



Presents

Sourdough Bread Starter to Finish



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Scratch Made Life Group

I have set up a Group for people who have taken Scratch Made Life classes on Facebook. It is simply called “Scratch Made Life Group”. This has been set up for you to share your successes, talk about challenges and toss around things with this group. I do moderate the group and will be participating in the discussions as well. Additionally, there will be special events set up through this group that will only be available to SML Alumni!

Introduction

The wonderful taste and smell of sourdough bread, it is a thing that makes memories. Many credit the City of San Francisco as the birth place of sourdough bread but it is actually the oldest form of leavened bread and was used at least as early as ancient Egypt. The theory is that it was discovered when bread dough was left out and wild yeast drifted into the dough. All sourdough recipes begin with a starter – a mixture of flour and water.

There are still some that swear by San Francisco sourdough and it just may be the best. Why? Because different bacteria make different sour flavors. San Francisco is full of bacteria species that make its sourdough bread famous. So you may start your sourdough journey in Sacramento but then you get transferred to Boston, take your starter with you but your bread tastes a bit different and behaves differently. It is because of the different species of bacteria that are in the area. Additionally, you will find that your starter will behave and taste differently in the summer than it does in the winter.

Scientifically speaking, sourdough is a bread made from the natural occurring yeast and bacteria in flour. It has a more sour taste and better inherent keeping qualities than breads made with baker's yeast, due to the lactic acid produced.

Sourdough is considered to be one of the healthiest breads to eat. This is because it is made through a fermentation process that relies on naturally occurring yeast and bacteria to make the bread rise. It is also easier to digest than other breads due to its prebiotics as well as the probiotics created during the

fermentation process (maturing of the starter). Sourdough is also thought to have a low glycemic index which has less impact on blood sugar.

All of this is wonderful but it can be confusing to go from starter to the oven. The goal of this course is to provide you everything you need to create your own starter, grow it and turn it in to a wonderful loaf of sourdough bread.

What is a Sourdough Starter?

A sourdough starter is how we cultivate the wild yeast that we can use for baking. Wild yeast is present in all flour. The easiest way to make a starter is to simply combine flour and water and let it sit, “feeding” it as needed.

Can I change the Flour Used in my Flour Mixture for the Starter?

Yes. As long as you keep the same ratios and use some of your original starter you can mix up the flour combinations if you want to. The recipe supplied in this handout uses whole wheat flour and all-purpose flour. You can use whole wheat and rye, you could try all all-purpose, it is up to you. You will have different results with different flours so I do recommend you stick with the recipe in this handout at least for a few months.

What water should I use in the Starter?

The more pure your water, the better the results. Using bottled or filtered water will give you the best results. As with so many other foods, the less processed the better the outcome. Do not use water that contains chlorine – you risk killing the good bacteria working to make a great starter.

What is meant by “Feeding” a Sourdough Starter?

Feeding a sourdough starter is actually just like it sounds. In order for a sourdough starter to mature it needs food to feed from to grow the good bacteria and develop the yeast. In the recipe supplied in this handout you will feed your starter every 24 hours (some recipes it is more frequent). A feeding is just water, flour and some of your starter.

What if I miss a feeding or I go out of town?

If you miss a feeding, just pick up where you left off. If you missed several feedings and left your starter on the counter it will have weakened so it may take a few feedings to get it back up to speed. But you will get it back into shape.

If you are going to be out of town or you only want to bake a loaf every few weeks or once a month, you can put a lid on it and place it in the refrigerator. I have heard stories of people letting their starter sit dormant for up to six months and

being able to revive it by just starting the feeding process. If you are home, try to feed your starter weekly even though you aren't going to use the starter for a while, helps to keep it healthy.

Weigh Your Ingredients

In the sourdough making process it is very important to weigh your ingredients. A good scale is a necessary investment. You can feed your starter and create your dough using volume measurements (measuring cups), but feeding and creating dough by volume is much more accurate and much more likely to result in a good sourdough.

Here is the link to the scale that I like to use. I get it from Amazon.

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00UIVIXVO/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o08_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1



Where to keep your sourdough starter while feeding

While you are feeding your starter you should keep it at room temperature, 70-85 degrees is best. I leave mine on the kitchen counter covered with a piece of plastic wrap.

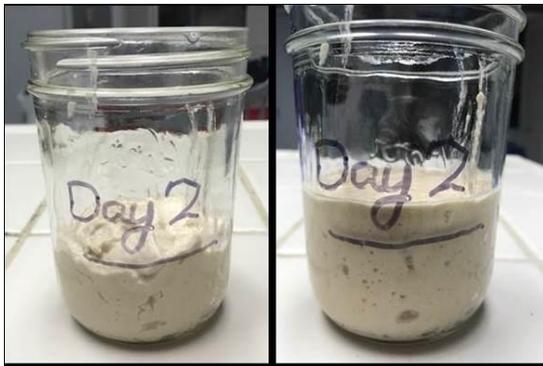
How do I know my Sourdough Starter is Ready?

Your starter is ready when it is nice and active. This means it has a bubbly appearance. When you put a spoon in it the starter it almost looks spider webby and you can hear a noise as you are putting your spoon through the starter. You will note you're your starter has more than doubled in size in an 8-10 hour period. There will also be a nice, sour aroma to the starter. When you first start, your starter may be nice and active but not have a strong aroma. You can go ahead and bake but the sourdough taste will not be as strong as you may like it. This will occur with the maturity of the starter or you can cheat a bit and add just a pinch of citric acid to your dough.

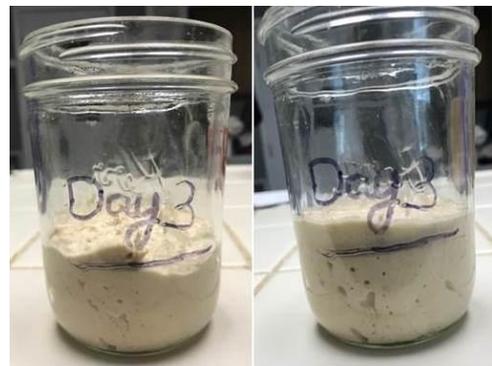
To follow are pictures of the progression of a newly made starter over a ten day period. Most new starters will be ready to use in 10-14 days. That time period shortens as the starter matures.



Day 1: This is what your starter will look like after you first mix it. This is just a mixture of flour and water.

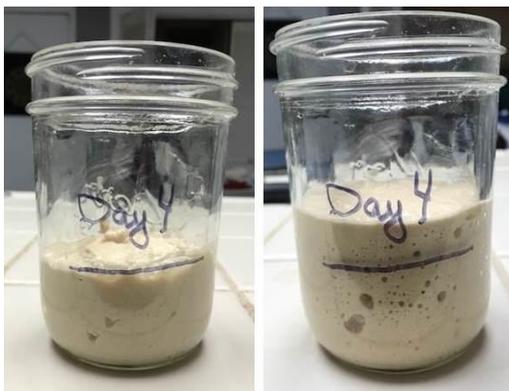


Day 2: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours on right



Day 3: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours on right

Note the line on the mason jar. This is where the starter began right after feeding. Using mason jars are great for cultivating your starter because it is easy to monitor the development. You can see the bubbles and the growth easily.



Day 4: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours on right



Day 5: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours on right

You can see at Day 5 the starter has more than doubled in size in 10 hours and there are lots of bubbles visible. You could use your starter at this point but the aroma isn't there yet, so I continued the feeding process.



Day 6: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours in middle, top view at 10 hours on right



Day 7: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours in middle, top view at 10 hours on right



Day 8: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours in middle, top view at 10 hours on right



Day 9: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours in middle, top view at 10 hours on right



Day 10: Just mixed on the left, at 10 hours in middle, top view at 10 hours on right
READY TO START THE PROCESS TO BAKE!

Now that you have some background, and some visuals to help you along let's get to making sourdough bread from starter to finish.

1. Sourdough Starter Flour Mix

4 ½ cups (24 ¾ ounces) whole wheat flour
5 cups (25 ounces) all-purpose flour

Mix together and maintain in an airtight container for daily feedings.

2. Sourdough Starter

1 cup (5 ounces) sourdough starter flour mix

2/3 cup (5 1/3 ounces) room-temperature water

Mix together until no dry flour remains. Transfer to a mason jar. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 24 hours.

3. Feed Starter

1/4 cup (2 ounces) room-temperature water

1/4 cup (2 ounces) starter (discard remaining starter or save in separate bowl)

1/2 cup (2 1/2 ounces) flour mixture

Measure all into bowl on scale or a glass bowl. Mix all until no dry flour remains and transfer back into mason jar. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 24 hours.

Repeat this step every 24 hours until starter doubles in size in 8 to 10 hours after being fed and is pleasantly aromatic, 10 to 14 days. At this point starter is mature and ready to be baked with, or it can be moved to storage in the refrigerator. To store - feed, transfer to clean container, cover, let sit at room temperature for five hours. Cover with lid and transfer to refrigerator.

NOTE: If your sourdough starter doubled in size but you let it fall more than a half an inch you will need to feed it again and allow it to double before using it to prepare for baking.

4. Prepare for Baking

Eighteen to 24 hours before baking, measure out 1/2 cup (4 ounces) starter and transfer to clean bowl; discard or save remaining starter. Stir 1 cup (5 ounces) all-purpose flour and 1/2 cup (4 ounces) room-temperature water into starter until no dry flour remains. Cover and let sit at room temperature for 5 hours. Cover and refrigerate for at least 12 hours or up to 18 hours.



Preparing starter for bake.

Left – just after mixing. Center – 5 hour rise side view. Right – 5 hour rise top.

5. Sourdough Starter

Remove starter prepared for baking from the refrigerator. Measure out amount needed to your recipe and set aside. Using some of the remaining starter, start at the “Feed Starter” step (Step 3) to start developing your starter for another bake.

6. Bake!

For Small Loaf:

- 3 2/3 cups (18 1/3 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1 3/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 1/2 cups plus 4 teaspoons (12 2/3 ounces) water, room temperature
- 1/3 cup (3 ounces) mature sourdough starter from Prepare for Baking (#4) step

For Large Loaf:

- 7 1/3 cups (36 2/3 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 3 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 3 cups plus 4 teaspoons (25 1/3 ounces) water, room temperature
- 2/3 cup (6 ounces) mature sourdough starter from Prepare for Baking (#4) step

Whisk flour and salt together in medium bowl. Whisk room-temperature water and starter in large bowl until smooth. Add flour mixture to water mixture and stir using wooden spoon, scraping up dry flour from bottom of bowl until dough comes together, then knead by hand in bowl until shaggy ball forms and no dry flour remains. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for at least 12 hours or up to 18 hours.

***If your dough is runny at this point do a “Cold Proof”, which simply means to place dough covered into the refrigerator for 12 hours. This will firm up the dough to a workable consistency.



Mixing & rising.

Left – Just after mixing. Center – Just after mixing, top. Right – 8 hour rise.

Lay 12 by 12-inch sheet of parchment paper (do not use wax paper) on counter and spray generously with vegetable oil spray. Transfer dough to lightly floured counter and knead 10 to 15 times. Dough will be very loose and sticky. Shape dough into ball by pulling edges into middle. Transfer dough, seam side down, to center of parchment. Pick up dough by lifting parchment edges and lower into heavy-bottomed Dutch oven. Cover loosely with plastic wrap.



Preparing Dough to Bake

Left – Dough ready for kneading. Right – Dough in Dutch oven.

Bring about 6-8 cups of water to a full, rolling boil. Adjust oven rack to middle position and place Dutch oven on that rack. Pour boiling water into a vessel and place pot on lower rack. Close oven door and let dough rise until it does not readily spring back when poked with your floured finger, 2 to 3 hours.

Remove Dutch oven and water pan from oven; discard plastic from Dutch oven. Lightly flour top of dough and, using razor blade or sharp knife, make one 7-inch-long, 1/2-inch-deep slit along top of dough. Cover Dutch oven with its lid and place on middle rack in oven. Heat oven to 425 degrees. Bake bread for 30 minutes (starting timing as soon as you turn on oven).

Remove lid and continue to bake until loaf is deep brown and registers 210 degrees, 20 to 30 minutes longer. Carefully remove bread from pot; transfer to wire rack and let cool completely before cutting.



Finished product!

Notes:

Placing the Dutch oven on top of a baking stone or baking sheet helps to reduce the possibility of burning of the bottom and sides of the bread.

If you prefer a lighter colored bread, about 15 minutes after taking the lid off of the Dutch oven, place the water back into the oven. The steam will help to reduce the coloring.

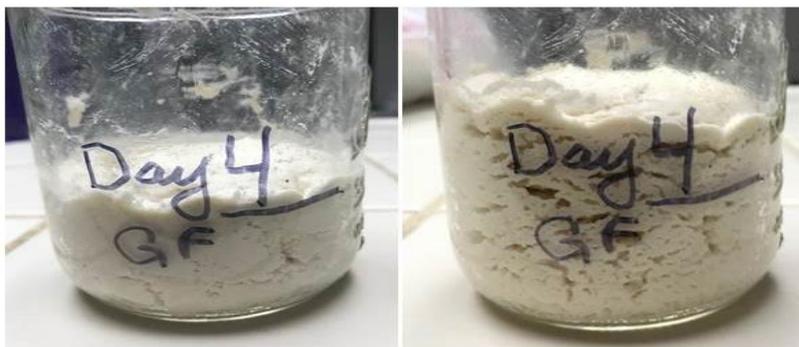
Gluten Free Sourdough Bread

You can use this same process and recipe from start to finish creating gluten free sourdough bread. I used King Arthur's 1:1 Gluten Free flour to create the starter and bake the bread.

A few minor tweaks:

- The sourdough starter flour "mix" is all the King Arthur's 1:1 (or whatever gluten free flour mix you choose to use)
- When feeding the starter (days 2 on) add 2.2 ounces water
- Let your starter go the full 14 days before using for the first time around.
- To mix your dough: Use a gluten free flour that advertises itself as "1:1" or "all inclusive", something that indicates you can use the flour straight across for the flour in a regular recipe. King Arthur, Pamela's and Bob's Mill all have good 1:1 flour mixes.
- For the bake: Place directly into Dutch oven heavily coated with cooking spray. Bake at 400 degrees for one hour, or until baked through. No need to steam.

Here are a few pictures of the Gluten Free process.



Day 4: Gluten Free - mixed on left, 10 hours on right.



NOTE: When baking Gluten Free the experience will be a bit different. Your dough will not double in size during the proofing phase. Also, you do not need to knead gluten free bread, just shape it and put it into your cooking vessel. The purpose of kneading dough is to break down the gluten which bread using gluten free flour does not have.

Using the Sourdough Discard

As you feed your sourdough, there is quite a bit of starter that gets discarded. You can save that discard and refrigerate it to make some tasty treats from waffles to pizza dough. Here are a few recipes that use the discard.

Pancakes/Waffles

Overnight sponge

- 2 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1 cup sourdough starter, unfed/discard

Waffle or pancake batter

- all of the overnight sponge
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil or melted butter
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

Directions

1. To make the overnight sponge, stir down your refrigerated starter, and remove 1 cup.
2. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the 1 cup unfed starter, flour, sugar, and buttermilk.
3. Cover and let rest at cool room temperature (about 65°F to 70°F) for about 12 hours, or overnight.
4. In a small bowl or mixing cup, beat together the eggs, and oil or butter. Add to the overnight sponge.
5. Add the salt and baking soda, stirring to combine. The batter will bubble.
6. Pour batter onto your preheated, greased waffle iron, and bake according to the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Serve waffles immediately, to ensure crispness. Or hold in a warm oven till ready to serve.
8. Yield: 1 dozen 8" waffles or about 2 dozen medium pancakes.

Pizza Crust

- 1 cup sourdough starter, unfed/discard
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 2 1/2 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon instant or active dry yeast
- 4 teaspoons Pizza Dough Flavor, optional but delicious

Directions

1. Stir any liquid on top of your refrigerated starter back into it before measuring 1 cup into a large mixing bowl.
2. Add the warm water, flour, salt, yeast, and Pizza Dough Flavor (if using). Mix to combine, then knead for about 7 minutes in a mixer with the dough hook, until the dough wraps itself around the hook and cleans the side of the bowl.
3. Place the dough in a greased container, cover and let rise until almost doubled in bulk. Depending on the vitality of your starter, this will take between 2 and 4 hours. For a faster rise, place the dough in a warm spot, or double the yeast.
4. For two thin-crust pizzas, divide the dough in half, and shape each into a flattened disk. Drizzle two 12" round pizza pans with olive oil, and brush to coat the bottom. Place the dough in the pans, cover, and let rest for 15 minutes. After this rest, gently press the dough toward the edges of the pans. If it starts to shrink back, cover and let rest for 15 minutes before continuing.
5. For a thicker, large pizza, oil a 14" round pizza pan (an 18" x 13" half-sheet pan will also work). Place the dough in the selected pan and press it out to the edges, again giving it a 15-minute rest before continuing if it starts to snap back.
6. Cover the pan(s) and let the dough rise until it's as thick as you like.
7. Towards the end of the rise time, preheat your oven to 450°F.
8. Sauce and top as you like, but don't add cheese yet. Bake thin-crust pizzas for 5 minutes before removing from the oven and adding cheese. For thick-crust pizza, bake for 10 minutes before removing from the oven and adding cheese. Return to the oven and bake for 5 to 7 more minutes, until the cheese is melted.

English Muffins

2 tablespoons sugar
2 cups warm water (110°F-115°F)
1 tablespoon active dry yeast or instant yeast
1 cup sourdough starter, ripe (fed) or discard;
7 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1/2 cup Baker's Special Dry Milk or nonfat dry milk
1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) butter, at room temperature
1 tablespoon salt
1/4 teaspoon sour salt (citric acid), optional; for enhanced sour flavor
semolina or cornmeal, for coating

1. Combine all of the dough ingredients, except the cornmeal/semolina, in a large bowl.
2. Mix and knead — by hand, electric mixer, or bread machine — to form a smooth dough. The dough should be soft and elastic, but not particularly sticky; add additional flour if necessary.
3. Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover, and set it aside to rise for about 1 1/2 hours, or until it's noticeably puffy. For most pronounced sour flavor, cover the bowl, and immediately place it in the refrigerator (without rising first). Let the dough chill for 24 hours; this will develop its flavor.
4. Gently deflate the dough, turn it out onto a lightly floured work surface, cover it, and let it sit for a few minutes, to relax the gluten. Divide the dough in half. Working with one piece at a time, roll 1/2" thick, and cut in 3" rounds. Re-roll and cut any remaining scraps. Repeat with the remaining half of dough.
5. Alternatively, divide the dough into 24 pieces (total). Shape each piece into a round ball, then flatten each ball into a 3" round. For a somewhat more even rise as the muffins cook, flatten each ball slightly larger than 3", and trim edges with a 3" cutter (or trim all around the edge with a pair of scissors). Muffins with cut (rather than flattened) sides will rise more evenly.
6. Place the rounds, evenly spaced, onto cornmeal- or semolina-sprinkled baking sheets (12 per sheet). Sprinkle them with additional cornmeal or semolina, cover with plastic wrap, and let them rise until light and puffy, about 45 to 60 minutes. If the dough has been refrigerated overnight, the rise time will be about 2 hours.
7. Carefully transfer the rounds (as many as a time that will fit without crowding) right-side up to a large electric griddle preheated to 350°F, or to an ungreased frying pan that has been preheated over medium-low heat.
8. Cook the muffins for about 10 to 12 minutes on each side, or until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of a muffin registers 190°F. The edges may feel a bit soft; that's OK.
9. Remove the muffins from the griddle, and cool on a rack. Store tightly wrapped at room temperature for 4 or 5 days; freeze for longer storage.
10. Yield: 2 dozen large muffins.

Dinner Rolls

1 cup milk (8 oz, 240ml), warmed to about 110°F
1 1/2 tsp instant yeast (5g)
2 Tbsp granulated sugar
1 large egg, at room temperature
6 Tbsp unsalted butter (3 oz, 85g), at room temperature
1 1/2 tsp salt
1/2 cup sourdough starter discard (unfed) (4 oz, 113g)
2 3/4 cup all-purpose flour (11 1/2 oz, 325g)
1/4 cup potato flour (1 5/8oz, 46g)

1. Combine all ingredients together in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook or paddle attachment. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds, scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula, then beat on medium speed until the dough comes together and pulls away from the sides of the bowl, about 2 minutes. (If you do not own a mixer, you can mix this dough with a large wooden spoon or rubber spatula).
2. Keep the dough in the mixer and beat for an additional 2 minutes or knead by hand on a lightly floured surface for two minutes.
3. Lightly grease a large bowl with oil or nonstick spray. Place the dough in the bowl, turning it to coat all sides in the oil. Cover the bowl with aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or a clean kitchen towel. Allow the dough to rise in a relatively warm environment for 1-2 hours or until double in size.
4. Grease a 9×13 inch baking pan or two 9-inch square or round baking pans. You can also bake the rolls in a cast iron skillet or on a lined baking sheet.
5. When the dough is ready, knead it gently to deflate it. Divide the dough into 14-16 equal pieces. Shape each piece into a smooth ball. Arrange in prepared baking pan.
6. Adjust oven rack to a lower position and preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). (It's best to bake the rolls towards the bottom of the oven so the tops don't burn.)
7. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown on top, rotating the pan halfway through. If you notice the tops browning too quickly, loosely tent the pan with aluminum foil
8. Remove from the oven and allow rolls to cool for a few minutes before serving.
9. Cover leftover rolls tightly and store at room temperature for 2-3 days or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Cinnamon Raisin Bread

Dough

- 1/2 cup sourdough starter, ripe (fed) or discard
- 3 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons instant yeast
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 large egg
- 5 tablespoons soft butter
- 2/3 cup lukewarm water

Filling

- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 large egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water
- 1/2 cup raisins

Directions

1. To make the dough: Combine all of the dough ingredients, and mix and knead — using your hands, a stand mixer, or a bread machine set on the dough cycle — to make a soft, smooth dough.
2. Place the dough in a lightly greased container, and allow it to rise for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, until it's just about doubled in bulk.
3. While the dough is rising, make the filling by stirring together the sugar, cinnamon, and flour.
4. Gently deflate the dough, and transfer it to a lightly greased work surface.
5. Roll and pat the dough into a rough rectangle approximately 6" x 20".
6. Brush the dough with the egg/water mixture, and sprinkle it evenly with the filling and raisins.
7. Starting with a short end, roll the dough into a log. Pinch the ends to seal, and pinch the long seam closed.
8. Transfer the log, seam-side down, to a lightly greased 9" x 5" loaf pan. Cover and allow the bread to rise until it's crested about 1" over the rim of the pan, about 1 hour.
9. While the dough is rising, preheat the oven to 350°F.
10. Bake the bread for 40 to 45 minutes, tenting it lightly with aluminum foil after the first 15 to 20 minutes. The bread's crust will be golden brown, and the interior of the finished loaf should measure 190°F on a digital thermometer.
11. Remove the bread from the oven, and gently loosen the edges. Turn it out of the pan, and brush the top surface with butter, if desired; this will give it a soft, satiny crust. Allow the bread to cool completely before slicing.

Banana Nut Bread

¾ cup sugar
 ½ cup butter
 3 large browned bananas, mashed
 1 egg
 1 cup sourdough starter discard
 2 tsp vanilla extract
 1 ½ cups flour
 1 tsp baking powder
 ½ tsp baking soda
 ½ tsp salt
 1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)
 1 cup chocolate chips (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease your loaf pan(s). Cream together sugar and butter. Add bananas, egg and vanilla and beat until completely combined. Add the starter and mix – if doing this by hand this will take a while so be patient. Add the dry ingredients and mix well. If adding walnuts or chocolate chips, fold into the batter.

Pour into greased pan(s). Bake for 45 – 60 minutes, depending on size of pan, or until toothpick inserted comes out clean.

Sourdough Crackers

1 cup Whole Wheat Flour or White Whole Wheat Flour
 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
 1 cup sourdough starter, unfed/discard
 1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter, room temperature
 2 tablespoons dried herbs of your choice, optional
 oil for brushing
 coarse salt (such as kosher or sea salt) for sprinkling on top

Directions

1. Mix together the flour, salt, sourdough starter, butter, and optional herbs to make a smooth(not sticky), cohesive dough.
2. Divide the dough in half, and shape each half into a small rectangular slab. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes, or up to a couple of hours, until the dough is firm.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
4. Very lightly flour a piece of parchment, your rolling pin, and the top of the dough.
5. Working with one piece at a time, roll the dough to about 1/16" thick. The dough will have ragged, uneven edges; that's OK. Just try to make it as even as possible.

6. Transfer the dough and parchment together onto a baking sheet. Lightly brush with oil and then sprinkle the salt over the top of the crackers.
7. Cut the dough into 1 1/4" squares; a rolling pizza wheel works well here.
8. Prick each square with the tines of a fork.
9. Bake the crackers for 20 to 25 minutes, until the squares are starting to brown around the edges. Midway through, reverse the baking sheets: both top to bottom, and front to back; this will help the crackers brown evenly.
10. When fully browned, remove the crackers from the oven, and transfer them to a cooling rack. Store airtight at room temperature for up to a week; freeze for longer storage.

Go Forward and Bake!

You now have the tools to create your own sourdough starter from scratch, feed it, prepare it for baking and bake. You also have what you need to know to create a nice gluten free sourdough starter and loaf. AND, some fabulous ideas for using the sourdough starter discard. I have no doubt I will be receiving reports of all of the marvelous creations coming from your kitchen!

Good luck to you and never hesitate to reach out with questions or share your results!