with roasted red peppers or for over roasted eggplant. The bread is "bagged" to create a moist soft crust after 20 minutes of cooling from the oven.

- Bread starter (sponge - see Bread Starters on page 159)
- 3 Pounds unbleached flour
- ¼ Cup fresh finely chopped sage
- ½ Cup fresh finely chopped basil
- 1 Tablespoon finely ground white pepper
- 1/8 Cup fresh finely chopped rosemary
- 1 Cup finely chopped chives
- 5 Four inch sprigs of rosemary to flavor the oil
- ½ Cup very tasty olive oil
- Water (in general, ratio 1 cup of water to 1 ¼ cups of flour)
- 1 ½ Tablespoon salt to start (taste raw dough – no, you don't have to swallow)

Heat oil in pan add sprigs of rosemary. Let this "melt" or wilt into the oil on low. Do not use high heat or you'll transform both the oil and rosemary's flavor. Let cool.

In a very large bowl, add half the flour, cooled oil, herbs, salt, mix all of the starter or sponge. Add enough water to make a batter with a spoon. Now start working in the balance of the flour. At some point it too thick to use a spoon so switch to your hands. Keep working in more flour while kneading. When the dough is nearly stick free. Cover it with a wet towel and take a 20 minute break. Let water fully penetrate flour. Come back and now add more flour slowly. Dough should be kneaded, turned and worked until the dough is evenly moist and consistent. You should be able to smack your hand into the dough and hold it for ten seconds and pull away pretty much stick-free. The water content is now right.

Breads and Muffins

Dump dough on the counter. Clean out bowl. Dry it and oil it. Place dough back in oiled bowl. Cover with a wet towel and cover this with tin foil tightly sealed. Place in refrigerator for eight hours to develop slowly.

Remove dough from refrigerator to counter. Begin working the dough. Heat up the dough a bit. This should be a bit difficult as the bread is cold. Let stand covered with a wet towel in a warm place (75F) for two hours to come up to temperature. When the bread is double its size, divide it into two portions. Knead each portion of dough in turn. You may return the dough to the mixer and knead with the dough hook until shiny and elastic; repeat with second portion. Roll into a round. Set each round on parchment paper covered with coarse corn meal. The corn meal will give the bread's bottom a professional finish. I set a course 24' length of hemp string centered under each loaf. The string is tied with a square knot after the last rising. As the bread cooks, the string will nick into the loaf giving this loaf a characteristic country rustic appearance. Cover with damp towel. Let rise.

Preheat oven to 375.

Tie string and cut ends 2 inch long on each loaf. Slash two chevrons on each side of the string's dividing line on each loaf. Spritz hot oven with mist of water to add moisture avoid glass, light fixture or electric coils. Cook 45 minutes.

Glaze by brushing with 1 tablespoon of water with 1 beaten egg white. Bake another ten minutes. Cool on racks 20 minutes. Then wrap in tin foil. Bag in tall plastic kitchen bags until ready to slice.

Yorkshire Popovers

This is a savory accompaniment for a roast (lamb, beef, or pork) made from an egg batter similar to that of Yorkshire pudding, typically baked in muffin tins with pan drippings. Popovers made with clarified butter and a little peanut oil to keep butter from burning could be served with jam.

- 4 Eggs
- 1 Cup milk
- 1 Cup + 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1/4 Teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/8 Teaspoon fresh cracked pepper
- Melted beef fat and drippings

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Whisk eggs until foamy and light. Whisk in the milk. Add flour, salt and pepper, whisk until airy and smooth.

Place a muffin tin in a shallow roasting pan; fill each hole halfway with melted beef fat. Place in oven for 15 minutes or until it starts to smoke. Brush fat up the sides and top on the tin. Half fill each cup with batter. Bake 25 minutes. Do not open oven. Reduce temperature to 375 F and bake another 10 to 20 minutes until brown and firm. Excess fat will spill over into roasting pan. Serve immediately as best right out of oven.