



Goldrush San Francisco Starter

The dried San Francisco starter is very easy to use and will get you started in the world of sourdough baking, quickly and effectively. Once activated, your starter will, if looked after through simple feeding, last forever. Some instructions from the manufacturer are supplied and of course you can follow those if you prefer to although we like ours!

Activating Your San Francisco Starter

The starter needs to be reestablished using flour and water. Tap-water should be fine, but some supplies are very chlorinated which serves to kill yeast and bacteria - the opposite of our objective. If you are in any doubt then use either bottled water or leave your tap-water in a jug to stand overnight to allow the chlorine to evaporate.

To a non-metallic bowl add 100g flour and 200g water, stirred together to make a pancake batter-like mixture to which the sourdough sachet is added and stirred.

Leave the covered starter in a warm place, such as an airing cupboard or warm kitchen, overnight, for about 12 hours before looking again.

Give the mixture a feed of 50g flour, stirring it in and then return it to the warm place.

After another 4 hours, some dark, clear liquid will begin to settle out of the starter, a sign of activity – along with a few bubbles. At this point, feed it with another 50g flour and 40g warm water.

Another 4 hours on, the starter should be clearly active with lots of bubbles, looking like an uncooked crumpet.

For the next 3 days, once a day, add 50g flour and 40g water, which will increase the acidity and activity of the starter.

The starter will continue to develop in flavour, but once it is up and running, you can store it in a pot in the 'fridge until you need it. Store a small quantity, around 150g or so and use the rest. Our blog has more about looking after your active starter.





Garden Herb Sourdough

Instructions

This loaf is fairly light containing mostly white flour with some rye and spelt flour with a selection of garden herbs currently in your garden, make sure that you take out any woody bits before finely chopping them.

You need 150g of white sourdough starter which you should make before starting this recipe. To your stored starter, add 80g flour and 70g water, stir and leave in a warm place for at least 24 hours after which a blob of the starter will float in water if ready - if not leave it for an hour or two longer. You can now return all but the 150g to your storage pot.

Method:

In a bowl, use a dough whisk to mix the starter in the warm water until dispersed. To this, add all of the remaining ingredients (except the cheese), and mix together until the flour is wetted and leave for about 10 minutes to allow the flour to absorb the liquid. Scrape all of the bowl contents out onto a lightly floured surface, knead the dough for 10 seconds and then put back into the bowl for another 10 minutes, knead for 10 seconds and repeat. Leave for 30 minutes and then knead for 10 seconds again. The dough should become easier to handle now as the dough develops. Repeat after another 30 minutes and then after 1 hour.

Tip the dough from the bowl, knead and shape to form a cob, with the top-most part of the dough stretched smooth and the seam tucked underneath. Dust a 1kg proving basket with rye (or rice or potato) flour, place the dough into it, seam side up and leave for about two hours in a warm place, until doubled in volume.

Heat the oven to 220°C, placing your La Cloche, if you have one, into the cold oven. When the oven is up to temperature, tip the dough onto the base of the La Cloche, or a tray, score a cross with a grignette or very sharp knife, and sprinkle the cross with the cheese. Place the tray or La Cloche (with dome fitted) in the oven. If using a La Cloche, bake for 40 minutes after which remove the dome and bake for a further 10 minutes by which time the loaf should be evenly golden brown with a blistered crust, otherwise, bake for 40-50 minutes until golden brown.



Ingredients

150g	white sourdough starter (25%)
400g	strong white flour (66%)
100g	spelt flour (17%)
100g	rye flour (17%)
360g	luke-warm water (60%)
10g	fine sea salt (1.7%)
30g	poppy seeds (5%)
75g	finely chopped mixed herbs (12.5%)
-	grated cheese for topping (e.g. cheddar or red leicester)