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Cast Iron Bread: A Baker's Dozen Primer



Synopsis

Is it a baker's dozen or a baker does Zen? The author has no need for no-knead bread; because, his experience with it leads him to conclude that there is only so much water one can add to dough before it becomes truly unruly and does not produce a well risen loaf. Adding just the right amount of water is the point he makes in this book. For that, there is a bit of kneading. But not enough to require a body-builder's biceps. A home baker since his early teens, the author offers his interpretation of a low-knead, long-rise bread recipe encompassing 13 loaves with flavor, texture and color. Grab a measuring cup and let's make bread on your schedule. The photos are actual loaves of bread the author created while writing this book. You'll need your own sourdough starter for 3 of the loaves.

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Customer Reviews

I eat bread on a regular basis and other than a baguette haven't bought a single loaf in eight weeks. I always wanted to make bread, but the process seemed both messy and complicated. I figured it would be hard to correct less than perfect results. Before reading this book I had not attempted to

bake yeast bread, although I have made scratch biscuits for many years. The technique described in Cast Iron Bread seemed approachable and has worked out well for me. It is roughly: mix ingredients, let rise for 12-14 hours, stretch the dough a couple of times, bake in a Dutch Oven with the top on for a period of time, remove the top and finish baking. In practice I don't find this approach to be messy, difficult to understand, or hard to do. I am working towards mastering Black Pepper Bread minus the black pepper. It says that is the recipe to use to make plain bread. At some point I expect to branch out to other recipes. Even my first loaf was good except for a small soggy region in the very middle. Subsequent loaves are getting better. I have baked at least one loaf/week since buying the book. The crust is incredible when the bread first comes out of the oven. I eventually purchased and used the Dutch Whisk mentioned in the section that talks about tools and equipment. As the book states it is easier to use than a wooden spoon. I have also used a Kitchenaid mixer, which is easier for me than the Dutch Whisk but involves more clean-up. There are a couple of things I wish were in the book. I measure most ingredients by weight instead of volume. The book addresses measurements by weight but only in passing and then somewhat vaguely. I wish it included correlating weights for all of the measurements by volume. I wish it included a troubleshooting section.

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