



# Italian Bread

Makes: 1 loaf / 16 slices Prep Time: 1 hour 55 minutes (mostly inactive) Bake Time: 50 minutes Total Time: 2 hours 45 minutes

Recommended pan: 8.5 × 4.5" Loaf Pan

## Ingredients

- 400 g wheat berries, hard

### YUDANE INGREDIENTS:

- 20 g flour, any (set aside from milled flour)
- 40 g water, boiling

### REMAINING INGREDIENTS:

- 310 g water, cold
- 8 g sea salt
- 8 g yeast
- 8 g lemon, juice (or other citrus juice)
- 8 g barley malt syrup (optional)

## Directions

1. Put your kettle on, or boil some water however you do it.
2. Mill the grain into fine flour.

### PREPARE DR. MEL'S QUICK NO-WAIT YUDANE:

4. Place the yudane flour at the bottom of your mixing bowl, and pour the boiling water over it.
5. Quickly mix the flour and boiling water together into a paste.
6. Mixing the Bread:
7. Add the cold water to the mixing bowl, followed by the remaining ingredients. This allows the water to cool the yudane so it doesn't kill your yeast.
8. Knead with your dough hook until the dough looks smooth and shiny and fully cleans the bowl. This will vary greatly depending on the mixer you have. Mixers with bottom motors will need a rest between mixing so dough is not overheated OR the flour and the water must be very cold.
9. Preheat the oven to 450 F. If using a dutch oven, preheat that, too.
10. Transfer the dough into an oiled bowl with plenty of room to rise and a lid.
11. Do your first set of clock stretch and folds in a 2.5 quart mixing bowl to help develop structure in your dough.
12. When the dough rises almost to the top of the bowl, gently stitch the dough together again, and cover it with parchment or a silicone bread sling before turning it out onto the counter or a baking sheet.
13. Optional: dust the top of the loaf with a light coating of flour (I use brown rice), and score the loaf with a very sharp knife or razor at a 45 degree angle, about 1/4" deep.

### DUTCH OVEN BAKING PREP:

15. Remove the dutch oven from the oven, closing the door quickly. If not using parchment or silicone bread sling, coat the bottom of the dutch oven with flour before placing the bread inside and adding the dutch oven's lid. Place the dutch oven into the center of the oven and close the door.

### **OPEN BAKE PREP:**

17. Roll up a few ice cubes inside a tea towel. Soak the tea towel with hot water. Grab a few more ice cubes to throw into the bottom of the oven, and have a spray bottle of water handy. Place the bread into the center of the oven on a baking stone or baking sheet. Place the hot, soaked towel next to it, toss ice cubes into the bottom of the oven and spray the loaf quickly and heavily with water before closing the oven door.

### **BAKING:**

19. Bake for 30 minutes in a dutch oven or 25 minutes for an open bake.
20. Check the internal temperature of your bread with an instant read digital thermometer. If it's not 190 F or above (ideally 200 F), lower the temperature of the oven to 400 F, and bake until it does reach that temperature. Cover the loaf with foil if you don't want the loaf much darker. For me, that's 15-20 minutes.
21. When bread has reached the ideal temperature, remove the bread from the oven, and from the pan it baked in (if using a dutch oven).
22. Place the bread gently on a cooling rack with air flow all around the loaf for 3 hours.

### **Notes**

### **Equipment**

[Grain Mill](#)

[Pyrex Bowl set \(with lids\)](#)

[Silicone Spatulas](#)

[Parchment sheets unbleached](#)

[Silicone bread slings](#)

[Lodge Dutch oven / skillet](#)

### **Tips**

- If you are not gentle with the bread dough, it will lose structure
- If you do not let this cool before slicing - for real - it will become dense and gummy inside.
- You must bake to temperature - don't eyeball it or thump test it. That will result in over-baked and crumbly bread that we don't want.
- Do not skip my yudane method - it's quick, easy and essential
- It doesn't matter if the yeast is instant or active dry - both work here
- This can also be baked in a bread pan. just shape it after mixing, and let it rise in the bread pan before baking.
- A second bread pan turned upside down over the first bread pan makes an excellent dutch oven.