



COOKING PASSION SINCE 1877

SOURDOUGH BREAD AND SALTED FERMENTED BUTTER



Serves 12

INGREDIENTS

100g strong white (bread) flour, preferably unbleached organic flour
100ml tepid water, preferably spring water

INGREDIENTS TO 'FEED'

200–300g strong white (bread) flour, preferably unbleached organic flour
tepid water, preferably spring water

INGREDIENTS DOUGH

500g strong white (bread) flour, preferably unbleached organic flour
1 tsp salt
240ml tepid water, preferably spring water, or as needed

METHOD

For the starter, stir the flour and water together in a bowl to make a sticky paste. Cover with a damp tea-towel (not cling film) and leave on the kitchen counter for 2 days, dampening the tea-towel again as needed to keep it moist. If after 2 days the mixture looks bubbly and has a milky smell, you can proceed to the first feed. (It may take up to 4 days to reach this stage.) If there are patches of mould or the paste smells sour or bad, throw it away and start again with a new batch of starter.

To feed, stir in 100 g (3½ oz) flour and enough tepid water to make a soft, paste-like dough. Cover the bowl and leave as before for 24 hours. At this point the starter will look very active and bubbly. Stir well, then discard half the starter. Add another 100 g (3½ oz) flour and enough tepid water to make a dough, as before. Cover again and leave for 12 hours. If the starter looks very bubbly and lively, it is ready to use. If it seems only slightly bubbly, give it one more feed and wait 6 hours.

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INGREDIENTS BUTTER

450g (1lb) unsalted butter
1 Tbsp coarse salt

For the dough, mix the flour with the salt in a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Weigh out 200 g (7 oz) of the sourdough starter and mix it with the tepid water, then pour it into the well in the flour. Gradually work the flour into the liquid mixture to make a soft dough. You may need to add a little more water if the dough feels dry or crumbly, or more flour if it sticks to your hands or the bowl.

Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and knead for about 10 minutes or until very pliable. Return it to the cleaned bowl, cover with a damp tea-towel and leave to rise in a warm place for 3–8 hours or until doubled in size. Rising time depends on the room temperature and on the strength of your starter. (A new starter will give a slower rise and less volume than one that is well established.)

Turn out the risen dough onto a floured work surface and knock it back with your knuckles to its original size. Shape the dough into a ball and set it in a basket or colander lined with a heavily floured linen tea-towel. Cover with a damp tea-towel and leave to rise for 2–6 hours or until doubled in size.

Towards the end of the rising time, preheat the oven to 220°C (425°F, gas mark 7). Invert the loaf onto a large greased baking sheet and quickly slash the top with a sharp knife. Bake for about 35 minutes or until the bread sounds hollow when tapped on the base.

Transfer the bread to a wire rack and leave to cool. It can be kept for up to 5 days.

METHOD BUTTER

Mix the salt thoroughly with the butter

Spoon into a clean jar and pack it in, pressing down to dispel any air pockets.

Seal tightly and store in a cool place for a month to let it ferment.

It should be ready after a month.

Once opened, store in the fridge and use within a month.