

Pain de Mie - whole wheat malt porridge bread *A square slice sandwich loaf*



Finally, I have understood that *pain de mie* translates as *crumb-bread*; purposely made to maximize the crumb and minimize the crust. This is achieved by baking the loaf in a closed bread pan that it exactly fills, in a moderately hot oven.

Enclosing bread while it bakes, whether under a cloche, inside a Dutch oven or inside an enclosed box, keeps the dough moisture contained in the loaf. Any of these enclosures will produce loaves with well contained moisture, independently of the internal oven space or oven humidity.

Crumb bread, pain de mie, is possibly the most frequently found format for our daily bread. It is our ordinary bread shape, for toast and sandwiches, shaped in a rectangular box with a square cross section. Generally, it is pre-sliced, with a soft crumb, a barely discernable crust and good keeping qualities.



This recipe for *pain de mie* is preferably made with whole wheat flour from wheat types with a light-colored bran, such as white wheat (e.g. Sonora) or durum wheat (e.g. Durum-Iraq), plus salt, water, and a simple whole wheat and malt sourdough starter to provide the leavening. Of course, red wheat could also be used. The particularly soft crumb results from including a malt treated porridge made with a portion of the flour. The final bread flavor is mildly nutty and slightly sweet.

Method

Amounts are for a *pain de mie* style loaf pan with lid, dimensions: 4 x 4 x 9 inches (10 x10 x 23 cm)

Whole wheat flour basis: 666 grams

Step I. Sweet malt porridge preparation

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Amount in grams</i>	<i>Bakers percent</i>
Whole wheat flour	66.6	10
Water at ambient temperature	266.4	40
Wheat malt (enzyme active)	33.3	5

[] In a saucepan, mix whole wheat flour and cold water to a smooth slurry. Heat to boiling while continuously stirring and continue cooking for a minute. *Notice that the mixture thickens to an evenly smooth porridge.*

[] When the porridge has cooled to less than 104°F (40°C) beat in all the enzyme active malt flour. Cover with a lid and set aside for 60 minutes at 86°F (30°C). *The mixture should thin somewhat and become distinctly sweet tasting.*

Step II. Mixing the dough

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Amount in grams</i>	<i>Bakers percent</i>
<i>Extra virgin olive oil (optional)</i>	26.6	4
Whole wheat flour	599.4	90
Salt	10.0	1.5
Water	166.5 - 233.1**	25 - 35**
Simple whole wheat sourdough starter	66.6	10

** Suggested total hydration is 65-75%, including water in porridge (40%).

Begin with the lower amount of water for the dough. Use an amount of water to make a medium stiff dough for easy handling.

[] *Optionally, beat olive oil into the sweet porridge.*

[] In main mixing bowl, mix whole wheat flour and salt.

[] In a separate jug or bowl combine water and sourdough starter; add this mixture to main mixing bowl.

[] Add all of the sweet porridge from Step I, to the main mixing bowl.

[] Mix the dough well for 5-10 minutes, until all the ingredients are evenly incorporated. *Final dough should be medium stiff, yet smooth and extensible. Add 5-10% more water if dough is too stiff.*

[] Press the dough down into a bowl or box with lid and leave to ferment and rise at 86°F (30°C) for 4 hours. *Dough should be puffy at the end of this time but may not rise to double the original volume. Total fermentation time from mixing until baking, needs to be long enough for sufficient acidity to develop to deactivate the malt alpha-amylase.*

Step III shaping and final rise

Water moistened hands, a clean board and a dough scraper are all that you will need to handle the dough. Do not sprinkle flour.

[] Punch dough down on a smooth surface. Form into a rectangle approximately 8 x 12 inches. Fold the top third over and then fold the bottom third over, to form a piece 8 x 4

inches. Gently flatten and leave to rest at 86°F (30°C) under a moist towel for 15-30 minutes.

[] Prepare the baking pan with a baking parchment paper liner.

Use a sheet of parchment paper 12.5 x 16 inches (32 x 41 cm)). Cut off a 4 x 16 inch (10 x 41 cm) strip from the length of the paper. Line the bottom and ends of the pan with this strip. The remaining piece will line the bottom and sides of the pan and also lap over the dough as a cover.

[] Finally shape the dough piece into cylinder, by gently pressing it and rolling it up with slight stretching, along the length. Use pressure on the ends with dough scraper to maintain the length. Pinch the seam closed. Support the dough piece, seam-side down on the parchment liner and lower into the baking pan. Push it gently into the bottom of the pan. Cover with pan lid. Leave to rise at 86°F (30°C) for 2 hours.

Step IV Baking

[] Preheat oven for an hour at 375°F (191°C). Bake the loaf enclosed in the pan for 60 minutes at 375°F (191°C).

[] After baking, immediately remove loaf from pan, remove parchment paper and allow to cool on a rack. Allow to cool completely before cutting. Store loaf in a closed container, or wrap, to allow the crust to soften.