

# **EASY BREAD MAKING FOR SPECIAL DIETS**

**Third Edition**

Use your bread machine, food  
processor, mixer or tortilla maker  
to make the bread YOU need  
quickly and easily

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# Sourdough and Variety Breads

## ALL ABOUT SOURDOUGH

What is sourdough? It is yeast bread that is leavened by a sourdough starter or culture. The culture contains wild yeast, which produces gas and causes the bread to rise, and bacteria of the genus *Lactobacillus* that give the bread a sour flavor. There are many different sourdough cultures, each with a special flavor of its own and unique rising characteristics.

Perhaps the use of sourdough cultures is beyond the scope of a book dedicated to making bread as easily as possible. However, there are some people who are allergic to commercial baker's yeast and the bread made with it who seem to tolerate sourdough bread. Sourdough bread is not yeast-free; perhaps these people are not allergic to the wild yeast but are allergic to baker's yeast much as one may be allergic to lettuce but not to endive. If you are allergic to yeast, be sure to ask your doctor before trying sourdough bread.

Another dietary reason to make sourdough bread is because it has a lower glycemic index (GI) score than bread made with the same grain but leavened with yeast only. The acid and sourness produced in bread by *lactobacilli* decrease the bread's impact on blood sugar and insulin levels and make it a good food for a glycemic control weight loss program such as that in *Food Allergy and Gluten-Free Weight Loss* as described on the last pages of this book and at [www.foodallergyandglutenfreeweightloss.com](http://www.foodallergyandglutenfreeweightloss.com)

A final reason to make your own sourdough bread is for the flavor of the bread itself. If you have eaten at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco and are a fan of the sourdough bread there, you may consider the time spent maintaining and using a sourdough culture (or at least using a Lalvain du Jour™ starter) worthwhile when you taste how delicious your bread can be.

Some cookbooks contain recipes for making your own sourdough starter. However, in the process of catching and growing wild yeasts from your environment, you may also catch some molds and bacteria that you would rather not have. Also, the flavor of bread made from these homemade starters is barely sour. If you want to make sourdough bread that is really sour, purchase a San Francisco sourdough starter from Sourdoughs International, Inc. (See "Sources," page 224) or some Lalvain du Jour™ freeze dried starter from the King Arthur Flour Baker's Catalogue (See "Sources," page 225). For the best flavor, use your Sourdoughs International starter alone in sourdough bread; never use commercial baker's yeast with it.

## MAKING BREAD WITH A TRADITIONAL SOURDOUGH STARTER

Sourdough cultures from Sourdoughs International come with detailed instructions on how to activate and maintain your starter. Activating it involves “feeding” it with flour and water several times and keeping it warm. The dried sourdough culture you receive contains a small amount (less than ¼ cup) of wheat flour. If you wish to make non-wheat bread, feed your culture with white spelt flour or another non-wheat flour. When I activated my cultures, I fed them with white spelt flour nine times before using them in bread. Sparing you the arithmetic, this meant that there was about ⅓<sub>2</sub> teaspoon of wheat flour per cup of starter by the time it was first used, or about ⅓<sub>16</sub> teaspoon in a large loaf of bread weighing about two pounds. With repeated use and feeding of the culture, the amount of wheat flour continues to decrease, so eventually I considered my starters to be essentially wheat-free. However, if you have celiac disease, gluten intolerance, or are very sensitive to wheat, the flour in the purchased traditional culture may still be a problem. For truly wheat-free or gluten-free sourdough bread, use a Lalvain du Jour™ starter as described on the next page.

Traditional sourdough bread is a challenge to the bread machine baker because wild yeast takes much longer to leaven bread than commercial baker’s yeast and bread machine cycles are based on the way baker’s yeast leavens bread. In addition to the wild yeast being slower producers of the gas that makes bread rise, the *lactobacilli* take about twelve hours to develop the full flavor you want in your bread. Also, sourdough cultures are unpredictable, behaving differently from one use to the next. I find it best to use the dough cycle or a programmable cycle on my bread machine to make the dough and allow the bread to rise outside of the machine where I can easily judge when it is ready to be baked. For further information about traditional sourdough breads and bread machine baking, refer to *Worldwide Sourdoughs From Your Bread Machine* by Donna German and Ed Wood.

The **procedure for making traditional sourdough bread** using a purchased starter is as follows: Re-activate your starter if you have not used it within the last week by feeding it with equal volumes of flour (wheat flour or non-wheat flour such as spelt or rye) and non-chlorinated water as directed in the instructions that came with the starter. Let it sit in a warm place for 8 to 12 hours. Then stir it thoroughly, refrigerate part of it, and use the rest to begin making sourdough bread.

The evening before the day you plan to serve the bread, thoroughly mix the amount of starter and flour listed above the line in the recipe you are using (pages 99 to 100). You may mix it by hand with a wooden or plastic spoon in a ceramic or glass bowl, or you may use your bread machine to mix it. For most bread machines, use the dough cycle to mix it and then transfer it to a glass or ceramic bowl. (Avoid metal because it can inhibit the activity of the starter). Cover the dough with plastic wrap and a towel and put the bowl in a warm

place overnight.<sup>1</sup> If you have a programmable machine, you can mix your dough and let it rise in the machine overnight. For the Zojirushi™ BBCEC20 (or their older models) program this cycle for making sourdough:

Knead 1 – 10 minutes; Rise 1 – 24 hours, Rise 2 and 3 – off, Bake – off.

The next morning, if you are making the dough by hand, mix in the ingredients below the line in the recipe using the smaller amount listed for the flour. Knead for 10 minutes, adding additional flour as needed, to make an elastic dough that is no longer sticky

If you are using a bread machine on the second day, transfer the sponge back to the bread machine pan. For a programmable machine in which the sponge was rising overnight, stop the cycle. Add the ingredients below the line in the recipe using the smaller amount listed for the flour. Run the cycle above or the dough cycle, adding enough flour to make an elastic dough that is no longer sticky. Stop the cycle after it has finished kneading.

Oil and flour a baking sheet. Shape the dough into a round or long loaf and put it on the prepared sheet. Let it rise in a warm place until doubled, about 3 to 5 hours. Near the end of the rising time, put a small broiler pan and a baking stone (if you have one) in the oven and preheat the oven to the temperature given in the recipe for 20 to 30 minutes. (The broiler pan can be on a different rack). Slash the top of the loaf with a sharp serrated knife or lamé. Put the bread in the oven. Pour 1 cup of boiling water into the broiler pan to make the crust crisp. Bake for the time directed in the recipe. If the top is getting too brown before the bottom browns, cover the loaf with foil part way through baking. Cool the loaf completely before slicing

## MAKING BREAD WITH A FREEZE-DRIED SOURDOUGH STARTER

Since the first edition of this book was written, new products have become available which allow us to make sourdough bread without keeping and maintaining a traditional sourdough starter. These products are ideal for anyone who wants to make sourdough bread only occasionally and include Lalvain du Jour™ freeze-dried sourdough starters, instant sourdough flavor, and Heidelberg rye sour flavor. (See page 98 for information about these flavors). Also, bread machines are much more sophisticated than they were years ago, and with the programmable Zojirushi™ machines we can make these **next generation sourdoughs** mostly in the machine. The bread machine, sourdough starters, and flavors are available from King Arthur Flour. (See “Sources,” page 223).

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<sup>1</sup> You can easily and inexpensively make a “proofing box” to activate your culture and use as a warm rising place for your bread. For more information about proofing boxes see page 58 of *The Ultimate Food Allergy Cookbook and Survival Guide* as described on the last pages of this book

The LA-4 French sourdough variety of the Lalvain du Jour™ freeze-dried starters makes assertively sour bread which my husband says is “just like real San Francisco sourdough.” This starter is added to each batch of bread in addition to a small amount of instant yeast. It is gluten-free and wheat-free (but may contain traces of beef) so it makes truly wheat and gluten-free sourdough bread. Unlike breads made with traditional starters, bread made with the Lalvain du Jour™ starter rises predictably from batch to batch, which allows us to use a programmable bread machine for the whole sourdough process.

The **procedure for making sourdough bread using a freeze-dried starter** is as follows: The morning or early afternoon of the day before you plan to serve sourdough bread for dinner, mix the ingredients above the line in the recipe you are using – usually flour, non-chlorinated water (bottled but not distilled), and the Lalvain du Jour™ starter – using a wooden or plastic spoon in a glass or ceramic mixing bowl or using a bread machine’s dough cycle or this programmable cycle:

Knead 1 – 10 minutes; Rise 1 – 24 hours, Rise 2 and 3 – off, Bake – off.

Allow this sponge to rise in a cozy (70° to 85° F) place (see the footnote on the previous page) or in the machine on the programmed cycle above for 18 to 20 hours.

The next morning, add the ingredients listed below the line in the recipe you are using. If you are making **wheat containing bread**, allow the dough to mix in the machine, assisting with a narrow spatula, for just a minute or two until a shaggy mass forms. Then turn off the machine. If you are making this by hand, mix briefly to just make a shaggy mass of dough. Allow the dough to rest for 20 to 30 minutes. This part of the process is called autolyse and allows the gluten to absorb water before you start kneading. If you are making bread which does not contain wheat, rye or spelt, a rest at this point is not needed.

If you are using a programmable bread machine and wish to bake your wheat or spelt bread in the machine, after the autolyse, start the cycle given in the recipe you are using. The rising and baking times may need to be adjusted slightly (start with 5 minute changes) for your baking conditions. If the dough over-rises and falls, decrease the rising time; if it is too dense, increase the rising time; if it over browns, decrease the baking time.

If you would like a traditional crisp, cracking sourdough crust on your wheat or spelt bread, do not bake the bread in a bread machine. Use the dough cycle or the programmable cycle above to knead the bread after the autolyse, or knead it by hand to produce elastic but not sticky dough. To make spelt bread, after the kneading is finished, hand-shape the dough into a loaf and put it into a loaf pan that has been oiled and floured. Allow it to rise and bake it as on the next page. To make wheat bread, allow the dough to rise for about 3 hours in a warm place or in the machine on the programmable cycle above. Then gently divide the dough, form it into a ball or balls, and place it on a lightly oiled surface. Oil the

top of the ball(s) and cover them with plastic wrap and a towel. Allow them to rest for 20 to 30 minutes. Oil and flour a loaf pan or baking sheet. Gently, without deflating them too much, form the ball(s) into the desired shapes – either a roll to go in a loaf pan or two round or long loaves to be baked on a baking sheet. Put the dough on the baking sheet or in the loaf pan. Allow both wheat and spelt loaves to rise in a warm place for 3 to 5 hours or until they are doubled (or for wheat more than doubled, depending on how light and holey you prefer your bread). Near the end of the rising time, put a small broiler pan and a baking stone (if you have one) in the oven and preheat the oven to the temperature given in the recipe for 20 to 30 minutes. (The broiler pan can be on a different rack). Slash the top of the loaf with a sharp serrated knife or lamé. Put the bread in the oven. Pour 1 cup of boiling water into the broiler pan. Bake for the time directed in the recipe. If the top is getting too brown before the bottom browns, cover the loaf with foil part way through baking.

If you are making **gluten-containing wheat-free breads** such as rye and spelt without a programmable machine, the dough should be allowed to rise in a loaf pan and baked in the oven. Specific directions are given for each type of bread in the recipe.

**For gluten-free breads**, on the second day, start the programmable cycle given in the recipe immediately after adding the ingredients below the line in the recipe. No autolyse is needed because there is no gluten. Use a narrow spatula to assist the kneading process and spread the dough evenly in the pan at the end of the kneading time. You will see fibrous strands of guar gum developing in the thick batter as the kneading progresses.

To make gluten-free sourdough bread without a bread machine, mix the ingredients with an electric mixer to “develop” the guar gum. Allow the dough to rise in a warm place for about an hour. Oil and flour a loaf pan. Gently scrape the dough into the prepared pan. Allow it to rise in a warm place until it is just doubled or barely doubled. Preheat your oven to 375°F and bake the loaf until it is brown on the bottom. If the top is browning quickly, cover it with foil part way through the baking time to give the bottom of the loaf time to brown without burning the top of the loaf.

## OTHER SOURDOUGH SHORTCUTS

The easiest-to-use sourdough shortcuts are sour flavors which may be purchased from King Arthur Flour (see “Sources,” page 223). Their “instant sourdough flavor” contains corn, rye, and yeast products, but no wheat. Both wheat and wheat-free versions of an instant sourdough bread recipe are included in this chapter. These recipes require just a few hours to make very tasty near-San-Francisco-style sourdough bread with a minimal amount of effort. The Heidelberg rye sour makes wonderful rye breads. It contains rye flour so is not gluten-free, but it is wheat-free.

## **Recommended by Experts:**

*Easy Breadmaking for Special Diets* solves a problem common to patients on special diets, that of how to make your own breads and dessert with a minimum of time and effort. If you or your family members are on a special diet, this book will be very helpful to you, even if you've never cooked before.

William G. Crook, M.D.,  
Author of *The Yeast Connection*, *Detecting Your Hidden Allergies*, and many other books

Ms. Dumke has done the impossible! Imagine – wonderful breads from a huge variety of flours, yeast breads using non-gluten flours, quick breads that are yeast-free, and even cakes. I've used a bread machine for four years and never imagined it could be so versatile. This book opened my mind to all kinds of possibilities – it's an amazing body of incredibly original work.

Marjorie H. Jones, R.N.  
Author of *The Allergy Self-Help Cookbook*

*Easy Breadmaking for Special Diets* is the perfect book for bread machine owners who bake for anyone on a special diet. Nickie provides some great insight into the use of bread machines with some of the more difficult ingredients that are used on special diets. Best of all, these recipes really work and produce delicious breads that will appeal to everyone, regardless of diet!

Ada Lai, Editor  
*The Magic Bread Letter* newsletter