

Three Sourdough Baguettes

By "Wine"

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Getting the dough ready – Day 1

1. In your mixer bowl combine 28 grams of warm water, 10 gram of salt, and 93 grams of starter right from the fridge (must be a viable and active starter) mix together until the starter “dissolves”.

Now add 534 grams of bread flour and 334 grams of warm water.

Using a mixer with the dough hook mix until all is combined and forms a ball.

Place this dough into a glass bowl and let rest in a warm place for an hour.

2. Stretch and folds. Cover the dough with a towel, plastic wrap, or whatever else is easy. I put mine in a plastic cake container which sits on a heated mat. Over the next two hours do a series of 4 stretch and folds every 30 minutes. Using a wet hand, grasp a handful and stretch it upward until you feel resistance, then fold it back onto the dough mass. Repeat this motion 3 additional times, rotating the bowl about 90 degrees each time.

3. Cold Bulk Fermentation. After two hours place your tightly covered bowl into the refrigerator for overnight ferment.

Prepare for Baking – Day 2

When ready to bake plan to have about 2 ½ - 3 hours for shaping, proofing, and baking

4. Divide and Preshape. Scrape the dough out of the bowl onto a unfloured surface. Divide the dough into three equal weight balls (approximately 325 g each). Shape these balls into rounds or tubes. Let rest uncovered for 35 minutes

5. Shape. To simplify the proofing set-up, take a long piece of parchment paper and dust with flour and set aside to place the baguettes onto.

Using a little bit of flour on the surface and your hands shape each ball into a baguette shape. This is where you might need to watch video several time to get the hang of it.

Place each baguette on the parchment. Once you have all three on the parchment dust with flour and cover with a towel.

6. Proof. Let the dough sit in a warm place (I place mine on the heated mat) for about 45 minutes to 1 hour until they pass the poke test; that's when the dough springs back slowly leaving a slight indent in the dough.

7. Prepare the Oven. Find a heavy-duty metal or cast iron pan that you can use in the bottom of the oven to receive water to make steam and place it on the bottom of the oven. Place a baking stone or steel (preferable rectangular) into the oven and preheat at 450 degrees for an hour. That stone needs to be hot.

8. Bake. This is the important part; cut the parchment so that each baguette is on it's own piece. Score each with 3-4 long slashes down the baguette. Now place each baguette onto the baking stone. Then pour hot tap water into the pan on the oven bottom and close the door and bake for 20 minutes

Remove the water pan and bake for another 20 minutes.

9. Cut and serve! Allow the bread to cool completely, for at least 30 minutes, before cutting into it. Whole loaves can be stored uncovered at room temperature for 1 day. Once cut, bread should be stored in paper bags at room temperature and will keep for 5 days or longer. After the second day, it benefits from light toasting.

Baguettes can be frozen for later use.

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