

# APOLLONIA POILÂNE

—

Teaches Bread Baking



MasterClass



# ALL RISE

When Pierre Poilâne opened his eponymous French bakery in 1932, he didn't know that his breads would lay the groundwork for an artisanal baking revolution. More than 80 years later, Apollonia Poilâne is carrying on her grandfather's legacy



ourdough is Apollonia Poilâne's birthright: As a baby, her crib was a wicker proofing basket.

But the story of her family bakery begins in 1932, more than half a century before Apollonia was born. That's when her grandfather, Pierre Poilâne, opened a boulangerie on Rue du Cherche-Midi, in the bohemian St. Germain des Près district of Paris's Left Bank. The first bread he sold was the kind he grew up eating in Normandy: a rustic sourdough loaf the size of a large pottery wheel.

Skinny baguettes made from refined white flour and commercial yeast were the trend in Paris at the time. But Pierre's niche found its audience with starving artists, who appreciated the sourdough bread's longer shelf life. Local bistro owners also found the loaf's dense crumb ideal for tartines (open-faced sandwiches). When the Left Bank became a tourist destination, celebrities like Frank Sinatra stopped in, while Lauren Bacall and Robert De Niro had loaves shipped from Paris.

The bakery's popularity, especially among the glitterati, ramped up when Pierre's son, Lionel, entered the family business. As a teen, he'd been a reluctant apprentice, but in his early 20s, he had an epiphany. If he couldn't leave

the oven to see the world, he could bring the world to his oven.

Lionel took over Poilâne in the early 1970s and forever changed the popular image of a baker. He collected (and wrote) books about bread history and culture. He maintained a dapper wardrobe and traveled the world. He once built an entire bedroom out of bread for Salvador Dalí. (A replica bread chandelier still hangs in the Poilâne offices as an homage.) He insisted that the old traditions of bread making were an art form worth preserving.

Lionel oversaw the bakery's transformation from a beloved French institution to an international powerhouse. In the 1980s, he enlisted his wife, Apollonia's mother, Ibu, a Polish American architect and designer, to draw up plans for a new baking facility. It would be located in Bièvres, about 30 minutes outside Paris. Called La Manufacture Poilâne, this location featured 24 wood-fired ovens—all replicas of the one at Rue du Cherche-Midi—arranged in a circle around a stock-

pile of logs. Each oven was tended by one baker, who shaped each loaf by hand. The Manufacture allowed Poilâne to expand business without sacrificing handmade quality.

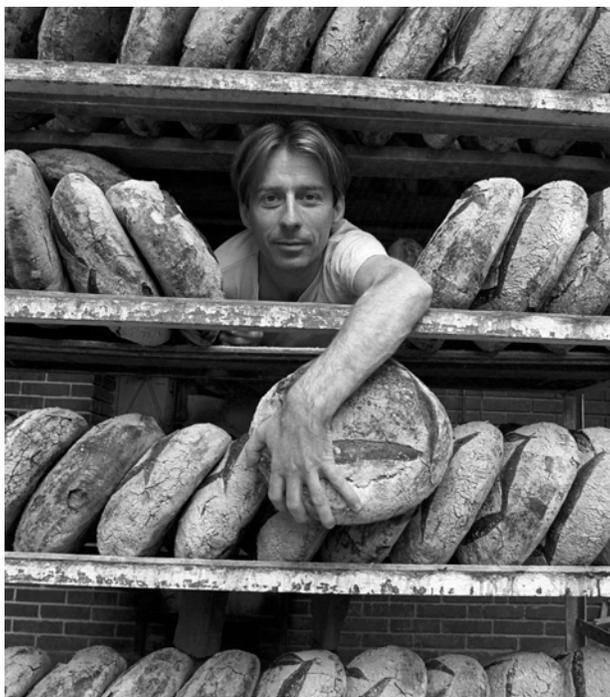
Which brings us to the baby in the proofing basket. When Apollonia was a child, she said that she wanted to be a baker in the morning, like her father, and an architect in the afternoon, like her mother. She began apprenticing at the bakery as a teenager. In 2002, when she was 18 years old, Lionel and Ibu were killed when their helicopter crashed in Western France. The next day, Apollonia took over operations of Poilâne. She decided to attend Harvard the following year, as planned, while continuing to run the bakery from her dorm room in Cambridge. She had bread overnights to her every Monday and flew to Paris once a month for important meetings.

Apollonia carried on the traditions of her father and grandfather, using the same recipes and the same 80-plus-year-old sourdough starter

to produce Poilâne's artisan breads. But Apollonia has also put her own stamp on the family business. She developed the bakery's first gluten-free offering, published a cookbook showcasing bread's potential as an ingredient in other recipes, and ushered Poilâne into the social media age.

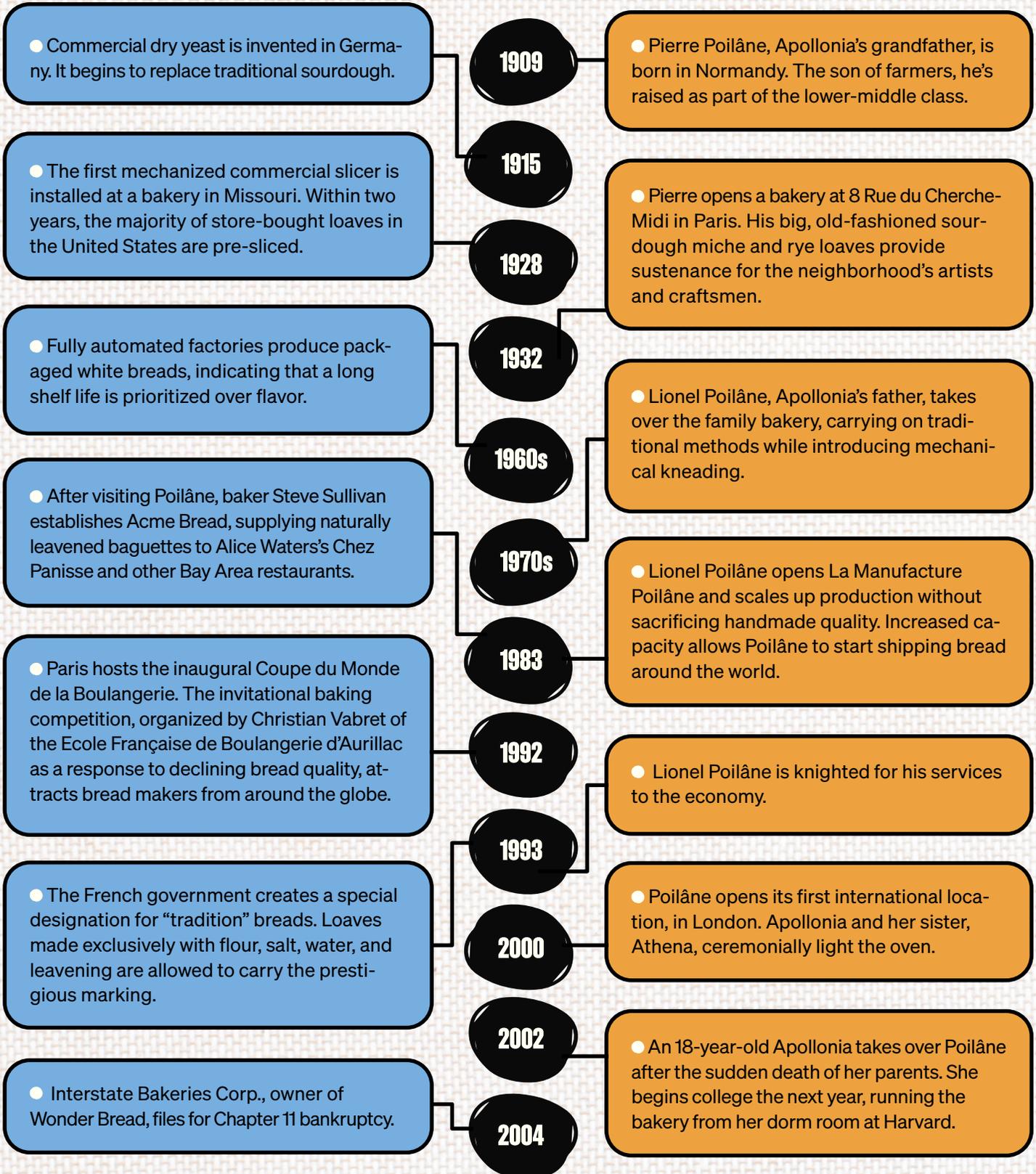
Today, she oversees 160 employees at six locations. But she still makes time to personally inspect one loaf from each of the 24 ovens at the Manufacture for color, smell, sound, and taste—because, according to Apollonia, baking bread is a craft that requires the engagement of all five senses. Time to dig in.

Lionel Poilâne in 1977



# Empire of the Bun

A brief history of bread making (and its most famous family) in the 20th century



# TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Most everything you'll need to get started



## BAKING SHEET

Make croutons, tartines, breadcrumbs, and a thousand other treats. You can also use a baking sheet (along with a weight) to turn a regular loaf pan into a Pullman loaf pan.



## BENCH SCRAPER

Remove dough stuck on countertops or the insides of bowls. Metal scrapers are most effective for the former; plastic scrapers offer the flexibility required of the latter.



## BRUSH

Grease the insides of a loaf pan—or the outside of a loaf—to form a shiny crust.



## COCOTTE

Also known as a Dutch oven. The lid traps steam, mimicking the effect of a stocked bakery. Grab a 12-inch cocotte for making sourdough and other free-form loaves.



## DIGITAL SCALE

Measure ingredients with precision (see page 11).



## FOOD PROCESSOR

Grind through breadcrumbs and make pesto. Most high-speed blenders can stand in for a traditional food processor.



## HAND MIXER

Mix those 'tweener doughs: the ones that are too heavy for whipping together by hand but aren't voluminous enough for the stand mixer.



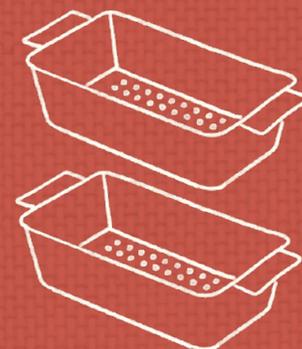
## KITCHEN SCISSORS

Useful for all kinds of tasks, including scoring loaves of brioche. The sharper, the better.



## LAME

Pronounced "lahm," these are good for scoring loaves efficiently (and without cutting yourself). The double-edged razor blade is attached to a wand or stick for extra control.



## LOAF PANS

Bake brioche and pain de mie in the correct form.



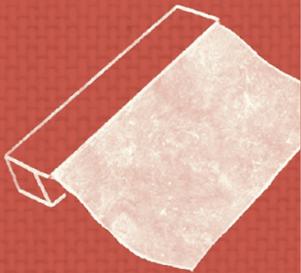
### MIXING BOWLS

Roll doughs by hand, and keep ingredients organized. Arm yourself with a few different sizes—get an extra-large one if you're planning to feed a crowd.



### OVEN MITTS

Handle hot loaves, cocottes, and baking trays. Some stores sell heat-proof gloves, which also work well.



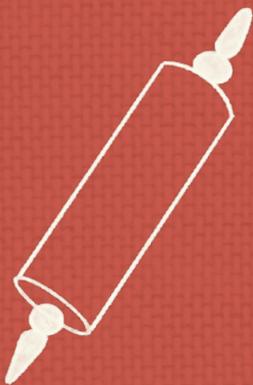
### PARCHMENT PAPER

Prevent sticking without adding extra oil to your loaf pans or baking sheets.



### PROOFING BASKETS

Rise and shape sourdough loaves.



### ROLLING PIN

Roll out sablé dough (see page 55).



### STAND MIXER

Knead without tiring out your hands. Recommended for recipes that call for prolonged, gentle kneading, like brioche.

# A Breaducation

Familiarize yourself with Apollonia's baking jargon

### Bulk fermentation

● Sometimes called bulk rise or first rise, this stage happens after the dough is mixed but before it's shaped. The bulk part is only relevant if you're making multiple loaves from the same hunk of dough.

### Crumb

● The structure of the bread. Breads with large, irregular air bubbles, like ciabatta, are said to have an open crumb; those with tiny, regularly spaced air bubbles, such as pain de mie, have a "tight" or closed crumb.

### Gluten

● The water-activated protein that makes dough stretchy. This elastic quality allows dough to rise without collapsing. Of all cultivated grains, wheat contains the most gluten, found in the seed's starchy in- nard (called endo- sperm). Refined

white flour is 100 percent endo- sperm, so it's high- er in gluten than whole-wheat flour.

### Kneading

● The massaging of dough before baking. This turns air pockets into ti- nier bubbles, creat- ing a more uniform, tighter crumb structure.

### Pain perdu

● The dish most Americans know colloquially as French toast, liter- ally translated as "lost toast." Pain perdu was initially conceived as a way of salvaging dried- out hunks of bread to create another meal.

### Proofing

● The dough's sec- ond and final rise, after shaping. This can happen in a proofing basket or a loaf pan.

### Sablé

● The French word for "sand." Here sa- blé refers to tex- tured shortbreads

from Normandy (the region where Apollonia's grand- father grew up).

### Seam

● A line on a loaf that indicates where it's been folded.

### Sourdough starter

● An acidic com- munity of natural yeasts and other bacteria used to leaven bread and add flavor.

### Tartine

● An open-faced sandwich that can range from a piece of toast smeared with jam to bread piled high with meats, cheeses, and vegetables.

### Yeast

● A living single- celled fungus found on many foods and in the air. Yeast consumes starch and releases carbon dioxide gas. When this happens within dough, the carbon dioxide gas fills existing air bubbles.

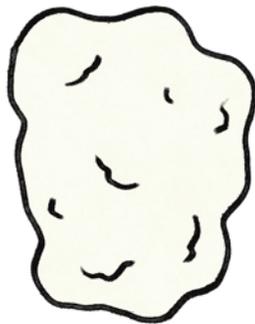
# THE FOUR STAGES OF FRESHNESS

From crust to crumb, familiarize yourself with the lifecycle of a loaf

	AGE	CHARACTERISTICS	BEST FOR
ULTRA-FRESH	0 to 1 day old	Moist, elastic, springy, difficult to slice	Eating untoasted, slathered with butter—or plain
FRESH	1 to 2 days old	Less moist, easy to slice	Tartines (see page 45), toast (see page 45), and sandwiches
DRY	3 to 4 days old	Much less moist, very easy to slice	Savory Pain de Mie Pain Perdu (see page 43) or Breadcrumbs (see page 53)
STALE	5+ days old	Hard, difficult to slice	Croutons (see page 49) or Breadcrumbs (see page 53)

## Roll Call

Getting your dough to a particular thickness can be a challenge. These tricks (and tools) can help

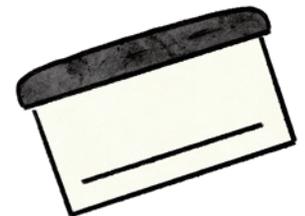


### SHAPE BEFORE ROLLING

● To do this, turn the dough out onto a piece of plastic wrap. Fold the plastic wrap over the dough and use your hands to pat the dough into the desired shape—a rectangle for pan loaves or a circle if you're making pie.

### USE A GUIDE

● Pastry rulers can ensure your dough is rolled out to the correct thickness. Select two rulers, line them up with the edges of your dough block, and position your rolling pin so that it rests on the rulers. These will act as guides, preventing you from rolling too thinly. (In lieu of speciality rulers, wooden dowels from most hardware stores can also get the job done.)



### SPREAD IT OUT

● If your dough looks a little uneven in places, cover it with plastic wrap. Using a plastic bench scraper, smooth out the dough until it's a nice, uniform sheet.



# Gold Standards

The best (and worst) butters for bread making

**B**utter is a water-in-fat emulsion, a network of tiny droplets of water molecules suspended in a network of fat globules, with a small amount of milk solids that are sometimes called curd. Maybe that doesn't sound appetizing, but it's going to ensure excellent dough—and a tasty result.

When it comes to baking bread, butter with a high fat concentration is preferable, since it's less likely to break up during kneading. This is typically represented in terms of percentage, and it varies by location: In the U.S., standard butters are 80 percent fat, less than their European counterparts. (In France, butter is legally required to have a minimum of 82 percent fat.)

And a small percentage change makes a huge difference. If you use a butter with a

higher water content, like a generic American supermarket stick, it'll absorb more of the dry ingredients. That can “throw off the balance” of a recipe, according to Apollonia. She uses raw French butter, which may or may not be available at your local grocer. As an alternative, look for one labeled with these terms: Amish, pastry, cultured, or European-style. It should have a higher fat content, keeping on an even keel.

Other notes: Buy unsalted, and skip on whipped. Also, when making brioche and other rich breads, make sure to add the butter last. Fat bonds to gluten proteins, preventing them from bonding to each other. The later addition allows the gluten network a chance to develop. Structure keeps it from collapsing.

## AS THE WORLD CHURNS

Meet the reigning champion of U.S. butters

● Poilâne's brioche recipe was designed using raw, high-fat French butter—an ingredient that might be difficult to find outside Europe. But keep an eye out for Organic Valley's European Style Cultured Butter at the grocery store. This unsalted artisan variety took first place at the American Cheese Society Competition in 2019. Coming in at 84 percent fat, it's a bona fide heavyweight.

The image shows a vast field of small, light-brown, spherical yeast cells. The cells are densely packed and appear to be of a uniform size and color, creating a textured, granular background. The lighting is even, highlighting the individual cells and their collective mass.

**YEAST**

# Ferment to Be

## How to control your yeast in less-than-ideal conditions

**T**he best temperature for dough fermentation is T-shirt weather: between 68°F and 77°F (20°C to 25°C) with 75 to 85 percent humidity. This is warm enough for yeast to produce carbon dioxide at a steady rate but not so hot that bacteria can run wild. Of course, we aren't always baking within these ideal conditions. What if the mercury is cresting, it's muggy outside, or

you're deep into #sweaterweather?

Don't panic. Remember that humans have been making bread—in every conceivable climate, under all imaginable circumstances—for millennia. Presumably, you're indoors with running water and a stocked kitchen. You've got all the resources you need to keep dough fermentation under control.



**PROBLEM:**  
**Your kitchen is too hot.**

Above the 77°F/25°C threshold, yeast will produce carbon dioxide at a noticeably faster rate, resulting in a quicker rise. Less waiting may seem like a good thing, but at higher temperatures, yeast can produce some funky-smelling by-products. Also, a fast rise increases the chances of over-proofing your dough, which can cause the loaf to collapse in the oven.

**ADJUSTMENT:**  
Use cold water when mixing dough, shorten your rise time.

**PROBLEM:**  
**It's getting chilly in here.**

Below 68°F/20°C, carbon dioxide production slows considerably. There's nothing wrong with this—some bakers actually bake in colder kitchens intentionally to develop flavor, a process known as retarding fermentation. Just make sure your dough rises completely or else it'll be overly dense when baked.

**ADJUSTMENT:**  
Expect a longer rise time, cover dough to prevent it from crusting over.



**PROBLEM:**  
**You're baking in a dry climate.**

Odds are your dough will absorb water more readily, so pay close attention while kneading. Excessively dry dough will feel, well, excessively dry. It might break apart when you pull it, too.

**ADJUSTMENT:**  
Add small amounts of water incrementally.

**PROBLEM:**  
**It's humid as heck.**

As you might guess, humidity means the dough is probably going to retain more water. Here, you need to be aware of stickiness: If the dough starts to feel like caulking and clings to your workspace, it's getting too wet.

**ADJUSTMENT:**  
Dust dough with flour, work through, repeat.



**PROBLEM:**  
**You're baking at a high altitude.**

If you live more than 3,500 feet above sea level, chances are you've noticed your dough falling flat. That's because higher elevation equals lower air pressure, which means less resistance for your leavening agent. What's more, thinner air is drier, which can cause your dough to rise quickly and irregularly.

**ADJUSTMENT:**  
There are a number of factors you have to consider when baking 3,500 feet (or more) above sea level. King Arthur Flour has some solid pointers to get you started.

# On a Granular Note

There are two basic ways to measure salt in baking. One method is far more accurate than the other

If you've ever cruised food blogs or opened *Saveur*, odds are you've been implored to buy a kitchen scale. Probably more than once. And in no uncertain terms.

Why are these sources so emphatic? Simple: It's about accuracy. When measuring ingredients, there are typically two avenues: volume (tablespoons, milliliters) or weight (ounces, grams). Volume measures how an ingredient fills a container—it's good for liquids, which take on the shape of the vessel in which they're placed. But it's not as accurate for solid ingredients, which have their own unique shapes. Also, the accuracy of a volume measurement depends entirely on the container; when it comes to home baking tools, slight variations in measuring cups

can throw a recipe into chaos.

Meanwhile, weight refers to how heavy an ingredient is, regardless of the container. (Note: the metric system is a bit more precise than its imperial counterpart, so use grams etc. whenever possible.) Unlike volume measurements, which might be impacted by the size and shape of an ingredient itself, the weight remains constant. Consider three common types of salt crystals:

Type of salt	Approx. weight
1 tbsp. <b>table salt</b> .....	<b>19 grams</b>
1 tbsp. <b>fine sea salt</b> .....	<b>15 grams</b>
1 tbsp. <b>Sel Gris</b> .....	<b>13 grams</b>

This is one way volume can be misleading. Following the exact same recipe, the food made with table salt will taste much saltier. Not ideal.

The volume-versus-weight conundrum is especially important in breadmaking, because flour is ultra-sensitive to measuring technique. Its fine texture is susceptible to both compression and aeration; depending on who's doing the scooping, the weight of 1 cup (125 grams) of flour can vary up to 20 percent.

Many times, these differences won't be enough to ruin a dish. But too much flour makes for a tough loaf; dough that's too wet will be impossible to work out.

The good news? Super-accurate, modern digital kitchen scales can be found online at affordable prices.

## KNEAD TO KNOW

Can I skip the salt?

● A small amount of salt strengthens the gluten structure of dough, allowing proteins to get closer together and form stronger bonds. But too much can actually weaken the gluten structure, which is why it's crucial to measure by weight instead of volume. The type of salt matters, too. Unrefined sea salts, like the ones from Guérande that Apollonia uses, contain minerals that can strengthen the gluten network. In sourdough breads, this is especially important since it limits the sourdough's digestion of gluten proteins.

### Help! I found a great recipe, but everything is measured in volume...

● No sweat. The internet has volume-to-weight conversion charts for basically every ingredient. Some websites, like that of the legacy flour company King Arthur, even have charts tailor-made for bakers and bread makers.

### Help! I'm stuck without a scale and need to measure flour...

● In a pinch, you can use a standard cutlery set. First, rake through your flour using a fork to lighten it up, then spoon it into a measuring cup. (Be delicate here; compacted flour will throw the measurement off.) Now use the backside of a knife to level it off—the motion should be smooth, one straight sweep.



# SALT

# FLOUR

# King of the Mill

From whole-wheat to gluten-free, the flour defines the bread

In the simplest terms, flour is any type of grain that has been ground to a fine powder. When it comes to baking, most recipes call for flour that comes from wheat grains. Like other seeds, wheat grains contain everything needed to self-reproduce. They're made up of three parts: endosperm, the starchy inner accounting for about 85 percent of the overall structure; germ, the oily embryo; and bran, the fiber-packed outer coating.

As the name suggests, whole-grain flour retains all three parts of the grain. It's more flavorful and nutritious than white flour, which is made from the carbohydrate-rich endosperm alone. The downside to whole-grain? Bran weakens gluten networks, making dough more difficult to knead and rise. Whole-grain flours also have a shorter shelf life than refined flours, since the oils they contain can go rancid.

Regardless of a flour's variety, the method of processing is crucial. Most white flour is made by grinding whole grains between hot metal rollers. It's then sifted to isolate the endosperm from the germ and bran. Many whole-grain flours are made the same way, except after rolling and sifting, the bran and germ are added back. It's a neat bit of engineering, but before the advent of the metal rollers during the 19th century, flour was mainly stone-ground: Whole grains were placed between two pieces of stone that rotated to grind them into small pieces. The stone-grinding method uses less heat but produces larger granules that are harder to

sift; some of the bran and germ gets stuck to the pieces of endosperm. So, even after stone-ground grains have been sifted, the resulting white flour retains some bran and germ, and therefore more flavor and nutrients.

When buying any kind of flour, pay close attention to the packaging. Wheat flour with high protein (up to 12 percent) relative to starch is known as hard wheat, typically labeled as "bread flour." Big protein means more gluten formation, and, in turn, stronger breads. Soft wheat, often labeled as "cake flour" (6 percent protein) or "pastry flour" (7 to 9 percent protein), creates less gluten, yielding a more delicate treat. The ubiquitous all-purpose flour? It's a blend of both—though it tends to be on the harder side, at least in the U.S., packing around 10 percent protein.

There are non-wheat alternatives, too. One of those is corn flour—coarse-ground dried kernels milled to an even finer powder. It's gluten-free and only comes whole-grain. At Poilâne, bakers also use rye flour. Like its wheat counterpart, this variety can be whole-grain (usually labeled dark rye) or refined (white rye). But rye berries contain far less gluten than wheat berries and absorb much more water. When it comes to baking bread, this can present a challenge. The solution? Rye flour is often combined with wheat flour to get a better rise. Apollonia recommends using medium rye flour, which has some, but not all, of the germ and bran removed.

## GOING STRONG

Ordinary bread dough is much too fragile for shaping bread decorations, so Apollonia fortifies the dough by adding extra flour. Here's how to do it



In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine at least 1 cup of either Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf dough or Poilâne-Style Sourdough Starter with 1 tablespoon of all-purpose flour.



Continue adding flour 1 tablespoon at a time, mixing after each addition, until the dough will not absorb more flour.



Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead until pliable. You should have a very thick (but still workable) dough.



# SOUR DOUGH BREADS



# SOURDOUGH STARTER

● **SOURDOUGH STARTER HAS A LOT OF NICKNAMES:** pre-ferment, levain, leaven. But its most colorful moniker is, fittingly, its French one: la mère, or “mother dough.” And a starter is just that—a chunk of wild yeasts and flavor-forming bacteria that, when combined with additional flour and water, forms the basis of each new sourdough loaf. You save a piece of starter

each time you bake so that the yeast strain carries on. It can live like this indefinitely and literally be passed down through generations: The starter used at Poilâne today is more than 80 years old.

Apollonia’s starter recipe is unique from most other recipes in that it calls for whole-milk yogurt, but no need to add it if you’re a dairy-free baker.

**INGREDIENTS  
(DAY 1)**

**60 g** plain whole-milk yogurt with live active cultures (note: dairy-free bakers can eliminate this ingredient)

**160 g** lukewarm water

**150 g** all-purpose flour

**60 g** whole-wheat flour

**INGREDIENTS  
(DAY 2)**

**150 g** all-purpose flour

**60 g** whole-wheat flour

**160 g** lukewarm water

**INGREDIENTS  
(DAYS 3 AND 4)**

**150 g** all-purpose flour

**60 g** whole-wheat flour

**160 g** lukewarm water

**PREP TIME**

5 days (starter will be ready to use on day 5)

**EQUIPMENT**

Kitchen scale

**DAY 1: BUILD**

In a medium glass bowl, whisk together the whole-milk yogurt and lukewarm water (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C).

Add the all-purpose and whole-wheat flours. Use a rubber spatula to bring the ingredients together using a scooping motion, about 2 minutes. The mixture should have a texture between thick yogurt and bread dough. If your kitchen is very warm, you may need an additional tablespoon of water.

Cover the bowl with a clean folded cloth and let the sourdough starter rise at room temperature (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) in a draft-free place for 24 hours.

**DAY 2: FEED**

After 24 hours, the starter should have increased in volume. It will have a texture similar to thin yogurt or cake batter. If your starter has not risen at all (likely due to a cold environment), move the starter to a warmer (but not hot) place and let it rise for another 24 hours. If after 48 hours your starter has not risen at all, start over.

Once your starter has risen, do the first feeding. Using a rubber spatula, delicately fold in the all-purpose flour, the whole-wheat flour, and the lukewarm water (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) until all ingredients are fully incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Cover the starter and let it rise at room temperature for another 24 hours.

**DAY 3: DISCARD AND FEED**

The top of the starter should be speckled with air bubbles and it should have a more yeasty smell, but the consistency will still be liquidy, like cake batter.

Turn on the kitchen scale. Weigh the starter, and note the weight. Discard 370 grams of the mixture. Use a rubber spatula to delicately fold in the all-purpose flour, the

whole-wheat flour, and the lukewarm water (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) until all ingredients are fully incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Cover the starter and let it rise at room temperature for 24 hours.

**DAY 4: DISCARD AND FEED**

The top of the starter should be speckled with air bubbles and it should have a more yeasty smell, but the consistency will still be liquidy, like cake batter.

Turn on the kitchen scale. Weigh the starter, and note the weight. Discard 370 grams of the mixture.

Use a rubber spatula to delicately fold in the all-purpose flour, the whole-wheat flour, and the lukewarm water (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) until all ingredients are fully incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Cover the starter and let it rise at room temperature for 24 hours.

**DAY 5: DISCARD AND FEED**

The starter is ready to use. If you're using it straight away, feed it about 3 hours before you plan to bake. (If you're not using it immediately, discard 370 grams according to the previous instructions.)

Use a rubber spatula to carefully remove about 1 cup for use in Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf (see page 21) or Rye (see page 25), keeping the remainder for future loaves. Repeat the discarding and feeding method every 24 to 48 hours. Remove part of your starter every 1 to 2 days to keep your starter robust and the size manageable (either bake with or discard the portion that you've removed).

If you need to pause the starter's growth, you can refrigerate it for 3 to 5 days and halt the discard-and-feed process. Once removed from the refrigerator, resume the discard-and-feed schedule for at least 3 days before baking.

# The Tastemaker

**S**OURDOUGH STARTER IS WHERE IT ALL BEGINS: a bit of flour and water left out to attract yeast and bacteria floating around in the air. Making a starter is easy, but it's hardly a passive activity—you'll need to monitor and feed the base, in some cases on a daily basis. (As Apollonia says, "You must keep it like a pet.") The upshot? When you nurture a sourdough starter, it gives back to you, becoming stronger and developing a unique—and outstanding—flavor.

## BASKET CASES

Poilâne bakers use linen-lined wicker baskets for proofing. You can use a colander with a clean cotton or linen dish towel. Flour the cloth to prevent your dough from sticking and absorbing excess moisture. Once your loaf has proofed, shake the excess flour off the cloth and store it in a plastic bag, but don't wash it; over time, it'll build up a protective flour coating that helps breads slide in and out. Trace amounts of bacteria and yeast can also reduce proofing time by as much as 15 percent.

## HOW YOU MET YOUR MOTHER

Poilâne's mother dough has been around since the silent-film era. Your new starter won't have the same levels of bacteria. The good news? Non-yeast components of a starter often contain some of the same lactobacilli (lactic acid bacteria) found in yogurt. Apollonia doesn't consider this cheating. She actually suggests adding a little yogurt to encourage fermentation. It might give your starter the jump it needs.

## GOING DUTCH

A lidded Dutch oven, known as a cocotte in France, is an essential sourdough tool for the home baker. It helps mimic the environment of large, traditional wood-fired ovens, like the ones at Poilâne. Modern domestic ovens don't get as hot as those log-burners, and they have vents that allow steam to escape easily. Preheating a Dutch oven ensures that the surface of the baking vessel is extra hot when the bread goes in the oven; the lid will trap steam, helping the bread rise more quickly. Moisture is crucial here. Supple dough encourages maximum expansion during the first 10 minutes of baking.



# Three Practical Reasons to Bake Sourdough

There's a reason it's a staple among home bakers

## SHELF LIFE

● The lactic acid bacteria found in sourdough starters slow down the staling process, while the acidity of the bread inhibits microbial growth (read: mold).

## FLAVOR

● Unlike bread made with commercial yeast alone, sourdough has a unique taste that reflects its environment.

## TEXTURE

● Those lactic acid bacteria that keep sourdough bread from going stale? They also improve the texture of the bread, yielding crisp and chewy loaves.

## IS MY STARTER READY?

Three ways to know



### SIGHT

A starter that's ready will be very bubbly. Store yours in a glass jar so you can observe changes.



### SMELL

Your starter should smell pleasantly funky. If it smells bad, don't worry. That's just an indication that it's time to refresh (a.k.a. feed) your starter. Give it a couple of days of regular feeding before baking bread.



### TIME

Keep a starter journal. It'll give you important insights and, ideally, reveal your starter's unique rhythm and cadence.

## GROW, BABY, GROW

How to pamper your sourdough

### FEED IT

● Refreshing your starter provides new food for the yeasts, increasing production and, in turn, improving its ability to leaven your bread.

### STIR IT

● Giving your starter a good whisking introduces more oxygen, which yeast needs to reproduce.

### REGULATE IT

● Yeast thrives between 68°F and 77°F (20°C to 25°C). If the starter is too hot, bacteria may overtake the yeast; if the starter is too cold, it won't ferment at all.

### SHIELD IT

● Starter that's living in a drafty place—say, near a window or door—might form a crust. Keep your sourdough in a hospitable location.

# POILÂNE-STYLE WHEAT LOAF



## INGREDIENTS

**4 g (1½ tsp)**  
active dry yeast

**2 c plus 8 tbsp**  
water, divided

**20 g** coarse  
sea salt,  
preferably sel  
de Guérande

**410 g** active  
Poilâne-Style  
Sourdough  
Starter (see  
page 17)

**550 g (4 c)**  
all-purpose  
flour, preferably  
stone-ground,  
plus more for  
dusting

**450 g (3¼ c)**  
whole-wheat  
flour, preferably  
stone-ground

● **YOU MIGHT CALL THIS LOAF THE MICHE** that launched an empire. It's synonymous with Poilâne, and the first thing you'll notice is the size: It's a 4-pound boule (round bread) that Apollonia recommends cutting into quarters for easier slicing.

A rustic, hearty bread made with a sourdough starter and whole-wheat flour, miche keeps longer than the white-flour baguettes that were fashionable when Apollonia's grandfather opened the bakery in 1932. This old-fashioned bread isn't as tangy as San Francisco sourdough and has a tighter crumb than pain au levain—the other French wheat sourdough bread—which makes it a perfect receptacle for jam or ideal for making sandwiches.

The dark color comes from the stone-ground flour, which is custom-made for the bakery in Paris—the blend of white and whole-wheat flours in this recipe is a good approximation for the original.

## METHOD

**1.** Activate the yeast. In a small bowl, combine yeast with 1 tablespoon lukewarm water and whisk with a fork. Let sit until activated, about 2 minutes. Test for activation by briefly whisking with a fork. If it's foamy, the yeast has activated. If

not, start again with a new batch of yeast and lukewarm water.

**2.** In another small bowl, combine salt with 2 tablespoons of water and stir to dissolve.

**3.** Use a bench scraper to carefully transfer the sourdough starter to a large bowl. Avoid deflating any air bubbles in the starter. Add the activated yeast mixture to one side of the bowl and cover with a little flour to prevent the yeast from touching the salt. Add the salt water mixture to the other side of the bowl. Add the remaining all-purpose and whole-wheat flours.

**4.** Pour 2 cups plus 5 tablespoons of water down the sides of the bowl. If it's a very cold day, use warm water; if it's a hot day, use cool water.

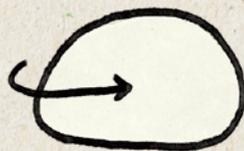
**5.** Lightly flour your hands. Keeping your nondominant hand on the side of the bowl, form your dominant hand into a scoop shape and gently mix the ingredients, keeping your fingers together. Use your nondominant hand to rotate and tilt the bowl as you mix (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## TRUE TO FORM

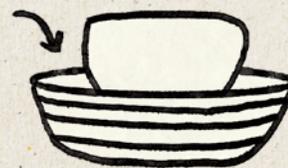
Poilâne master baker Felix Ferreira can shape a loaf of sourdough in about three seconds. Here's how he does it



**Roll the dough** from right to left. With two hands, flip the bottom over the top to form a round.



Cup your hands around the dough and **spin it in a circle** on the work surface to form a taut ball.



Gently **flip the ball** into the prepared proofing basket, smooth side down.

**Shaping tip:** Don't go crazy flouring your work surface. You're not baking cookies here; the bread dough should stick a little to your kitchen counter. Reach for the dough scraper before the flour bag.

## KNEAD TO KNOW

### What's the deal with active dry yeast?

● This variety of baker's yeast consists of dried granules in a protective coating. The advantage of using active dry yeast is that it can be stored for a longer period of time, but that doesn't mean it stays good forever. After a few months, dry yeast will die, just like its live brethren.

the dough with your cupped hand. Continue mixing until the ingredients come together and the dough has a stringy consistency, like soft string cheese.

**6.** Use your clean hand to very lightly flour a work surface. Use your dough-covered hand to scrape the dough out of the bowl and onto the work surface. Use a bench scraper to scrape excess dough from your hand onto the dough mound.

**7.** Flour your hands away from the loaf, and rub them together to remove all traces of dough. Discard this dough and flour; do not incorporate it into the rest of the dough. When your hands are clean and lightly floured, knead the dough. If it's a hot day, you can be more forceful with the dough. If it's a cold day, you'll need to be more delicate with the dough.

**8.** Use a bench scraper to flip the dough over. If it sticks to the work surface, pick up the dough and re-flour the work surface. Use fast, energetic (but not too forceful) movements to knead the dough, bringing the side of your hand underneath the dough and folding it up over itself, then press it into the center of the dough with the heel of your hand. Repeat this motion until the dough comes together, about 5 to 10 minutes. The dough doesn't need to be fully smooth, but there should not be any flour pockets.

**9.** Lightly flour a large, clean glass bowl. Use a bench scraper to transfer the dough from the work surface to the bowl. Cover the dough with a cloth and let it rise in a warm (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C), draft-free place until it has doubled in size and offers some resistance, about 45 minutes. Start checking the dough after 30 minutes, especially if your kitchen is very warm. If your dough has not doubled in volume after 30 minutes, consider moving the dough to a warmer (but not hot) place and give it an extra 10 to 15 minutes.

**10.** While the dough is rising, generously

flour a cloth-lined wicker proofing basket or line a colander with cotton or linen.

**11.** Once the dough has doubled in size, begin shaping. Lightly flour your hands and lightly re-flour your work surface if necessary. Use the bench scraper to turn the dough out from the bowl onto the floured work surface. With the dough scraper and a lightly floured hand, gently move the dough across the work surface, re-flouring the surface as needed.

**12.** Use both hands to scoop underneath the left and right sides of the dough, lifting the dough straight up and setting it back down. The dough will stretch out when you lift it. As you set it back down, tilt the dough so that the top and bottom edges fold underneath, creating a seam. Gently cradle the folded dough mound (seam side down) to the top left corner of your work surface.

**13.** Working diagonally, from the top left corner of your work surface down to the bottom right corner of your work surface, gently tuck the dough underneath itself with your dominant hand, using your nondominant hand as a guide to keep the dough's shape. Repeat this motion until the surface of the dough is taut. You'll know you're using the correct motion if the seam at the bottom of the dough is very small and tight.

**14.** Carefully transfer the dough, seam side up, to the proofing basket. Let the dough rise, covered with a clean towel, in a warm (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C), draft-free place until it's sitting about ½ an inch (1 finger wide) away from the rim of the basket, about 2 hours. If after 2 hours the dough is still an inch or more away from the rim of the basket, let it rise for no more than an additional 10 to 15 minutes.

**15.** While the dough proofs, position a rack in the bottom third of the oven and preheat the oven to 475°F/245°C. Midway through the second hour of proofing and after the

oven is heated, place a lidded Dutch oven inside and allow it to warm up.

**16.** Once the dough is done proofing, quickly and carefully remove the Dutch oven and immediately close the oven door. Lightly flour the inside of the Dutch oven.

**17.** Quickly flip the dough from the proofing basket into the Dutch oven, seam side down.

**18.** Score the bread. Using a sharp lame or razor blade, score a simple ¼-inch-deep hash mark into the top of the bread, using the bottom of the proofing basket as a guide for the size of the hash mark. If the dough has risen a lot, score it very lightly to avoid collapsing. If the dough hasn't risen very much, score it deeply (up to ½ inch deep) to give the bread room to rise during baking.

**19.** Put the lid on the Dutch oven and bake, covered, 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove the lid and continue to bake until the bread is a deep brown color, about 35 minutes longer.

**20.** Remove the Dutch oven and transfer the bread from the Dutch oven to a wire rack. To test for doneness, do the knock test: Balance the bread on its side and knock on the bottom of the loaf. If it sounds clear, the bread is ready. If it sounds muffled, return the loaf to the Dutch oven and continue to bake for an additional 5 to 15 minutes.

**21.** Once it's done baking, allow the bread to cool on a wire rack for at least 1 hour.

**22.** Wrap the bread in a towel and store it at room temperature for up to 1 week. If you live in a very dry climate, wrap the bread in cloth and store inside a plastic bag. If freezing, wait until the loaf has cooled entirely. Once cool, put large pieces of the loaf in freezer bags (as large as will fit in the bags). Remove as much air as you can from the bag and seal for up to 3 months. Thaw at room temperature when you're ready to use.



## Keeping Score

How to add a unique (and functional) flourish to your bread

Once your dough has risen, been shaped, and risen again, it'll continue rising even further while in the oven. Cutting a slash in the bread, known as scoring, controls its expansion. Bakers do this to prevent their loaves from cracking—and to give the dough a helpful boost: If your loaf is under-proofed, a deep score can create a little more expansion. For an under-proofed loaf, score lightly (or not at all).

In this particular arena—and in all baking, really—success comes down to precision and balance. When scoring, you need to cut deep enough to allow the bread to expand but not so deep that it damages the shape of the loaf. This requires a honed blade and confident technique. The best tool for the job is a baker's lame, which has a handle that attaches to a curved, double-edged razor blade. Don't have one handy?

Try using a double-edged razor blade, which is sharper and thinner than the single-edged version.

If you're just starting to experiment with scoring, one of the easiest patterns to accomplish is a hashtag shape. With your blade angled at about 45 degrees, apply medium pressure—about what you'd use to write on paper with a pen. Quickly slash two parallel lines, each about ¼ inch deep. Then turn the bread 90 degrees and repeat. Speed is critical here. Hesitation can cause tears in the bread.

Once you've mastered the basics, try upping your game—lettering, laurels, abstract lines. The internet has no shortage of inspiration posts to serve as visual springboards. Find one you like, then start tinkering. Eventually, you'll land on a bread-making signature that's all your own.



# RYE

## INGREDIENTS

**1 c plus 8 tbsp** water, divided, plus more for rinsing

**2 g (¾ tsp)** active dry yeast

**9 g** coarse sea salt

**250 g (1¼ c)** active Poilâne-Style Sourdough Starter

**305 g (3 c)** stone-ground 100 percent rye flour, preferably medium (not light or dark), plus more for work surfaces

**130 g (1 c)** bread flour, such as King Arthur

● **PAIN DE SEIGLE (WHICH TRANSLATES** as “bread of rye”) was one of the original offerings sold at Poilâne. This French-style rye, made with Poilâne-Style Sourdough Starter, is rustic and full of malty, chocolatey flavor.

Rye is a cold-hardy grain that thrives in nutrient-poor soil and was once a food staple in northern and eastern Europe. Its flour has a floral quality, which Apollonia likens to “walking through a field of flowers on a warm spring day.” But it presents some unique challenges to the home baker: It contains less gluten than wheat and absorbs up to four times as much water as wheat flour. These qualities produce a denser, less expansive loaf that stays moist for a long time. Although less famous than the miche, the Poilâne rye loaf has been around just as long.

Apollonia likes to make her loaf using 100 percent rye flour, but if you’re just getting started, try cutting your loaf with all-purpose flour (as the recipe here calls for) and work your way up to a pure base.

## METHOD

**1.** Set up your workstation with a large bowl of room temperature water for rinsing your hands.

**2.** In a small bowl, combine the yeast with 1 tablespoon of lukewarm water and whisk with a fork. Let sit until activated, about 2 minutes. Test for activation by briefly whisking with a fork; the mixture should foam.

**3.** In another small bowl, combine the salt with 1 tablespoon lukewarm water and stir to partially dissolve.

**4.** Using a rubber spatula or bench scraper, scrape the sourdough starter into the center of a large glass bowl. Add the activated yeast mixture to one side of the starter and sprinkle with some of the rye flour. Add the salt mixture to the other side of the bowl, making sure the salt does not directly touch the yeast, which could deactivate the yeast. Add the remaining rye flour and all of the bread flour on top of the other ingredients.

**5.** Pour 1 cup plus 6 tablespoons of room temperature water around the sides of the bowl to help the dough detach from the sides of the bowl.

**6.** Lightly flour your hands with rye flour. Make a scoop shape with your dominant hand and scoop the dough, gently stirring to incorporate the ingredients. Use your free hand to turn the bowl as you scoop and mix the dough.

**7.** Continue mixing until the dough comes together. You should have a very sticky, wet dough with a texture similar to cooked oatmeal. Use a dough scraper to scrape any excess dough off of your hands and into the bowl.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## KNEAD TO KNOW

How will I know if my loaf is fully baked?

● The most apparent indication is visual: Fully baked breads will form a dark crust. (If you're unsure, err on the side of a darker crust.) You can also test doneness by knocking or tapping on the bottom of the loaf. If the knock sounds clear, the bread is ready; if the knock is dull and muffled, the interior has not fully developed. Oh, and don't discount your nose. The aroma of fresh-baked bread is unmistakable.



**8.** Rinse your hands in the prepared bowl and dry with a clean cloth. Lightly flour your work surface. Rub your hands on the floured surface to spread out the flour and dry out your hands.

**9.** Use a bench scraper to tip the dough out of the bowl and onto the floured surface. Flip the dough over using the bench scraper. If it sticks to the surface, add a little more flour underneath the dough.

**10.** Knead the dough into a ball. Use your palm to bring one edge of the dough in toward the center, then press it down with the heel of your hand. Repeat this process, going all the way around the dough mound, until it forms a smooth dough that can be easily shaped into a ball. If the dough sticks to the surface, pick it up using the bench scraper and re-flour.

**11.** Let the dough rest on a floured work surface for 1½ hours in a warm (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C), draft-free space, covered

with a cloth. The dough should rise slightly, about 20 to 40 percent.

**12.** After about 1½ hours (but no more than 2 hours), uncover the dough. Re-flour the work surface and your hands, if needed. Flip the dough over on the work surface with your hands or a bench scraper.

**13.** Flour a cloth-lined wicker proofing basket (or large colander lined with cotton or linen) with 1 teaspoon rye flour and set aside. If using a new basket, spray it with water before sprinkling the sides with flour. Do this a few hours ahead of using it.

**14.** Slowly roll the dough ball across the length of the work surface, using your hands to keep a round shape, about 3 times. Add flour to your hands and the work surface as necessary. Use your hands to grab the dough from underneath and turn it into the proofing basket, seam side up.

**15.** Cover the proofing basket with a cloth and let rise in a warm (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C), draft-free space until the seam opens up and the dough rises to the top of the basket or an inch above (about 2 fingers wide), about 1½ hours (but no more than 2 hours).

**16.** When the dough is almost fully risen, position a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 425°F/220°C.

**17.** Line a baking sheet with a silicone mat or parchment paper. In one smooth motion, flip the bread onto the baking sheet. If the dough sticks to the basket, tip the basket and use your hand to delicately coax the dough out. (Alternatively, you can bake the loaf in a Dutch oven to give it some extra lift.)

**18.** Score the dough. Using a very sharp lame or razor blade with light pressure, create a hash mark that's about ¼ inch deep. Let the dough rest to allow the slash to open up slightly, about 2 minutes.

**19.** Bake until the loaf no longer expands, at least 60 minutes. To determine if the bread is fully baked, use the knock test: Balance the bread on its side and knock or tap on the bottom of the bread. If the resulting noise sounds clear, the bread is ready. If the knock sounds muffled, return the loaf to the oven for 5 more minutes and test again. For this loaf, err on the side of overbaking rather than underbaking.

**20.** Let the bread cool on a wire rack for about 1 to 2 hours.

**21.** Wrap the bread in a cloth or place it in a paper bag. Store at room temperature for 3 to 7 days. If freezing, wait until the bread has cooled down entirely. Store it in a freezer bag for up to 3 months. Thaw the loaf at room temperature when you're ready to use.



# Crumb de la Crumb

## Breaking down the structure of your bread

Fundamentally, every loaf of bread is science made into sculpture. Dough is just a temporary network of air bubbles held together by starch and protein; during the baking process, starch absorbs water. The temporary becomes permanent.

Cut open any loaf of bread and you'll see what's called the crumb: If the interior features large, irregular holes, like ciabatta, it's said to have an open crumb. Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf and other sandwich breads, like Pain de Mie, have small, regularly distributed air pockets known as a closed crumb.

Two main factors determine crumb. The first is hydration. Since wetter doughs ferment more quickly, they yield a more

open crumb. Drier doughs behave the opposite way—Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf is on the less-hydrated side, resulting in a dense crumb that's ideal for toast and tartines.

The other factor is kneading. When you see bakers folding and massaging dough, it's not just for show. They're stretching out the gluten, having the proteins do their proverbial toe-touches before a jog. This allows the proteins to expand during fermentation and encourages the molecules to bond, making for a more elastic dough with better structure. Kneading also breaks up gas bubbles for a consistent crumb, distributes yeast equally, and evens out the temperature of the dough, allowing for uniform proofing and baking.



# YEAST BREADS



# PAIN DE MIE

## INGREDIENTS

**294 g (2 c plus 2 tbsp)** bread flour

**98 g (½ c)** all-purpose flour, plus more for flouring a work surface

**13 g (1 tbsp)** granulated sugar

**240 ml (1 c)** whole milk

**5 g (1¼ tsp)** active dry yeast

**3 tbsp** lukewarm (not hot) water, divided

**8 g (1¼ tsp)** fine sea salt

**5 g (2 tsp)** freshly ground black pepper

**3 tbsp** unsalted butter (preferably Amish butter, pastry butter, cultured butter, or other butter with a high fat content), room temperature, with each tablespoon divided into 3 to 5 chunks, plus more for greasing bowl  
Neutral oil, such as sunflower or canola oil, for oiling pan

● **PAIN DE MIE MEANS “BREAD OF CRUMB”**—as in, this bread is all crumb and barely any crust. Think of it as France’s answer to Wonder Bread—a fluffy, white loaf made with commercial yeast for a mild flavor and uniform texture. That doesn’t mean pain de mie is boring, though. Milk and butter give it a richness, and a touch of freshly ground black pepper lends a little oomph.

This loaf features air pockets so small and uniformly distributed that they’re barely visible. Eating a slice is like “biting through a cloud,” Apollonia says. It’s traditionally baked in a Pullman loaf pan, which gives it a uniformly rectangular shape. Pain de mie is an ideal sandwich bread, and it also makes a great base for Savory Pain de Mie Pain Perdu (see page 43) and Croutons (see page 49).

## METHOD

**1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, combine bread flour, all-purpose flour, and sugar.

**2.** Warm the milk. In a small saucepan, heat the milk until lukewarm (100°F to 110°F/37°C to 45°C). The saucepan shouldn’t be so hot that you can’t touch the bottom of the pan. (If the milk is too hot, it can kill the yeast, but if it’s too cool, it won’t incorporate with the other ingredients.)

**3.** Activate the yeast. In a small bowl, use a fork to whisk yeast with 1 tablespoon lukewarm (not hot) water to activate the yeast. Let sit until bubbly, about 2 minutes. After 2 minutes, give the yeast mixture a quick whisk with the fork. If it’s foamy, the yeast has activated. If not, start again with a new batch of yeast and lukewarm water.

**4.** Add the yeast mixture, salt, and pepper to the flour mixture. Avoid placing the yeast

mixture and salt in direct contact, which can deactivate the yeast. You can sprinkle some of the flour mixture on top of the yeast mixture for insurance.

**5.** Mix on low speed until ingredients are incorporated. You should see flecks of black pepper evenly distributed throughout the dough.

**6.** Add 2 tablespoons lukewarm (not hot) water and all of the lukewarm (not hot) milk. Mix on low speed, then increase to medium, until ingredients are incorporated and the dough begins to pull away from the side of the bowl, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides once or twice if needed to incorporate the ingredients. It’s okay if a little flour remains at the bottom of the bowl—you’ll incorporate it later.

**7.** Incorporate butter one tablespoon at a time. With the mixer on low speed, add the first tablespoon of butter, divided into 3 to 5 smaller chunks. Increase the mixer’s speed to medium and continue to mix until the butter has just disappeared, about 1 minute.

**8.** Repeat this process twice more, until all 3 tablespoons of butter are fully incorporated and the dough looks smooth. Be careful not to overwork the dough by mixing too fast, mixing too long, or letting the butter soften to the point of melting.

**9.** Scrape down the sides of the bowl. The dough may detach from the sides of the bowl on its own, or it may stick slightly, but it should feel like a single mass. As a rule, err on the side of undermixing, and finish the dough with a spatula. The dough should come together easily once you start mixing with the spatula. If the (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## KNEAD TO KNOW

### How will I know if my dough has risen enough?

● Volume is the clearest indication that fermentation is done. As a general rule of thumb, for most breads, fully fermented dough will have doubled in size, while air bubbles on the surface mean the dough has overproofed. You can also poke the top of the dough with your finger: Fully fermented dough will retain an indentation. It can't bounce back—the gluten has been stretched to its limits.

butter has melted during the mixing process, the dough will be harder to mix and the finished bread will have a rougher structure and crumb, but the bread will still be bakeable.

**10.** Add a small piece of butter to a piece of paper towel and use it to butter a large glass bowl.

**11.** Using slightly greasy hands that are not overly moist or dry, round your palm into a scoop shape. Gently scoop the dough out of the stand mixer bowl and cradle the dough into the greased glass bowl. The dough should come away easily from the bowl at this point.

**12.** Cover the glass bowl with a clean kitchen towel and let the dough rise in a draft-free place at room temperature (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) until it has doubled in size, about 2 to 2½ hours.

**13.** While the dough is rising, prepare the loaf pan. Use a pastry brush to lightly coat the inside of a 9 x 5 loaf pan with oil. For a loaf with a flat top, you can use a Pullman loaf pan; if you don't have a Pullman loaf pan, a regular loaf pan will work fine. The top of the loaf won't be as flat, but the loaf will bake the same.

**14.** Start checking on the dough after 1½ hours, especially if your kitchen is very warm, which can speed up the rising process. If the dough has already doubled in size, move on to shaping. If it has already been 2½ hours and your dough hasn't doubled in size, you may have overmixed the dough, your kitchen may be cold, or the butter may have been too warm or too low in fat. After 2½ hours, move on to shaping to prevent overproofing, which can cause the dough to collapse in the oven.

**15.** Lightly flour a work surface with 1 or 2 big pinches of flour. Use your hands to

spread the flour evenly, removing any large lumps.

**16.** Uncover the dough and use a dough scraper or your hands to gently slide the dough away from the sides of the bowl and onto the work surface. Gently flip the dough over.

**17.** Lightly flour your hands by rubbing your hands on the floured work surface.

**18.** Shape the dough. Working your way horizontally across the dough, gently push down with the heel of one hand to flatten the dough into an oblong shape that is about an inch longer than the length of the loaf pan, with the long edges facing you. Use your free hand to gently cradle the dough, keeping it in position as your other hand flattens with the heel.

**19.** At this point the short ends will be rounded. To achieve a more rectangular shape, fold the short edges of the dough inward toward the dough's center, just enough so that the long edge of the rectangle is the same length of the pan. Lightly press down on the seams. What you have should be exactly the same length as the loaf pan. When you bake the bread, the dough will expand upward, not sideways, so this is your chance to get the right fit.

**20.** Gently roll the dough into a thick log. Start with your palms flat on the work surface, with your index fingers almost touching and your thumbs reaching back toward you. The edge of the dough that's farthest from you should be almost touching your index fingers. Gently use your index fingers to start rolling the far edge of the dough toward yourself, eventually using your entire palm and thumbs to roll the dough in on itself. As you roll, gently use your thumbs to tuck in the edges inward to avoid stretching out the dough.

**21.** Repeat this gentle rolling motion up to 6 times to create a uniformly thick log. The middle of the log should be about the same height as the ends, and the log should be the same length as the loaf pan.

**22.** Very delicately cradle the dough log into the prepared pan, seam side down.

**23.** Lightly oil a piece of parchment paper large enough to cover the top of the loaf pan, plus an inch or two of overhang.

**24.** Let the dough rise a second time at room temperature (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) in a draft-free place, covered with the oiled parchment paper (oiled side down) and a weight. If using a Pullman pan, you can let the dough rise with the lightly oiled Pullman lid on top. If you're baking a loaf with a rounded top, you can use an oiled piece of plastic wrap as a covering instead of the lid or weight.

**25.** After 30 minutes, start checking the dough. If it is rising rapidly and measures ½ inch (about 1 finger wide) below the edge of the pan, move an oven rack to the lower third position and preheat the oven to 390°F/200°C. For a flat top, leave the dough covered with the Pullman lid. Start baking as soon as the oven has heated. (Note that preheating the oven early will make the kitchen hotter, which may cause the dough to rise more quickly.) Place the loaf pan horizontally in the center of the oven rack.

**26.** If the dough is rising slowly, continue to let it rest, up to 1 hour longer, preheating the oven when the dough seems almost risen. If the dough overproofs (meaning it rises more than ½ inch below the edge of the pan), try baking without the lid to prevent the loaf from collapsing.

**27.** Bake until the bread has fully risen and a crust has formed, about 35 minutes.

**28.** Carefully remove the lid (if using) and continue baking until the crust achieves an even golden brown or light honey color, about 10 to 15 minutes longer. If the bread collapses during baking or looks underbaked after removing the lid (if using), continue baking up to 1 hour total.

**29.** Unmold the loaf while it's still warm. Flip the pan upside down onto a clean dish towel. Cool upside down on a wire rack for at least 1 hour.

**30.** Wrap the bread in a cloth and place it in a paper bag. Store at room temperature for up to 5 days. If freezing, wait until the bread has cooled down entirely. Store it in a freezer bag for up to 3 months. Thaw the loaf at room temperature when you're ready to use.

## INGREDIENTS

**1 package (2½ tsp/7 g)** active dry yeast

**2 tbsp** lukewarm (not hot) water

**250 g (2¼ sticks/9 oz)** unsalted butter with a high fat content, room temperature, cut into bite-size pieces (if your kitchen is very hot, compensate by using cool butter), plus more for buttering bowls and pans

**500 g (3½ c)** all-purpose flour, plus more for work surfaces

**55 g (¼ c)** sugar

**7.5 g (1¼ tsp)** fine sea salt

**5** large eggs, room temperature, cracked into a medium bowl, plus 1 egg for egg wash



# BRIOCHE



● **RICH BRIOCHE WAS ONCE THE FOOD OF QUEENS**, most famously Marie Antoinette. Now it's a boulangerie staple—one of the few products, Apollonia says, that you'll find in both French bakeries and patisseries.

Made with 100 percent white flour, eggs, plenty of butter, and a little sugar, this sweet breakfast loaf is worlds away from Poilâne's hearty miche. Brioche isn't compli-

cated to make, but it does require periods of long, gentle kneading due to its high fat content. It's worth the effort—the result is a rich and airy bread with a tight crumb that begs to be dunked in hot chocolate.

As an apprentice, Apollonia mixed brioche dough by hand every day, so she won't make you do the same. This is the only bread recipe where you're (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## KNEAD TO KNOW

### What's spontaneous leavening?

● Archeological evidence of leavened bread dates to 4000 BC. Early bakers never really knew whether their dough would rise; their results were largely based on what bacteria happened to be in the air when the oven was fired.

strongly encouraged to use a stand mixer. She also uses sharp kitchen scissors to score a border around the edge of her loaf, creating the distinctive mushroom-like top associated with the rich white bread—try the same technique at home.

#### YIELD

Makes two 9 × 5-inch loaves

*Note: Do not divide the recipe in half. If you don't want to bake two loaves in one day, store half of the dough in the fridge for 2 to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months. For this recipe, you need the volume of two loaves' worth of dough.*

#### METHOD

1. Activate the yeast. In a small bowl, use a fork to whisk the yeast with 2 tablespoons of lukewarm (not hot) water. Let sit until bubbly, about 2 minutes. After 2 minutes, give the yeast mixture a quick whisk with the fork. If it's foamy, the yeast has activated. If not, start again with a new batch of yeast and lukewarm water.

2. Using a brush or a paper towel dipped in room temperature butter, generously grease 2 large glass bowls. Set aside.

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine flour, sugar, salt, and activated yeast. Add the activated yeast mixture to one side of the bowl and cover with a little flour to prevent the yeast from touching the salt.

4. Mix on low speed until ingredients are fully blended and consistency is uniform, about 30 seconds. Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl.

5. Add 5 eggs and mix on low to medium speed until all of the ingredients are almost fully incorporated and the dough comes together, no more than 3 to 4 minutes. When the stand mixer starts struggling to mix the dough, it's time to add the butter.

6. Remove the paddle attachment and attach the dough hook.

7. With the mixer on low speed, incorporate the butter in three to four additions, adding each addition only after the butter from the previous addition has mostly disappeared into the dough. Use a rubber spatula to bring the dough together, if necessary. Avoid overworking the dough, which will cause the butter to separate and become oily. Continue mixing on low to medium speed until the dough is smooth and shiny and pulls away from the sides of the bowl, 10 to 12 minutes. The dough shouldn't stick to your hands, and it should have some resistance to the touch.

8. Lightly flour the work surface and transfer the dough to the work surface using a rubber spatula or bench scraper. Divide the dough in half using a bench scraper. Lightly flour your hands and gently shape dough into 2 ball-like shapes by lightly tossing the dough around the work surface and into your free hand using the bench scraper.

9. Gently cradle the dough into the greased bowls. Cover each bowl with a clean kitchen towel and let rest in a draft-free place at room temperature (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C). Let the dough rise until it has doubled in size, about 2 hours (but no more than 2½ hours). The dough should be yellowish in color, with a smooth top and some resistance.

10. Using a brush or a paper towel dipped in room temperature butter, generously grease two 9 x 5-inch loaf pans. Set aside.

11. Lightly flour your work surface and hands. Using your hands, a rubber spatula, or a bench scraper, delicately transfer the dough to the floured work surface.

12. Shape one of the dough balls. Working your way horizontally across the dough, gen-

tly push down with the heel of one hand to flatten the dough into an oblong shape that is the same length as the loaf pan (9 inches), with the long edge facing you. Use your free hand to gently cradle the dough, keeping it in position as your other hand flattens with the heel.

**13.** Fold the short edges of the dough in toward the dough's center, just enough so that the edges become straight rather than rounded, about ½ inch on either side. Use your fingers to lightly press on the seams, re-expanding the dough to the length of the pan.

**14.** Place your palms flat on the work surface with your index fingers touching the far edge of the dough and your thumbs pointing back toward yourself. Gently roll the dough toward your body and shape it into a log, using your thumbs to tuck in the edges.

**15.** Carefully lift the dough log, cradling the heavier middle, and transfer it to the prepared pan, seam side down. Repeat shaping process with the other dough ball.

**16.** Cover both pans with a clean cloth and leave them in a draft-free place, ideally your work surface, to avoid any unnecessary movement that can damage the dough. (If your kitchen is drafty, cover the pans with a plastic bag.) Let the loaves rise until the dough reaches the top of the pan or just above, about 1½ hours to 2½ hours. Try not to remove the cloth when checking on your dough, which will introduce a draft. Instead, notice if the cloth has risen.

**17.** When the dough has mostly risen, position a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F/180°C.

**18.** Make the egg wash. In a small bowl, beat the remaining egg. Using a pastry brush, very delicately brush a small amount of egg wash over the top of each loaf, being careful

not to oversaturate the dough, which can deflate the loaf or burn the top of the bread during baking.

**19.** Use clean kitchen scissors to score the center of the loaf. Set your free hand on the rim of the pan and use it as a ledge for the scissors. Guide your hand horizontally across the loaf as you make short snips along the length of the bread. Let the dough rise on the work surface, uncovered, about 3 to 5 minutes, so that the dough can expand around the scoring marks. If the dough has overproofed, skip this step and bake your loaf without scoring.

**20.** Bake until the loaves have expanded and are light terra-cotta/gold/orange in color, about 35 to 40 minutes. Don't open the oven door during baking, which can cause the bread to collapse.

**21.** Leave the brioche in the pan until the surface of the bread is just cool enough to touch, about 2 minutes. Use one hand to cradle the bread and delicately turn it over to unmold. Place the loaf on a wire rack to cool, at least 1 hour.

**22.** Wrap the bread in a cloth and place it in a paper bag. Store at room temperature in a dry place for 5 to 7 days. If freezing, wait until the bread has cooled down entirely. Store it in a freezer bag for up to 3 months. Thaw the loaf at room temperature when you're ready to use.

## KNEAD TO KNOW

**Why do I have to wait so long to eat my bread?**

● Your loaf isn't done baking just because you take it out of the oven. At this stage, the interior of the bread is much hotter than the exterior; cooling the bread allows the heat and moisture to be evenly distributed throughout. Transfer your bread to a wire rack, cover it with a cloth, and let it cool for at least an hour before slicing. If you cut it too early, it may be gummy inside.

# SAVORY CORN FLOUR BREAD



## INGREDIENTS

**32 g (3 tbsp)**

whole flax seeds

**400 ml (1½ c)** oat

milk, preferably homemade, divided

**1 c** hazelnuts, skinned and toasted (optional)

Neutral oil, such as sunflower oil or canola oil, for greasing pan

**240 g (2 c)**

corn flour (not cornmeal or cornstarch), such as Bob's Red Mill corn flour

**9 g** (scant tbsp) instant yeast

**6 g (1 tsp)**

fine sea salt

● **APOLLONIA FELL IN LOVE WITH** cornbread in a dining hall at Harvard, where she attended college. Traditional cornbread is typically made with a mixture of cornmeal and wheat flour, but Apollonia spent a decade developing this recipe, which uses 100 percent corn flour. This shows off the flavor of corn and just so happens to be vegan and gluten-free. For this recipe to work, make sure you have corn flour, which is much finer than common cornmeal; a good option is Bob's Red Mill corn flour.

## METHOD

**1.** One hour before you plan to bake, prepare the flax seeds. In a deep mortar, pound flax seeds with a pestle until they resemble coarsely ground flour, about 2 minutes. (If you don't have access to a mortar and pestle, you can use a small blender or coffee grinder.)

**2.** In a small bowl, combine the ground flax seeds with ⅔ cup oat milk and let sit at room temperature for at least 1 hour and up to 24 hours. The mixture should develop a goopy texture, similar to an egg white.

**3.** Crush the hazelnuts in a food processor or on a cutting board using the flat handle of a knife. The result can be coarse or fine, but avoid processing it into a nutmeal.

**4.** Use a pastry brush to lightly coat a 9 x 5-inch metal loaf pan with oil.

**5.** Place the corn flour in a large bowl. Add the flax seed mixture, yeast, hazelnuts, and remaining 1 cup of oat milk.

**6.** Use a rubber spatula to mix until all of the ingredients are thoroughly incorporated and there are no pockets of corn flour. The texture should be pourable, like cake batter.

**7.** Pour the dough into the prepared loaf pan. Measure how far away from the top of the pan the dough is and write it down. (Finger width is a good measurement system here.)

**8.** Cover the dough with a clean kitchen towel and let it rise at room temperature (68°F to 77°F/20°C to 25°C) until it has risen by about ½ inch (1 finger wide), about 2 hours. Avoid overproofing—if the dough has risen at all, you're ready to bake. If you lightly touch the top of the dough, it should feel very delicate and airy.

**9.** Position a rack in the lower third position and preheat the oven to 390°F/200°C.

**10.** Very carefully transfer the loaf to the oven to prevent it from collapsing. Bake until the loaf is a deep golden mustard color throughout and is starting to brown on the edges, about 40 to 60 minutes. If the loaf looks underdone (lighter in color), bake for an additional 10 to 15 minutes.

**11.** Once the loaf is done baking, unmold it and let it cool on a wire rack for at least 1 hour.

**12.** Wrap the bread in a cloth or place it in a paper bag and store it at room temperature for up to 2 to 3 days.

## NO DAIRY? NO PROBLEM

How a humble seed can mimic the properties of an egg

● Since corn flour doesn't contain gluten, Apollonia experimented with different rising agents when developing this recipe. To make this bread completely free of animal products, she turned to a common vegan baking substitution: the flax egg (a.k.a. ground flax seeds mixed with water or oat milk). The seed coating contains a gum that, when ground and mixed with a liquid, creates a foam stabilizer very similar to an egg white, cleverly mimicking the gluten network of a wheat bread.



# BREAD COOKING



# SAVORY PAIN DE MIE

## PAIN PERDU

### INGREDIENTS

2 ripe medium tomatoes, roughly chopped

½ tsp curry powder

1 tsp sea salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground black pepper

2 eggs

2 2-inch-thick slices of 3- to 4-day-old Pain de Mie (see page 31)

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1 pint ripe cherry tomatoes, quartered lengthwise

2 tbsp minced chives

● **TAKING INSPIRATION FROM FRENCH** pain perdu and Spanish pan con tomate, this savory dish calls for both medium tomatoes (as the soaking liquid) and cherry tomatoes (as a topping). These two varieties complement each other, showcasing the tomato's range of flavor and texture.

After the bread soaks in the egg-tomato mixture, it becomes light and fluffy, almost like a tomato omelet. It's a prime example of what Apollonia calls "breadcooking"—using bread as an ingredient in a larger dish. To her, creatively repurposing bread that's past its peak freshness respects the time and energy that go into every loaf. "I do not want to waste a crumb of bread," she says. "From the crust to the very last crumb, there is the work of the baker. There's the work of the miller. There's the work of the grower. And that value chain should not be wasted once the bread goes dry or is even stale."

### METHOD

1. Add the medium tomatoes, curry powder, salt, and a sprinkle of pepper to the bowl of a food processor or blender. Use short pulses to blend until the tomatoes become a slightly chunky purée, about 1 minute.

2. In a large shallow bowl, whisk the eggs until they're frothy. Add the tomato mixture to the beaten eggs, and whisk to combine. Add the bread slices to the bowl.

3. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a frying pan set over medium heat.

4. While the pan heats, flip the bread so that both sides absorb the liquid.

5. Make the tomato topping. In a medium bowl, combine the cherry tomatoes, chives, the remaining tablespoon of olive oil, a pinch of salt, and a sprinkle of pepper. Toss to coat all ingredients with oil.

6. When the oil in the pan just begins to smoke, add the bread. Cook until the underside is golden brown, about 1 to 2 minutes. Flip the bread with a spatula. Continue to cook the bread until the other side is golden brown, about 1 to 2 minutes longer.

7. Turn off the heat and transfer the bread to a plate. Top each slice of pain perdu with half of the tomato topping, and serve immediately.

# SOURDOUGH WHEAT TARTINES

## INGREDIENTS

4 ½-inch-thick slices Brie

2 ½-inch-thick slices Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf (see page 21), preferably cut from the center of the loaf

6 thin slices prosciutto

Freshly ground black pepper

● **THIS HAM-AND-CHEESE TARTINE IS A** perennial bestseller at the café Apollonia's father opened in 1996, on Rue du Cherche-Midi next to the bakery. It's best prepared using bread that's beyond peak freshness but hasn't yet dried out: The cheese adds just enough moisture to revive a slightly stiffened crumb. Here, Apollonia uses a few slices of Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf.

Feel free to experiment, using the tartine base for other accoutrement—fresh greens, soft-ripened cheeses, jams. (The combination of arugula, Brie, and fig preserves is a tasty option.) The only rule? You should be able to pick up and eat a tartine with one hand. Keep it tight.

## METHOD

1. Turn the broiler of your oven on the lowest setting.

2. Arrange 2 slices of cheese on each slice of bread to cover. Layer 3 slices of prosciutto on top of the cheese on both slices of bread, piling it up to create texture. Sprinkle each tartine with a pinch of freshly ground black pepper.

3. Cut each tartine in half widthwise and set the pieces on an ungreased baking sheet. (To serve as an appetizer for multiple people, leave the tartines whole. After broiling, cut them into strips, about 2 fingers wide.)

4. Broil until the cheese has melted and the prosciutto begins to darken and crisp, about 2 to 3 minutes. Eat immediately.

## TOAST OF THE TOWN

How to make the best crisped bread of all time

● If you're putting in the effort to make high-quality sourdough, you deserve to make yourself the best toast. Apollonia's tartine is toasted in the broiler, which allows the cheese to melt and the ham to crisp up without making a mess. But maybe you want your toast with something that doesn't need to cook, like butter and jam? Here, Apollonia offers a trick: Cut two thin slices of bread off the loaf and put both halves in the same toaster slot. That way, you'll end up with two pieces that are each toasted on one side, leaving the other side moist. Spread your toppings on the crispy side, where they'll stay put, et voilà: the best toast of them all.



# SOURDOUGH WHEAT AND RYE GRANOLA

## INGREDIENTS

**½ lb** 2- to 3-day-old Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf (see page 21), cut into 1-inch chunks, crusts removed

**½ lb** 2- to 3-day-old Rye (see page 25), cut into 1-inch chunks, crusts removed

**½ c** toasted, skinned, unsalted almonds

**½ c** toasted, skinned, unsalted hazelnuts

**½ c** unsweetened puffed rice

**1 tsp** sea salt

**¾ c** honey

● **THE IDEA FOR THIS RECIPE CAME ABOUT** as Apollonia was learning to make granola. She happened to have some stale bread on hand, and, being a bread-obsessive, she decided to throw it into her granola in place of the rolled oats.

Her experiment turned out so well that she makes her granola the same way to this day. “This recipe is for those last pieces of bread that you don’t want to discard,” she says. “They’re too big to throw away, and yet too dry to eat through.” She encourages you to customize your own recipe by incorporating different types of bread, nuts, and dried fruit.

## METHOD

**1.** Position a rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 325°F/160°C.

**2.** Add both types of bread chunks to the bowl of a food processor. Process until coarse breadcrumbs are formed, about 2 minutes. (If your food processor is struggling to break down the larger pieces, transfer the breadcrumbs to a large bowl and remove only the largest pieces. Return the large pieces to the food processor and continue to pulse.)

**3.** Add the nuts to the food processor and continue to process until roughly chopped, about 30 seconds longer.

**4.** Transfer the bread and nut mixture to a large bowl. Add the puffed rice and use your hands or a spatula to combine.

**5.** Add the salt and honey to the bowl. Stir with a rubber spatula to evenly coat the bread, nut, and rice mixture.

**6.** Transfer the granola to a deep ungreased baking dish and spread evenly. The granola shouldn’t be more than 2 fingers high in the pan; if it is, split the mixture into two batches.

**7.** Bake until the puffed rice is golden, 35 to 40 minutes. While baking, crush the granola with a wooden spatula every 10 to 15 minutes to break the bind of the honey and form smaller pieces.

**8.** Let the granola cool completely in the dish. Serve immediately, or store it in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 months.





# CROUTON VARIATIONS

## INGREDIENTS

### FOR THE OVEN-BAKED BRIOCHE CROUTONS

3 1-inch-thick slices stale Brioche (see page 35), crusts removed

1 tbs olive oil  
Sea salt  
Freshly ground black pepper

### FOR THE PAN-TOASTED PAIN DE MIE CROUTONS

3 1-inch-thick slices stale Pain de Mie (see page 31), crusts removed

1 tbs olive oil  
1 clove garlic, minced  
½ c chopped fresh parsley leaves

● IF YOU'VE BEEN TOPPING YOUR SALADS and soups with store-bought croutons, it's time to elevate your game. Homemade croutons come together in a matter of minutes, and they're made using dried-out bread that would probably be composted otherwise. Plus, you can get creative with different types of bread as well as spices and herbs, turning the ordinary into the unique.

Here, Apollonia shares two different recipes for croutons: one that uses stale Brioche and one that uses stale Pain de Mie. Once cooked, both varieties will keep for up to 2 weeks.

#### OVEN-BAKED BRIOCHE CROUTONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F/175°C.
2. Cut each slice of Brioche into about 6 cubes. (You can use the crusts to make Breadcrumbs—see page 53).
3. Arrange the bread cubes in a single layer on a baking sheet. Drizzle the cubes with the olive oil, then season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Bake until the bread is completely dry and a light golden brown, about 10 to 15 minutes.
5. Let the croutons cool completely. Serve immediately or store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

#### PAN-TOASTED PAIN DE MIE CROUTONS

1. Cut each slice of Pain de Mie into about 6 cubes. (You can use the crusts to make Breadcrumbs—see page 53).
2. Heat the olive oil in a pan set over medium heat. In a small bowl, combine the garlic and parsley.
3. Once the oil is hot, add the bread cubes to the pan in a single layer and stir to coat them with oil. Continue stirring until golden, about 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Add about half of the garlic-parsley mixture to the pan and stir to coat the croutons. Continue to toast the croutons until the parsley begins to stick to them and they're golden and fully dried out, about 1 minute longer.
5. Transfer the croutons to a paper towel-lined plate, and sprinkle them with the remaining garlic-parsley mixture. Let the croutons cool before serving or storing. Store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

## INGREDIENTS

### FOR THE FLAVORED BRIOCHE CROUTONS

12 oil-packed anchovies or fileted anchovies

1 tsp Dijon mustard

Zest of 1 lemon, preferably unwaxed and organic

1 garlic clove, minced

4 2½-inch-thick slices stale Brioche (see page 35)

3 tbsp olive oil

3 tbsp Parmesan cheese, finely grated

### FOR THE DRESSING

3 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tsp honey

6 tbsp olive oil  
Sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

### FOR THE CAESAR SALAD

3 romaine hearts, torn

1 c sliced radishes

2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, finely grated

# CAESAR SALAD & FLAVORED BRIOCHE CROUTONS

● **IF YOUR FAVORITE PART OF A CAESAR salad is the croutons, you're not alone.**

Apollonia's twist on this classic dish starts with a simple base: romaine, radishes, lemon vinaigrette. But the lettuce is just a canvas for the main event: her Brioche croutons. The crispy bread bits are packed with all of the classic Caesar flavors—anchovies, mustard, Parmesan—and add a savory, crunchy flair that can't be found on a grocery store shelf.

## METHOD

**1.** Make the Flavored Brioche Croutons. In the bowl of a food processor, combine the anchovies, mustard, lemon zest, and garlic. Process until the ingredients start to come together, about 30 seconds.

**2.** Add 2 tablespoons water and continue processing until the ingredients achieve a mostly smooth, pourable consistency. Add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time, if needed. Transfer the anchovy mixture to a small bowl.

**3.** Arrange the Brioche slices on a rimmed baking sheet in a single layer. Use a pastry brush to cover each slice with a generous layer of the anchovy mixture, then flip each slice and repeat on the other side.

**4.** Cover the tray with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 6 hours and up to 24 hours.

**5.** After 6 to 24 hours, turn on your oven's broiler.

**6.** Tear the Brioche into roughly 1-inch cubes directly onto the baking sheet. Drizzle the pieces with olive oil and sprinkle them with Parmesan.

**7.** Broil the Brioche, tossing once, until the croutons are golden, dry, and reduced in size, about 2 to 3 minutes. Allow the croutons to cool on the baking sheet.

**8.** While the croutons are cooling, make the dressing. In a medium bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, honey, and olive oil. Add salt and pepper, and whisk to combine.

**9.** Once the croutons are fully cool, make the salad. In a large bowl, combine the lettuce, radishes, and Parmesan cheese. Drizzle with about half of the dressing, and toss to coat. Add about two-thirds of the croutons and the remaining dressing, and toss to coat. Top with the remaining croutons, and serve.



# BREADCRUMBS & SOURDOUGH WHEAT PESTO



## INGREDIENTS

1 thick slice stale Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf (see page 21, plus more to taste)

¼ c walnuts

4 c parsley leaves, loosely packed, coarsely chopped with scissors

1 tsp sea salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground black pepper

½ c extra-virgin olive oil

● **IN ITALY, BREADCRUMBS WERE** historically used in pesto as a substitute for cheese. When Apollonia learned this culinary tidbit, she thought about the walnut rye bread made at the bakery: Why not use the leftovers to make pesto?

You don't need a nutty Poilâne loaf to make breadcrumbs at home—any type of stale bread works, and each will lend a different flavor and texture. Brioche makes for an airy, crispy breadcrumb; sourdough is coarse and dense. The recipe here calls for Poilâne-Style Wheat Loaf, but if you have a few different kinds of leftover bread at home, try mixing them together to make your own intriguing, unique blend.

## METHOD

1. Slice the bread into a few larger pieces, then use your hands to tear the slices into smaller chunks.
2. Place the bread in the bowl of a food processor, and pulse to form fine breadcrumbs.
3. Add the walnuts, parsley, salt, and a pinch or two of pepper. Pulse until the ingredients just come together, about 30 seconds.

4. Slowly add the olive oil, and continue to pulse until the pesto comes together into a uniformly dark green, coarse paste. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. For a smoother pesto, add more olive oil, and continue to pulse.

5. Store the pesto in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

### Help! I want to make breadcrumbs, but I only have fresh bread on hand...

● Not to fear, we've got a trick for that. Start by cutting the bread into thick slices, then dry it out in the oven at 200°F/93°C for about 10 minutes. Now you're ready to make breadcrumbs:

1. Slice the bread into smaller pieces, then use your hands to tear it into chunks.
2. Pulse the chunks in the food processor until the breadcrumbs reach your desired consistency, about 2 minutes. (If your food processor is struggling to break down the bigger pieces, transfer the breadcrumbs

to a bowl and remove the largest ones. Return those to the food processor and continue to pulse.)

3. Once the breadcrumbs are ready, add salt and seasonings, like allspice and black pepper, or even minced fresh herbs. Spiced breadcrumbs can be stored in an airtight container in a dry environment for up to 1 month. Breadcrumbs with fresh herbs can be stored in an airtight container in a dry environment for up to 2 days.



# RYE SABLÉ

## INGREDIENTS

2 eggs

175 g (1 c) sugar

250 g (1 c) butter, room temperature (not warm)

500 g (5 c) rye flour, plus more for dusting

Pinch of salt (optional)

● **ALONG WITH THE SIGNATURE MICHE**, sablés are among Poilâne's most famous offerings.

The sandy shortbread cookies are known in-house as punitions (“punishments”). The moniker is a nod to Apollonia’s great-grandmother, who told her grandchildren to come get their punitions and then handed them cookies instead. This rye-based version pairs wonderfully with coffee or tea.

## METHOD

1. In a large bowl, combine eggs and sugar. Using a handheld mixer on the lowest speed, beat eggs and sugar until frothy, about 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Add the butter and beat with the handheld mixer on low speed until just incorporated, about 1 minute.
3. In a medium bowl, combine rye flour and salt, and whisk to evenly distribute salt.
4. Add half of the flour and salt mixture to the egg mixture, and bring together with a rubber spatula. Then add the rest of the flour and salt mixture, and bring together with the rubber spatula.
5. Using the handheld mixer on low speed, mix until the flour is fully incorporated and the dough has the consistency of wet sand, scraping down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula about halfway through mixing. Do not overmix.
6. Use a spatula or a bench scraper to scrape half of the dough onto a clean work surface. Use your hands to bring the dough together into a disk about 1½ inches thick, then use your palms to shape the edges of the disk into a square. Cover tightly with plastic

wrap, using a bench scraper to transfer the dough if it’s sticky.

7. Repeat with the other dough half and refrigerate both dough blocks for 30 minutes. *Make ahead: Store plastic-wrapped sablé dough in the freezer for up to 3 months.*

8. Lightly flour a work surface and rolling pin. Roll out the dough to about ¼ inch thickness. If your kitchen is very warm, refrigerate the rolled-out dough before cutting the cookies, 10 to 15 minutes.

9. Lightly flour a cookie cutter and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

10. Cut out cookies as close to one another as possible, to avoid re-rolling the dough multiple times, which overworks the butter. Use a bench scraper to transfer the cut-out cookies to the parchment-lined baking sheet.

11. Cover with a second layer of parchment paper and refrigerate for 30 minutes. *Make ahead: Freeze cut-out cookie dough for up to 3 weeks.*

12. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F.

13. Uncover the sablés and bake until deep golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. If baking 2 sheets of cookies at once, rotate halfway through baking.

14. Let cool on the baking sheet until cool enough to touch. Store in an airtight container in a dry, cool place for up to 3 months.

## CLASS CREDITS

**Lionel and Irena Poilâne with bread**

Photograph by Emile Perauer

**Lionel and Irena Poilâne embracing**

Photograph by Brigitte von Boch

**Apollonia in front of the Poilâne shop**

Photograph by H el ene Saglio

**Lionel Poil ane and Salvador Dal i with bread furniture**

Photograph by Christian Hirou

**Various product images and images of the Poil anes**

Photographs by Matthieu Alexandre



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