



Ciabatta

Below you'll find a list of ingredients and equipment needed for your class. To ensure efficiency during class, please have all ingredients on hand before class begins. **Any prep work to be done before class is highlighted in yellow.**

All recipes used in class will be attached in your confirmation email. Please scroll past the equipment list for the recipes.

If you have any questions or concerns email us, bakingeducation@kingarthurbaking.com. All Zoom links are sent out on the day of class. If you have not received the link 1 hour before your class begins, please contact us at the email above.

Please make the Biga 12-16 hours before the class begins. See recipe for ingredients and directions.

INGREDIENTS *(total amount needed for the class)*

- Unbleached All-Purpose Flour: 722g (about 6 cups), plus more for dusting work surface*
- Instant or active dry yeast: 3g (1 teaspoon) + a pinch*
- Water: 564g (2 ½ cups)*
- Salt: 14g (2 ¼ teaspoons)*

EQUIPMENT

- Scale (preferred) or measuring cup set*
- Tea towel (or couche)*
- Measuring spoons*
- Sheet pan or pizza peel*
- Mixing bowl*
- Parchment paper*
- Plastic bowl scraper*
- Thermometer*
- Metal bench knife*
- Pizza stone or steel*
- Bowl cover (plastic wrap or silicone)*
- *Cast iron skillet or heavy metal pan, preferred*

*Please note: Adding water to a cast iron skillet or metal pan in a blazing hot oven can cause warping and rusting. It's wise to designate a cast iron skillet specifically for baking bread, accepting the possibility of warping or rust. Look for affordable cast iron skillets at garage sales or thrift shops, where you might discover ones in less-than-perfect condition. Avoid using glass, ceramic, or glazed Dutch ovens for this purpose.

Ciabatta with Biga

YIELD: TWO LOAVES

INGREDIENTS

BIGA

- 145g (1 1/8 cups) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose flour
- 94g (1/3 cup) water
- pinch of instant yeast

FINAL DOUGH

- All the previously made biga
 - 577g (4 3/4 cups) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose flour
 - 14g (2 1/4 teaspoons) salt
 - 3g (1 teaspoon) instant yeast
 - 470g (2 cups) water
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DIRECTIONS

1. For the biga: Mix all the ingredients until well blended. Cover and leave at room temperature for 12-16 hours.
2. For the final dough: Place all final dough ingredients in a large mixing bowl with the ripe biga. Mix until well combined and no dry flour remains in the bowl.
3. Cover the dough and leave at room temperature for 2-3 hours. Fold the dough every ten minutes for the first hour, for a total of six folds. To perform a fold, reach into the bowl and stretch a handful of dough up out of the bowl until it feels tight or begins to tear away from the rest of the dough. Place the stretched handful of dough down on top of the remaining dough in the bowl. Rotate the bowl, pick up a new handful of dough and repeat the process of stretching and placing. Repeat this several more times, rotating the bowl as you go and working all the way around the bowl. The dough will become tighter and more elastic as you work. This tightening signals that you have successfully completed one fold.
4. When the dough has risen, turn it out onto a well-floured work area. Gently flatten the dough and cut into two pieces, each about 4" x 10". These irregular pieces of dough, stretched to be about 3/4" inch thick, are the finished, shaped loaves. Cover the loaves and let proof on well-floured boards or baking sheets for about 30 minutes.
5. As the dough is rising, place a baking stone in the oven and set the temperature to 500°F. Allow oven to heat for at least 30 minutes. Invert the proofed loaves onto parchment, slide onto the baking stone, and fill the oven with steam.
6. Bake for about 35 minutes, until the loaves are a deep golden color, firm on the sides, and feel light for their size.

Controlling Dough Temperature

Understanding the importance of dough temperature and knowing how to control it is important to good bread baking. Yeast are living organisms and thrive in dough given the right conditions. They like a steady, warm environment with plenty of food. The flour provides food, but it's up to the baker to produce a dough that is hospitable to good fermentation. A dough at 60° will ferment much slower than an 80° dough. To accurately follow recipe timelines, we need to mix dough that will be warm enough to make the yeast comfortable and active. At home, this usually means making dough that is around 78° after mixing is complete. The easiest way to control the temperature is to use the right temperature water for our mix.

To calculate Desired Dough Temperature, we use an easy formula. Professional bakers, who work on tight timelines, use this formula to control their doughs and stay on schedule, and it can be a valuable tool for baking at home. To calculate water temperature for our mix, we need to know a few things: The temperature of the air, the temperature of the flour, the temperature of our preferment (if there is one), and the amount of heat (we will call this "friction") we're going to generate during the mix (this applies only if mixing in a stand mixer. When mixing dough by hand, our number for friction is 0). A digital probe thermometer is needed.

STEP 1

Multiply the dough temperature we want (78°) by the number of variables we have (air, flour, preferment, friction).

- $78 \times 4 = 312$

STEP 2

Use thermometer to take the temperatures of the variables.

- Air: 70
- Flour: 67
- Preferment: 69
- Friction: 0

STEP 3

Subtract the value of each variable from the value in step 1.

- $312 - 70 - 67 - 69 - 0 = 106$

That is the whole Desired Dough Temperature calculation. If we pull 106° water from our tap, we will produce a dough near 78°, and can more reliably follow our recipe timeline.

NOTE

When mixing without a preferment, we will only have three variables. That means, multiply 78 x 3. Also, when using a mixer, the value for friction will generally be about 26. One test batch is all you need to determine the exact friction of your mixer.

All Steamed Up!

When it comes to baking beautiful, artisan-style breads at home there are a few things we need to set up to produce the best results. We need a good, hot, well-preheated oven, a baking stone/steel or some other hearth, and a means of introducing steam into the oven.

Preheating your oven with the baking stone in for the better part of an hour ensures that once the bread is in the oven, it will rise quickly and fully. The baking stone will retain plenty of heat for quick transfer to the dough. When using a baking steel, the preheating time may be slightly reduced. The rapid increase in dough temperature is a critical part of pushing the bread up during the first few minutes of the bake. Ovens that haven't been substantially preheated or lack a baking stone, or some other hearth, will result in flatter bread.

The second thing we need to make the best possible bread is steam. Flushing the oven with steam right after the bread is loaded keeps the bread moist and results in better volume, color, and crumb structure.

There are several ways to do this effectively. An old, dedicated, cast-iron pan placed in the bottom of the oven during preheating is an effective tool for steam. Immediately after loading the bread, slide the cast iron pan out of the oven far enough to carefully pour about one cup of boiling water into the preheated pan. Make sure to stay out of the way of the quickly rising steam. Close the oven, and let the bread bake in the freshly steamed oven until it's time to check for doneness. When pouring the water into the pan, it's a good idea to place a cookie sheet or other covering over the window of your open oven door. This ensures that no boiling water bouncing out of the pan damages your oven window.

Alternately, a cast-iron or ceramic Dutch oven may be preheated for the better part of an hour. Round loaves can be placed in the preheated pan, covered with the lid, and placed back in the hot oven. This method uses naturally generated steam from the baking bread by trapping it in the closed Dutch oven. No additional water or steam is required. When using this method, carefully remove the Dutch oven lid about 15 minutes into the bake. This will release excess steam and expose the loaf to the oven so it can take on color for the remainder of the bake.

If neither of these methods is available, a metal bowl may be placed over round loaves for about 15 minutes. This will also retain steam naturally emitted from the baking bread but may be less effective than either of the methods outlined above.