

Maggie's Dutch Oven Artisan Bread

(an adaptation of Jim Leahy's "*No Knead Artisan Bread*")

Basic Loaf Ingredients.....for a 12", 5 quart or larger DO:

3 cups unbleached white flour
3 teaspoons vital wheat gluten (Red Mill, top shelf of baking section in your grocery store)
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon active dry yeast
1 1/2 cups **lukewarm** tap water

Extra flour for shaping
Coarse cornmeal

Variations

Substitute 1 cup unbleached white flour for 1 cup whole wheat flour

Substitute 1 cup unbleached white flour for 1 cup rye flour, add 2 tablespoons caraway seed

Add 1/2 cup uncooked steel cut oats, cracked wheat, 7 grain cereal, etc., to flour mixture

Substitute 1 cup unbleached white flour for 1 cup 7 grain bread flour, **reduce salt to 1 teaspoon**

Add 1 cup dried cranberries, 1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans and grated rind of 2 oranges to flour mixture

Add 1 cup raisins or chopped dried apple, 1 cup chopped nuts and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon to flour mixture

Whisk 1/2 cup cooked, cooled oatmeal into warm water before adding to flour mixture, **reduce water by 1/4 cup**

Optional add-ins:

2 tablespoons **one** of the following:

ground flax meal
coarse cornmeal
wheat germ
wheat bran
sesame seeds
(whatever you might like...dried herbs?....use your imagination)

Tools needed:

Large, 3-4 quart, bowl
Heavy whisk, beater or wooden spoon, rubber spatula
Elastic bowl cover or similar item
Waxed paper
Parchment paper

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Step 1--mix: The day before baking, mix all dry ingredients together in bowl. Add warm water and stir/turn by hand until all flour is incorporated. Dough will be wet and sticky, rather the consistency of a biscuit dough. Scrape bowl down with spatula, cover with elastic bowl cover and set aside at room temperature 18-24 hours. Exact amount of time is not important. When ready, dough will have at least doubled in size and appear spongy.

Step 2--shape/rest: Prepare a sheet of parchment paper, cut generally to fit the inside bottom of your DO, sprinkling generously with coarse cornmeal, oats, wheat bran, etc. Set aside.

Sprinkle a few tablespoons of flour onto a sheet of waxed paper or other work surface. Scrape dough from bowl onto floured surface.

Using the floured wax paper to begin, gently fold and press edges of dough toward center, about 6 times, shaping into a rough rectangle or square. Pinch edges together, brush any seriously excess flour from dough and place seam-side down onto prepared parchment paper. Place parchment paper bundle back into your bowl. Cover with bowl cover or saran wrap and let rest about one hour.

Step 3--bake:

About 30 minutes into resting period, start 45 charcoal briquettes. When nearly ready, put lid on DO and arrange briquettes, 33 on top and 12 beneath. Let preheat/finish a few minutes, while you prepare your dough.

Remove bowl cover from dough. :) Snip top of dough 2-3 times with sharp scissors. Sprinkle with wheat bran, seeds of your choice, cornmeal, oats, etc., if desired.

Lift dough by parchment paper, place all **quickly** into oven and replace lid.

Bake 30 minutes, rotating top and bottom..... opposite directions, 45 degrees each..... at the end of 15 and then 30 minutes.

***After the 15 minutes rotations, arrange charcoals on lid around outer edge for remainder of baking time.

***After the 30 minutes rotations, take a quick peek inside to check browning, and **replace lid about 1/4" ajar**, to allow steam to escape and crust to dry and crisp. Wind will affect how hot your top coals become, so watch carefully. If a very windy day, remove about 9 coals around at this point, if bread is becoming too dark.

Bake about 10 minutes more, lid ajar, about 40 minutes total. Bread will be browned and feel light and hollow when done.

Remove loaf carefully to wire rack and ***let cool before slicing. If you cut too soon, interior will be damp and sticky.*** Bread should be airy and porous, crust crisp and chewy. Store when completely cool in plastic bag or other airtight container.

This is a very easy and very forgiving dough. If it seems too soft, too firm, or otherwise not just right....bake it anyway and try again next time. It will still be delicious. :)

To Bake at Home:

Prepare as above. Preheat DO and oven to 450 degrees. Bake dough 30 minutes, covered, then about 10 minutes uncovered. Cool on wire rack before slicing.

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