



Wholegrain Bread

Ingredients:

- 480g of freshly milled, wholegrain flour (we love a blend of Spitfire and Scout Wheat, Spelt and Rye in roughly equal proportions, but honestly, any combination of good wholegrain flour works...)
- A scant teaspoon of dried, instant yeast
- 630g of water (filtered, if your supply is chlorinated)
- 270g of strong white bread flour
- 16g of salt
- A decent glug of good quality olive oil
- A little extra flour for shaping the loaf (but not for kneading!)

The night before you want to bake - mix the wholegrain flour, yeast and water in a large bowl. Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rest over night.

Next morning - add the white bread flour and salt to the wholegrain flour mix. Bring everything together, using a spatula or dough whisk to start with, then switch to using your hands. Leave the dough in the bowl, clean your hands and your work bench.

Pour about a tablespoon of olive oil into a large mixing bowl and use your hands to ensure it coats the inside of the bowl completely. Take the dough out of the bowl using your oiled hands (a dough scraper is very helpful). Put the dough straight on the work bench and knead using the 'slap and fold' method. (You'll find some great videos online.) Dough likes to rest in between workouts, so knead, rest if for a few minutes, knead, then rest again, and then finish kneading. You shouldn't need any more flour at this stage. If you're new to making bread, just be patient. You'll get the hang of it.

Put the dough in the oiled bowl, cover with a clean tea towel, and leave to rise for 2 - 3 hours. Timing isn't critical, but it should be completely domed and almost doubled in size. Putting it in a slightly warm place will speed up the process. Putting it in the fridge will slow it down.

When you're ready to shape the loaf, gently coax the dough out of the bowl and onto your work bench. Stretch and fold north, south, east and west into the centre. Fold in half and create a tight 'skin' to the loaf. Again, just google 'shaping bread dough'. Put the dough in your floured banneton, seam side up. Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rise for a couple of hours.

At least 20 minutes before you're ready to bake, preheat the oven to around 250°C. Put your dutch oven (or bread cloche) in the oven. Once everything's reached temperature, take the dutch oven out and put it on a heat proof surface. Sprinkle some flour in the bottom of the dutch oven and carefully tip the dough in. The bottom of the dough will now be on the top. Slash the top with a razor blade, put the lid on and put the dutch oven back in the hot oven. Leave it to cook for 10 minutes, then remove the lid and mist the inside of the oven well with water in a spray bottle. Cook for another 20 - 25 minutes, or until the internal temperature of the bread reaches 93°C.

Remove from the oven and put the loaf on a wire rack to cool. Try not to cut it until it's cooled, at least a little...