

Pain Au Levain

Pain Au Levain recipe from 'Taste of Bread'.

Notes

This is from page 91 of Raymond Calvel's 'Taste of Bread' (or 'Le Goût De Pain'). This is made in three stages, each using the last, with the first one using peice of the last batch of bread (called a 'chef'). Calvel recommends a dough temperature of 25-26 °C for all the stages. The first stage is the 'rafrachi' (or 'refresher'), this should be mixed on low for 10 minutes and allowed to proof for 5-6h (3.5x starting volume). The second stage is the 'levain', this should be mixed on low for 10 minutes and allowed to proof for 4-6h (3.5x starting volume). The final stage is the complete dough that will become the finished loaf, it should be autolysed for 30 minutes before being mixed on low for 12 minutes. Fermentation should be 50 minutes, at this point a piece of dough can be torn off for the next batch and the bread can be divided and rounded over 10 minutes. Bench rest should be 10-20 minutes. Shaping is a further 10 minutes followed by a 4h proof stage (3.5-4x starting volume). The recipe also mentions that 0.2% yeast (maximum) can be used.

It is recommended that the bread is baked for 30-40 minutes at 230 °C (It's difficult to tell if this is 'fan' or not, especially since this was written in 1990 and was based on commercial bread ovens). The author does note that it should be baked at a lower temperature than yeasted breads due to the slowness of the oven-spring. Calvel also notes that a good crust is built on a relatively long baking time and a relatively low oven temperature. You're aiming for #834a1d on un-scored parts of the loaf with some areas darker (from the color plates).

This one has been organised slightly strangely and there is greater than 100% flour, there may be some mistake. I will be baking it to double-check. It is also a fairly spread out recipe, so may not be appropriate for a single loaf at a time unless you have very accurate scales. Autolyse in this one is 'optional' but highly recommended. Because of the higher acidity of sourdough, the gluten network is slower to develop. As much development as possible is desirable due to the comparatively lower leavening power of natural yeast cultures.

Ingredients

	Bakers %	500g total	1kg total	2kg total	3kg total	4kg total
Rafrachi White Flour	2%	5	10	21	31	41
Rafrachi Water	1.2%	3	6	12	19	25
Rafrachi Chef	1.54%	4	8	16	24	32
Levain White Flour	5.24%	14	27	54	81	108
Levain Rye Flour	0.46%	1.19	2.37	4.74	7	9.48
Levain Water	3.41%	9	18	35	53	70
Levain Rafrachi	4.77%	12	25	49	74	98
Main White Flour	95%	245	490	979	1469	1959
Main Rye Flour	5%	13	26	52	77	103
Main Water	64%	165	330	660	990	1320
Main Levain	13.85%	36	71	143	214	286
Main Salt	1.8%	4.64	9	19	28	37