

# Bread of Life

Makes 8 ea. 2½-lb. loaves

*An appropriate name for a staple that has been baked for centuries on a stone hearth, the Bread of Life returns us to the roots of our Wood Stone equipment. This earthy bread is a great educator—its lower baking temperatures allow us to observe the nuances of stone hearth cooking at a slower pace, while simple ingredients allow for more pronounced stone hearth flavors.*

## Ingredients

### Starter

1 qt. water, 85 degrees  
½ tsp. instant yeast  
2½ lbs. General Mills Harvest King flour

### Dough

3⅓ qt. water, 85 degrees  
5 oz. sea salt  
1 ea. starter (see above), torn into large pieces  
½ lb. wheat bran  
9½ lbs. General Mills Harvest King flour

## Method

**Oven Temperature: 420-450 degrees** (Spread coals out evenly on the floor of the oven 6-8 hours before baking the bread. Remove the coals 1 hour prior to cooking and place the night doors on the oven to keep in the heat.)

### To make the starter:

- Pour the water into an electric mixing bowl fitted with a dough hook attachment. Add the yeast to the water, followed by the flour. Mix for 7-10 minutes on low speed until the starter reaches a smooth consistency.
- Cover the starter and store it in the refrigerator overnight, or up to 24 hours.

### To make the dough:

- Remove the starter from the refrigerator and bring it to room temperature.
- Once the starter reaches room temperature, pour the water into a large electric mixing bowl fitted with a dough hook attachment. Add the salt and the starter pieces, and mix on low speed for about 10 minutes. There should still be soft stands of dough floating in the water.
- Add the wheat bran to the bowl, followed by the flour. Mix for 5-6 minutes on low speed. Cover the dough and let it double in size at room temperature.
- Once the dough has doubled in size, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and cut it into pieces that are 15 percent heavier than your desired loaf weight (piece the dough into 46 oz. cuts for a 2½ lb. loaf).
- Pound the air bubbles out of the dough by folding the edges towards the center and pressing down sharply (the dough should feel rather slack), then form the pieces into tight, round loaves. Place them upside down in linen-lined baskets that have been dusted with flour (the basket size should allow for 50 to 75 percent expansion of the loaves). Dust the tops of the loaves with flour and cover with a linen cloth.
- Place the dough filled baskets on a sheet pan and cover the entire pan with plastic to keep the loaves from skinning. Store the pan in the refrigerator overnight (12-16 hours) at about 42 degrees.
- The next day, remove the loaves from the refrigerator and remove the linen from the tops of the loaves. Let the dough rise for 1 hour.
- Turn the loaves out onto a bread peel sprinkled with either semolina or rice flour and lightly spritz the loaves with water. Score the loaves as you desire and place them in the raw landing zone. As the loaves begin to brown, rotate them for an even bake. Bake until the loaves sound hollow when knocking on the bottoms, about 1 hour. Remove the bread from the oven and transfer to a cooling rack.



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