

Italian Bread Base

Ingredients

- 510 grams hard wheat
- 360 - 460 grams water
- 10 grams sea salt
- 50 grams boiling water for Yudane
- 10 grams yeast

Optional:

- 1/4 lemon, squeezed or 1/8 tsp vitamin C powder
- 1/8 tsp barley malt powder

Recommendations:

- When starting out, use the lower end for water and gradually increase until you are more Comfortable handling higher hydration dough
- Spelt works better at the lower end of hydration (how much water compared to flour) because it absorbs less than hard wheat by approximately 10 grams
- The more yeast, the quicker the rise. Adjust the yeast up or down to change how quickly or slowly the bread rises.
- Salt also affects the rise, so you can decrease this - just know the bread will rise faster when you do

Make it Enriched:

- Change out the water for milk
- Drop the liquid by the amount of fat you add, such as 50 grams of butter
- if you add liquid sweetener, decrease the water by that amount

Directions

1. Mill the flour.
 2. Make the Yudane in the bottom of your mixing bowl by combining 50 grams of boiling water with 25 grams of flour..
 3. Add the water to the mixing bowl, then the remaining ingredients. This allows the water to cool the Yudane so it doesn't kill the yeast.
 4. Knead with your dough hook until it fully cleans the bowl and looks smooth and shiny. This will vary depending on mixer. Mixers with bottom motors will need a rest so as to not overheat the dough before kneading again. Be sure to use VERY COLD water in these cases.
 5. Preheat the oven to 450 F. If using a Dutch oven, preheat that, too.
 6. Do your first set of clock stretch and folds in a 2.5 quart mixing bowl to help develop structure in your dough.
 7. When the dough rises to the top of the bowl, gently stitch the dough together again, and cover it with parchment before turning it out into the counter or a baking sheet.
 8. If you like, dust the top with flour (I use milled rice flour), and score the loaf on a 45 degree angle, about 1/4" deep.
 9. Bake: 450 for 30 minutes in a Dutch oven or 25 open bake with steam. I soak a rolled up dish towel with water, spray the loaf with water, AND toss a few ice cubes into the oven.
 10. Decrease the oven temp to 400 F, baking until the inside is 205. Cover with foil if it's looking dark on top and you don't want it much darker. For me, that's 15 - 20 minutes.
- If you put the dough into the fridge before baking, it'll take longer to bake

