



Long fermented rustic sourdough recipe

~ makes two loaves

DAY ONE

In the evening make the levain:

Combine in a medium size bowl

- * 1 tablespoon of well fed starter (active)
- * 120 grams of stone ground white bread flour
- * 120 grams of lukewarm water (around 36°C)

Cover with plastic foil and leave in a warmish (not hot) place. The ideal temperature would be between 24 and 28 C , in winter or cold climates I suggest leaving it on top of the fridge or in your oven with only the light on.

DAY TWO

Around 9.00 am take a large bowl and mix:

- * 200 grams of your pre-mix (levain), it will have small bubbles on the surface
- * 680 grams of lukewarm water (36°C)

Loosen the levain with a fork in the water

Add:

- * 800 grams of stone ground white bread flour
- * 100 grams of spelt flour
- * 100 grams of stoneground rye flour

With an open spatula (wooden or metal) mix this to a ragged dough, it needs to be thoroughly mixed, but no need for a smooth dough here.

Leave to rest for 40 minutes

Add:

20 grams of non iodised salt / this is 4 level teaspoons (Sea salt or Himalayan salt is fine)

50 grams of lukewarm water.

Mix thoroughly now to incorporate the salt evenly, either with your hands or with the spatula. At this stage the dough seems too wet but do NOT add flour.

Cover with plastic foil and leave in a warm place again, rest for 30 minutes.

Now we will do a series of 6 "Stretch and Folds".

After the 30 minutes rest place the bowl in front of you, preferably on a table or low surface. Slightly wet your right (working) hand, grab the dough on the right inside side of the bowl, stretch it up as far as it will go, and fold it to the left, over the dough.

Turn your bowl a quarter turn, and repeat.

Do this stretching about 4 to 6 times in total, make sure you have been completely around. Cover again and rest for another 30 minutes (warm place).

So in total we do 6 of these S&F's, and after the 3rd or 4th set you will feel that the dough becomes fuller, not bubbly but more pillowy, this is the gluten in the flour developing. At each stretch and fold the dough will also become less sticky and starts holding up well, it will start coming away from the edge of the bowl and will stick to itself rather.

Rest for 15 minutes.

Lightly flour a countertop or work surface.

With a dough scraper deposit the ball of dough onto the surface, then divide in half with a large metal dough scraper. Fold in the cut edges towards each other and roughly shape each portion into a ball for a boule or a long log for a batard.

Cover with a cloth or kitchen towel and rest for 30 minutes, this is called the bench rest. It doesn't matter if the dough flattens a bit in this period.

Then do the last fold, the Book fold:

Place the dough piece in front of you on a floured surface, pat it lightly/very gently so it gets a bit more flat. Stretch the bottom half towards yourself, pull it up and lay it down so it touches the middle of the dough.

Take the left side, stretch a bit and fold towards the middle, same for the right side. Then from the bottom roll the whole folded lot towards the top and start making a round shape. There will be a seam, but that's ok, move the seam towards the bottom of the ball.

Now we need to tighten this ball to get a nice crust. Start by tightening the dough, tucking it in under itself, all the while keeping the seam hidden underneath.

When you think it's pretty tight, do a few final moves by sliding the ball towards yourself while holding your hands cupped and perpendicular to the work surface, the bottom will stick slightly and that helps make a nice taut dough surface.

For the batards (longer loaves) do exactly the same but maintain the elongated form whilst tightening.

Do not add any flour to the dough whilst shaping and tightening.

Then grab your baskets and flour the surface (or the linen covers) thoroughly with rice flour to prevent your dough from sticking to them.

Put the dough seam side up in the baskets, put each in a plastic bag and move them to the fridge for the overnight proofing. Fridge should be ideally at 4 degrees C.

DAY THREE

Preheat the oven with the cast iron pots inside to 250 degrees (300 if possible).
Electric ovens take about an hour/Gas ovens approximately 45 minutes.

In the meantime get some rough cornmeal (maize meal) ready and a very sharp knife or a baker's "Lame" if you have.

Remove the dough from the fridge just before baking, it won't have risen that much, about 30%.

Working quickly (but safely / everything will be very very hot) with good heatproof oven gloves remove one of the pots, place it on top of the stove. Remove the lid, sprinkle corn meal generously inside so the bread won't stick and turn your basket upside down above it to deposit the dough in the pan.

The seam will now be at the bottom.

Cut a few slashes into the bread to help the rise (this is called scoring), replace the lid and quickly put it back in the oven. Repeat for second loaf.

The scoring should be done at a 45 degree angle for optimum rise, but takes a bit of practice to get right. Alternatively you can bake "seam side up", the bread will then form a natural crack where the seams are.

Bake for 25 minutes on high (250 degrees), then remove the lids,

Lower the temperature to 230 degrees and bake for another 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on the breads, all ovens vary but you will soon get a feel for timings.

When you see that golden beautiful crust and are not sure it's done inside, just pierce with a metal or wooden skewer, if no dough stays on the skewer it's done.

Remove the pots from the oven, take the loaves out after 5 minutes, and place on a metal slotted rack to cool down. Leave for several hours to cool before cutting.

INGREDIENTS NEEDED SUMMARY

- A tablespoon of well fed starter (if it lives in the fridge you should take it out the day before, and feed twice or three times to get optimum activity)
- 120 grams PLUS 800 grams of stone ground white bread flour
- 120 grams PLUS 680 grams PLUS 50 grams of non chlorinated water
- 100 grams of spelt flour
- 100 grams of stone ground rye flour
- 20 grams of non-iodised salt (sea salt or Himalayan salt)
- Corn flour for the pot
- Extra flour for flouring the work surface

FOR FURTHER RECIPES & STOCKIST INFO:

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