

# Ancient Grains Sourdough Bread



Cook Time: 50 minutes.

Total Time (excluding time it takes to prep starter): Two days.

Servings: This recipe makes one-2 lb boule or two-1 lb boules

You will need an active (well fed) sourdough starter. I prefer my San Francisco Starter for this recipe, but a standard or organic starter would work as well.

With a crunchy exterior and chewy interior, Ancient Grain Sourdough Bread is texture rich with an earthy blend of grains and seeds to make a delicious hearty loaf to add to any meal.

Hydration: Flours vary in their moisture content and protein levels from brand to brand. Additionally, current humidity levels will impact how your dough feels from one batch to another. You may need to the water or flour as needed, *after mixing in the soaker*. If the dough feels a bit too dry, try adding a teaspoon or two of water. Add slowly so you don't add too

much. Too wet? Add a little flour, again take it slow and add just a little at a time. The more often you make a sourdough, you will better understanding of how your dough should look and feel.

It is important to measure your ingredients. I prefer weighing them as simply measuring you can sometimes be off a little and it can impact the results. Same goes for water temperature, use a thermometer to make sure you are accurate.

## ***Ingredients***

### **For the Soaker:**

- 1/4 C (40g) 7 Grain Cereal
- 3 Tbs (25g) Rolled Oats (not quick)
- 2 TBS (25g) Red Quinoa (rinsed)
- 2 Tbs (25g) Flax Seed
- 2 Tbs (25g) Sunflower Seeds (hulled and unsalted)
- 3/4 C (155g) boiling water. Removed from heat and allowed to cool slightly. (or soak the grains and seeds overnight in room temp water)

### **For the Dough:**

- 1/4 C (50g) [Sourdough Starter](#) previously fed, bubbly and active.
- 1 1/3 C (300g) Warm Water (80 – 90 degrees f)
- 2 1/2 Tbs (50g) Maple Syrup
- 3 C (400g) Bread Flour
- 1/2 C + 1 Tbs (100g) Whole Wheat Bread Flour or whole wheat flour
- 2 tsp (16g) Fine Sea Salt

**Topping (Optional):** Mixture of seeds/oats of your choice.

## ***Instructions***

### **Soaker:**

1. In a medium mixing bowl add the cereal, rolled oats, quinoa, flax seeds, sunflower seeds and water. This can be the day before and left to soak overnight, or if using hot water, they should soak while you mix the dough and let proof the first 30 minutes.

## **Dough:**

1. **Mix the Dough:** In the evening, whisk the starter, water and maple syrup together in a large bowl with a fork. Add the flours and salt. First, mix with a fork, the dough will be shaggy. Then mix by hand, mixing, folding and pushing the dough until the flour is fully incorporated and no dry bits are present. It will seem dry at first, but the more you work the dough, the more hydrated it will become. The dough will feel stiff, and it will stick to your fingers as you go. Do this for about 3-4 minutes. Use the fork to scrape off the dough on your fingers as much as you can.

Cover bowl with a damp tea towel. Set a timer for 30 minutes and allow the dough to rest for 30 minutes. Now is a good time to feed/refresh your starter.

2. **Incorporate the Soaker:** After the dough has rested, mix in the soaker. To do this, dump the soaker on top of the dough and begin kneading and folding the dough over and on top of itself, incorporating the ingredients of the soaker. Do this for about 1-2 minutes or until the soaker is evenly distributed in the dough. It will seem like a lot of added bits, but as you work the dough and as the dough develops through fermentation, the soaker will incorporate. The dough will be stiff, wet and sticky. If adjusting water or flour, now is the time to assess the dough and adjust as needed. Set a timer for 30 minutes and allow the dough to rest for 30 minutes.

3. **Fold the Dough:** After the dough has rested, fold the dough. To do this, grab a portion of the dough while it remains in the bowl, stretch it up and fold it over, pressing your fingertips into the center of the dough. You'll

notice the dough is less stiff and more workable at this point. Repeat, until you've worked your way around the dough.

This is the first fold, and you can stop here and begin bulk fermentation, but if time permits, and optimally, you'll want to repeat this fold two more times as it improves the final dough's structure and crumb. Allow for about 30-45 minutes each between folds.

4. **Bulk (fermentation) Rise:** After the last fold, cover the bowl with a damp towel and allow it to rise overnight at room temperature. This will take about 8-10 hours at 70F, but in a cooler kitchen the dough can take up to 12-14 hours to rise. The dough is ready when it no longer looks dense, is jiggly when the bowl is shaken, and has about doubled in size.
  
5. **Shape the Dough:** In the morning, and with damp fingertips, coax the dough into a floured work-surface.
  - i. If making two boules (1 pound / 453 grams - each), moisten the cutting end of the bench scraper and cut the dough in half.
  - ii. For one or two boules, with moist fingers, take a portion of the dough, gently stretch it towards you and fold it over towards the center and pressing it down gently. Repeat this process until you work the dough all the way around. Using a bench scraper flip the dough over and let rest for 10 minutes.
  - iii. Meanwhile, line an 8-inch (20cm) bowl with a towel or lightly flour a banneton (or two as needed). Scrape any excess flour away on your work-surface using the bench scraper and using a spray bottle with water, lightly spritz the surface of the work-surface. This will help the dough grip the surface and help create a taught dough. With lightly floured hands and using the bench scraper again as needed to help move the dough (the dough is sticky), cup your left hand around the dough and pull the dough toward you in a circular

motion with the bench scraper in the right hand, to tighten its shape and create a taught skin. Use the bench scraper as needed to work the dough as this dough is sticky. Re-flour your hands as needed.

- iv. Once the surface is taut, give it a good dusting of flour and smooth it over the top. With one swift move, use the bench scraper to scoop the dough up and, place the dough into the bowl/banneton, bottom side up. Sprinkle the bottom of the dough with a dusting of flour.

6. **Second (proof) Rise:** Cover the bowl with a damp tea towel and let rest for 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The dough is ready when it looks puffy and has risen slightly but has not yet doubled in size.

- i. **Preheat the oven to 500F.** Arrange a rack in the center of the oven, and another just below it. Place a sheet pan on the bottom rack.
- ii. Cut a sheet of parchment paper to fit the size of a 7 quart Dutch oven or other large baking vessel leaving enough excess around the sides to transfer the bread to the pot.

7. **Add Seeds (Optional) and Score:** To turn the dough out of the bowl/banneton, place the parchment over the dough and invert the bowl to release.

Add Seeds (Optional) Set out two sheet pans. Add seeds to one of the pans and put a wet towel or paper towel laid out in the other. Towel should be wet but not sloppy wet. With the smooth side down, gently roll the dough over the towel to moisten, then gently roll over the seeds to coat.

Score: Using the tip of a lame or a razor blade, score the dough about 1/2" (8mm) deep and about 2-3" (5-7cm) long on the top or any way you like. Use the parchment to transfer the dough to your baking vessel.

8. **Bake:** Place your lidded vessel on the center rack and reduce heat to 450F. Bake, lidded, for 20 minutes. Remove the lid and continue to bake for 30 -35 minutes, for one, 2 lb boule. If baking two, 1 lb boules, continue to bake lid off for 15-20 minutes. To check if the bread is ready, check the internal temperature of the loaf. It should read between 190F-205F when done. When finished, transfer to a wire rack. Cool for 1 hour before slicing.

Note: I have also had great success baking using a [steam method with a Pizza Stone](#).