

No-Knead Bread (Yes, really)

Wow, what a crust and crumb this has. And so very easy to boot.

Author: Jim Lahey of Sullivan Street Bakery, New York



3 cups all-purpose flour, or mixture with bread flour

1/4 teaspoon rapid rise yeast

1 5/8 cups water, plus 1-2 tablespoons

2 teaspoons salt

Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 137 Calories; trace Fat (2.5% calories from fat); 4g Protein; 29g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 0mg Cholesterol; 428mg Sodium. Exchanges: 2 Grain(Starch).

This is almost as good as Il Fornaio's Ciabatta bread. You might want to watch the video before you make it the first time. I'm glad I did because I might have done a couple of things differently. I used an oval Le Crueset pan (with lid) and it worked just perfectly. I will say that the bottom crust is VERY firm, which requires a firm hand to slice through. You can use a smaller pot and you'll likely have a higher-rising bread. By the way, Le Crueset does not guarantee the black knobs on their pots will survive in an oven over 400°. I used one with side handles and no black knobs. You may also use any other kind of pot - with a lid. If the dough comes out too moist, remove the lid sooner in the baking process.

In my Dacor oven (runs a bit hot) I bake this at 425° for 30 minutes, then remove lid and continue baking for another 15. Each oven is different. Initially the crust was too hard, which is why I reduced the temperature and removed it earlier from the oven. I also mix the flour - half bread, half regular all-purpose. Others who have made this say you can vary flours in small quantities. If you add too much whole wheat, however, it most likely will not rise sufficiently.

Internet Address: Video:

http://video.on.nytimes.com/?fr_story=35eac03d90314ffed6a0c0ac143ab87b1474fb89

Servings: 10

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 20 hours

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt and stir to distribute dry ingredients before adding the water. Add 1 5/8 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. If it's not sticky, add another tablespoon of water if you have any idea it's too dry. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.
2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.
3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.
4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.