

EASY BREAD

100 No-Knead Recipes



Judith Fertig

CONTENTS

Introduction	7
 PART 1: LET'S GET STARTED	 9
▶ Basic Artisan Breads	22
 PART 2: NOW YOU'RE BAKING	 32
▶ More Basic Artisan Breads	36
▶ Whole-Grain Breads	54
▶ Seeded Breads and Filled Breads	76
▶ Flavored Breads	92
▶ Slow-Rise Breads	110
▶ Gluten-Free Breads	124
▶ Festive Breads	136
▶ Brioche	150
 PART 3: MASTER BAKING	 169
▶ Bagels	172
▶ Buttery Yeast Breads	180
▶ The Artisan Pantry	194
 Acknowledgments	 214
Index	215



INTRODUCTION

Although artisan bread baking is a time-honored tradition, with classic forms and methods, there has been a recent surge of revision. Baking experts, food scientists and innovative bread bloggers have taken a fresh look at old recipes and come up with new, easier ways to achieve the same or similar results.

As a cookbook author, culinary instructor and avocational baker, I've built on their expertise and gone a step further in streamlining artisan bread baking into an achievable — and rewarding — activity for busy people.

I've also used a sequential, step-by-step approach. With each dough, with each recipe, you learn and master new techniques.

The result is Easy Bread, which shows how you can achieve incredible results in just minutes a day.

Your hands-on activity (not including rising, resting or baking time) with these breads is only minutes a day. You can make the dough one day, form and bake in the days afterward.

You master easy methods for shaping the dough into round loaves (boules), baguettes, batards, rolls, filled rolls, flatbreads, pizzas, bagels, pastries and more.

You learn similarly easy, streamlined ways to make complements to bread, such as artisan butter (in the food processor in 5 minutes) and caramelized onions (in the slow cooker).

A SIMPLE METHOD FOR EVERYONE

- ▶ Use basic equipment: a large mixing bowl, a Danish dough whisk or wooden spoon, measuring cups, a cutting board or cookie sheet, an instant-read thermometer, a serrated knife, a rolling pin, a broiler pan and a baking stone.
- ▶ Make enough dough for several loaves, store the dough in the refrigerator, then bake when you're ready. Many of the doughs keep in the refrigerator for over a week.
- ▶ Skip traditional bread-making steps. No need to proof (active dry) yeast over water to make sure it works; you use instant or bread machine yeast and simply stir it into the flour. No need to knead, as you use a moist dough that does the work of activating the gluten for you. No need to bake the bread the same day — you can if you want to, but you can also wait several days, up to a week or more.
- ▶ Know when your bread is done in one easy step — by using an instant-read thermometer. No tapping, thumping, guessing, hoping.

If you can bake a batch of brownies from a box mix, you are ready to start Easy Bread. So let's get started!

Part 1

LET'S GET STARTED

Equipment	12	Basic Artisan Breads	22
Ingredients	14	Easy Artisan Dough	22
Ten Basic Steps to Artisan Bread	17	Baguette	24
Characteristics of Easy Artisan Dough	21	Baby Boule	26
		Batard	27
		Rolls	29
		Pizza Blanca	30



LET'S GET STARTED

One-bowl, no-knead artisan bread. Is it as easy as it sounds? Let's get some hands-on experience.

If you follow the steps in making the dough, forming the loaves and baking the bread, you can't go wrong. Each easy step takes you closer to great artisan bread — and helps you avoid common pitfalls experienced by novice bread bakers.

So relax. Just follow the steps and you're on your way to your first boules and baguettes.

POINTERS FOR SUCCESS WITH ALL YOUR BREADS

- ▶ If you just scoop the flour out of the bag and dump it in the bowl, you could end up with a heavy, lackluster loaf, but by measuring the flour correctly, you'll end up with just the right amount.
- ▶ If you add hot water, it can kill the yeast and your bread won't rise, but by taking the temperature of the water, you'll know it is lukewarm.
- ▶ If you only thump or tap to test for doneness, you could end up with bread that is still gummy inside, but by taking the temperature of your loaf, you'll know it's done.

Equipment

Each piece of kitchen equipment listed below is simple but necessary to homemade artisan bread, from the start of making the dough to the process of baking it. To make the first master recipe, Easy Artisan Dough, you'll need basic kitchenware, including a wooden spoon or a Danish dough whisk. If you've never seen a dough whisk before, you'll be amazed at how often you'll use it once you get one. The dough whisk has a long wooden handle, and the whisk end looks like a freeform mitten made with thick stainless steel wire. The dough whisk does a great job with all of the doughs in this book, but is especially effective with heavier whole-grain doughs.

You'll also need something with which to slide your bread onto the baking stone in the oven. A simple three-sided cookie sheet will do, but as you get going, you might want to purchase a wooden baker's peel, sort of a flat shovel for getting breads and pizzas in the oven.

A flexible cutting board is indispensable for scooping up and sliding baguettes or batards from the floured surface to the baker's peel or baking stone. The baking stone helps replicate the even heating of a brick oven. The broiler pan of water underneath it adds steam for better baking results.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

- ▶ Measuring cups and spoons (liquid and dry)
- ▶ Instant-read thermometer
- ▶ 16-cup (4 L) mixing bowl
- ▶ Wooden spoon or Danish dough whisk
- ▶ Serrated knife
- ▶ Dough scraper
- ▶ Three-sided cookie sheet or baker's peel
- ▶ Flexible cutting board
- ▶ Baking stone
- ▶ Broiler pan

Ingredients

The basic ingredients for artisan bread are also simple, but each one is crucial to success.

YEAST

To bake artisan bread the easy way, you'll need instant or bread machine yeast, which is packaged in jars, in individual packets or in larger vacuum-sealed bags. Active dry or quick-rise yeasts need to be proofed in water first, and we're eliminating that step. The smaller granules of instant or bread machine yeast can simply be stirred into the flour and other dry ingredients. Because of the way instant or bread machine yeast is formulated, you'll use a little bit more of it than you're used to with active dry yeast bread recipes. Once you've opened your instant or bread machine yeast jar or vacuum-sealed bag, store it in the refrigerator so it stays fresh longer.

► Temperature affects it.

Both manufactured and wild yeasts in the air slow down their activity in a cold refrigerator and go into hibernation in the freezer. (That's why you can buy frozen yeast bread dough, then come home and bake it off.) Warmer temperatures help yeast release carbon dioxide to be trapped within the muscular layers of gluten, helping bread to rise. According to food scientist Shirley Corriher in *BakeWise*, manufactured yeast is most active between 86°F (30°C) and 95°F (35°C), while wild yeasts prefer lower temperatures. Yeast cells die between 138°F (59°C) and 140°F (60°C). For the artisan baker, this means that judging the temperature of liquids you stir into the dry ingredients is very important — use your instant-read thermometer so you don't inadvertently kill the yeast with hot liquids. Knowing how yeast works helps you understand the mechanics of baking better: how the bread rises in the hot oven until the dough itself reaches between 138°F (59°C) and 140°F (60°C), and then the excess moisture bakes out, the crust forms and the bread is done at 190°F (90°C).

► Leaving yeast to do its work slowly results in bread with better, more developed flavor.

So room temperature resting and rising, or even an overnight stay in the refrigerator, results in tastier bread.



FLOUR

Artisan bread made with a no-knead method requires flour with good protein content, because protein equals gluten. Gluten helps form the muscular structure of bread, thereby helping it rise. It can be activated either by kneading, which we're not going to do, or by adding extra liquid, which we are. The more gluten, the better rise we'll get in the bread. Unbleached all-purpose flour and bread flour have the protein and gluten content we're looking for. With some recipes, you can use either/or, while others specify bread flour to do really heavy lifting. If you want to use unbleached organic flours, all the better. Why unbleached flour? Because with less processing, unbleached flours retain more of their protein.

BAKING WITH CANADIAN BREAD FLOUR

Canadian bread flour generally has a higher protein content than U.S. bread flour. That means it absorbs more water. If using Canadian bread flour, you may need to use slightly more water to avoid a dry dough. Begin by adding an extra tablespoon or two (15 to 30 mL) of water and continue adding until a soft dough is formed.

SALT

We'll start off using table salt, but as we go along and get to purer artisan baking, we'll want the good stuff: fine kosher or sea salt. You can certainly use fine kosher or sea salt for all the recipes, if you wish.

WATER

We'll start off by using tap water, but as we go along, we'll use filtered or bottled spring water, as it has fewer chemicals and a purer, cleaner taste. (If you like, use filtered or bottled water for every recipe.) Use your instant-read thermometer to measure the temperature of the water in the first few recipes; eventually, you'll be able to tell by touch how warm the water needs to be. Hot water, 138°F (59°C) and above, will kill the yeast.



Ten Basic Steps to Artisan Bread

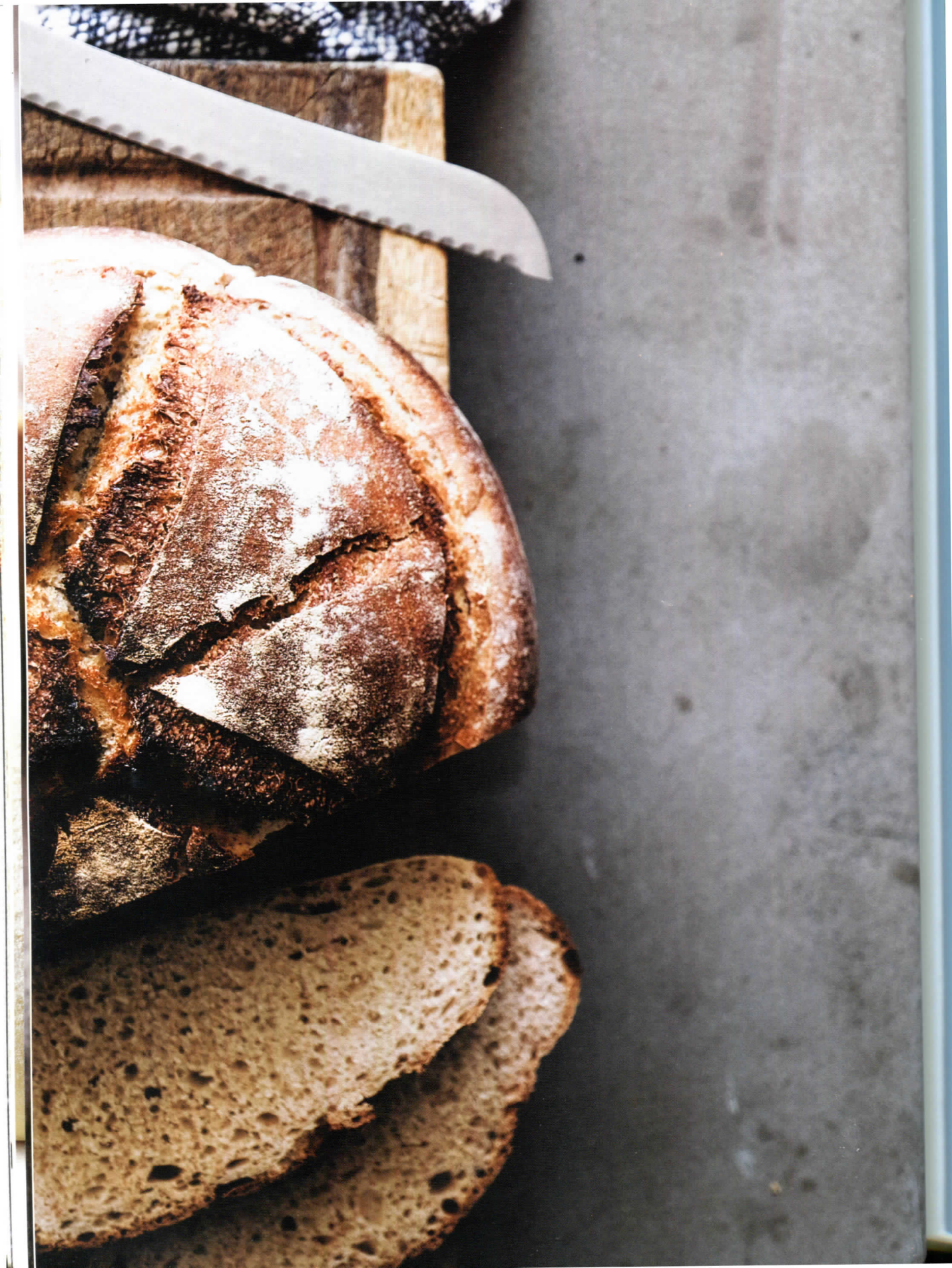
Now that we have the equipment and ingredients, what will we do with them?

1 MEASURE. How you measure the flour makes an enormous difference in the final product. If you just stick a measuring cup in a bag or container of flour and scoop, the flour packs into the measuring cup more. One cup (250 mL) of scooped flour will weigh around 5¼ ounces (about 157 g). If you spoon flour from the bag or container into the measuring cup, leveling it off with a knife or your finger, the flour gently settles in. One cup (250 mL) of spooned flour will weigh around 4½ ounces (about 140 g). Multiply that by the number of cups you need in a recipe, and you'll see that the measuring method makes a big difference. More flour means denser, heavier baked goods. And that's not what we want. So we'll spoon and measure.

2 MIX. Because we're working with instant or bread machine yeast, we'll stir the dry ingredients together first — usually the yeast, flour and salt — then stir in the liquid. We'll stir the dough together until just moistened, then beat 40 strokes, just as you would with brownie batter made from a mix. The dough should be lumpy, but it will get smoother and bigger as it rests and rises.

3 RISE. Now we'll let the yeast, flour and water do their work. The yeast will give off carbon dioxide bubbles, and the water will join with the gluten in the flour to form fibrous bands. The result is dough that rises. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap — it's easy to get the wrap to stick if you moisten the rim of the bowl with a little water, then attach the wrap. If you like, spray the underside of the plastic wrap, where the dough might touch, with olive oil before covering the bowl, so the dough won't stick as it rises. Let the dough rise at room temperature (72°F/22°C) for 2 hours or until it has risen nearly to the top of the bowl, or about doubled in bulk, and has a sponge-like appearance. If your kitchen is warmer, this may take less time. If your kitchen is cooler, it may take a little longer. The dough will even rise in the refrigerator.

4 USE RIGHT AWAY OR REFRIGERATE. Use the dough to bake that day or place the bowl of dough, covered with plastic wrap, in the refrigerator for up to 9 days before baking. Each master dough recipe has a different "use by" date; some sweetened, naturally leavened or enriched doughs will only last several days in the refrigerator. Just read the recipe to make sure. If you like, use a permanent marker to write the date you made the dough on the top of the plastic wrap.



Characteristics of Easy Artisan Dough

If you've baked kneaded breads before, this dough will seem looser to you — and it is! The extra moisture in the dough takes the place of kneading in activating the gluten in the flour. Gluten helps to form those muscular bands that are the structure of bread, trapping the carbon dioxide released by the yeast. When you work with the dough, use as little flour as possible and use the dough scraper as much as possible to scrape up the dough from the floured surface, turn it and even cut it. Use a pastry brush to brush away excess flour. The dough will feel more like a baby's skin than the tight doughs you usually get with a kneading method.

The looser dough also means that these breads are looser in shape. You won't get tight spirals, intricate braids, close knots or other exact forms. The Cardamom and Cinnamon—Scented Swedish Tea Ring (page 139), for example, will have a rustic, feathery appearance instead of the neat and tidy loaf you see in the grocery store.

Each master dough recipe will tell you what type of color, crust and crumb to expect from the finished product. Along the way, you'll learn how to achieve all the various types.

THE 3 CS OF ARTISAN BREAD

- **Color:** In artisan bread, color comes from the interplay of flour and heat. Depending on the type of flour you use, your dough may be creamy white, pale yellow, beige, reddish brown, flecked brown or dark brown. Flavorings such as puréed squash, beer and saffron, as well as herbs, fruits, seeds and spices that you stir or fold into the dough, also contribute to color and appearance.
- **Crumb:** The texture of the bread's interior. Each master dough recipe will produce a slightly different type of crumb, from the moist and soft custard crumb of Easy Artisan Dough to the rich and buttery crumb of Easy Artisan Brioche Dough.
- **Crust:** The top exterior of the bread. Your bread crusts will also vary with each master dough: a crisp crust with Easy Artisan Dough; a shiny, buttery crust with Easy Artisan Brioche Dough; and a crisp and shiny crust with Easy Artisan Bagel Dough.

Easy Artisan Dough

Makes enough dough for bread, rolls, pizza or flatbread to serve 12 to 16

This first master recipe introduces you to the basics of this easy artisan bread method. As you begin to make bread, all of this will get even easier. You won't have to check the temperature of the water, as you'll know what lukewarm feels like. You'll get quite good at forming the various types of loaves and sliding them onto the hot baking stone. You'll be able to tell, by how fast the temperature rises on the instant-read thermometer, when your bread reaches 190°F (90°C) and is done. Your artisan loaves will have a crisp, darkened crust, a tender, moist crumb and a mellow, toasty flavor — all with this easy method. The dough will also make delicious rolls, pizza or flatbread.

INGREDIENTS

- 6½ cups (1.625 L) unbleached all-purpose or bread flour
- 1½ tbsp (22 mL) instant or bread machine yeast
- 1½ tbsp (22 mL) fine table or kosher salt
- 3 cups (750 mL) lukewarm water (about 100°F/38°C)

METHOD

- 1 Spoon the flour into a measuring cup, level with a knife or your finger, then dump the flour into the mixing bowl.
- 2 Add the yeast and salt to the flour. Stir together with a wooden spoon or Danish dough whisk. Pour in the water and stir together until just moistened. Beat 40 strokes, scraping the bottom and the sides of the bowl, until the dough forms a lumpy, sticky mass.
- 3 Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature (72°F/22°C) in a draft-free place for 2 hours or until the dough has risen nearly to the top of the bowl and has a sponge-like appearance.
- 4 Use that day or place the dough, covered with plastic wrap, in the refrigerator for up to 9 days before baking.

EQUIPMENT

- Instant-read thermometer
- 16-cup (4 L) mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon or Danish dough whisk

TIPS

- ▶ Combining 1½ cups (375 mL) hot with 1½ cups (375 mL) cold tap water will result in lukewarm water of approximately 100°F (38°C).
- ▶ Before storing the dough in the refrigerator, use a permanent marker to write the date on the plastic wrap, so you'll know when you made your dough — and when to use it up 9 days later.

BAKING WITH CANADIAN BREAD FLOUR

Canadian bread flour generally has a higher protein content than U.S. bread flour. That means it absorbs more water. If using Canadian bread flour, you may need to use slightly more water to avoid a dry dough. Begin by adding an extra tablespoon or two (15 to 30 mL) of water and continue adding until a soft dough is formed.



Baguette

Makes 1 baguette, to serve 4

A crusty baguette — warm from the oven — can be a regular feature of your weeknight repertoire when you have the dough ready-made in the refrigerator. Form the baguette and let the dough relax while you prepare the rest of dinner, then pop the baguette in the oven to bake.

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{4}$ recipe prepared Easy Artisan Dough (page 22), about the size of a softball

Unbleached all-purpose or bread flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 mL) cornmeal

2 cups (500 mL) hot water

METHOD

1 Place dough on a floured surface and dust very lightly with flour. Flour your hands. Working the dough as little as possible and adding flour as necessary, form the dough into a 14-inch (35 cm) cylinder. Smooth the dough with your hands to form a soft, non-sticky skin. Pinch any seams together. Pinch each end into a point. Lightly flour any sticky places on the dough. The dough should feel soft and smooth all over, but not at all sticky.

2 Sprinkle the cornmeal on the cookie sheet and place the dough cylinder on the cornmeal. Cover with a tea towel and let rest at room temperature for 40 minutes.

3 About 30 minutes before baking, place the broiler pan on the lower shelf and the baking stone on the middle shelf of the oven. Preheat to 450°F (230°C).

4 Using a serrated knife, make three evenly spaced diagonal slashes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) deep, across the baguette, exposing the moist dough under the surface.

5 Carefully pull the middle rack of the oven out several inches. Hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the baguette will slide sideways onto the center of the

EQUIPMENT

Three-sided cookie sheet, flexible cutting board or baker's peel

Broiler pan

Baking stone

hot stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the baguette from the board to the stone. Push the middle rack back in place. Pull the lower rack out, pour the hot water into the broiler pan and push the lower rack back in place. Close the oven door immediately so the steam will envelop the oven.

6 Bake for 25 minutes or until the crust is a medium dark brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of the loaf registers at least 190°F (90°C). Remove the loaf to cool on a wire rack.

TIP

When you are proficient at sliding the dough onto the baking stone, you can bake two baguettes at one time. Place the baguettes on the prepared cookie sheet so that they are parallel to each other and about 6 inches (15 cm) apart. Then hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the first baguette will slide sideways onto the hot baking stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the first baguette from the cookie sheet to the back of the stone. With another jerk, slide the second baguette onto the front of the stone.



Baby Boule

Makes 1 round loaf, or boule, to serve 4

This recipe makes a small boule, which will rise dramatically in the oven, producing a crusty loaf with a moist and tender crumb, which four people can greedily consume. Delicious! And so easy!

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{4}$ recipe prepared Easy Artisan Dough (page 22),
about the size of a softball

Unbleached all-purpose or bread flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 mL) cornmeal

2 cups (500 mL) hot water

EQUIPMENT

Three-sided cookie sheet, flexible cutting board
or baker's peel

Broiler pan

Baking stone

METHOD

1 Place dough on a floured surface and dust very lightly with flour. Flour your hands. Working the dough as little as possible and adding flour as necessary, form the dough into a 6-inch (15 cm) round. Smooth the dough with your hands to form a soft, non-sticky skin. Pinch any seams together. Lightly flour any sticky places on the dough. The dough should feel soft and smooth all over, but not at all sticky.

2 Sprinkle the cornmeal on the cookie sheet and place the dough round on the cornmeal. Cover with a tea towel and let rest at room temperature for 40 minutes.

3 About 30 minutes before baking, place the broiler pan on the lower shelf and the baking stone on the middle shelf of the oven. Preheat to 450°F (230°C).

4 Using a serrated knife, make three evenly spaced slashes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) deep, across the boule, exposing the moist dough under the surface.

5 Carefully pull the middle rack of the oven out several inches. Hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the dough round will slide onto the center of the hot stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the dough round from the cookie sheet to the stone. Push the middle rack back in place. Pull the lower rack out, pour the hot water into the broiler pan and push the lower rack back in place. Close the oven door immediately so the steam will envelop the oven.

6 Bake for 27 to 30 minutes or until the crust is a medium dark brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of the loaf registers at least 190°F (90°C). Remove the loaf to cool on a wire rack.

TIP

When you are proficient at sliding the dough onto the baking stone, you can bake two boules at one time, if it's big enough to allow enough space between them. Place the boules on the prepared cookie sheet so that they are parallel to each other and about 4 inches (10 cm) apart. Then hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the boules will slide onto the hot baking stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the boules from the cookie sheet to each side of the stone.

Batard

Makes 1 large loaf, to serve 8 to 10

Use half of the dough to form a larger loaf, to be baked without a loaf pan. This bread has a dark crust, a mellow flavor and a soft crumb.

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{2}$ recipe prepared Easy Artisan Dough (page 22),
about the size of a volleyball

Unbleached all-purpose or bread flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) cornmeal

2 cups (500 mL) hot water

METHOD

1 Place dough on a floured surface and dust very lightly with flour. Flour your hands. Working the dough as little as possible and adding flour as necessary, form the dough into a 14-inch (35 cm) cylinder. Pinch the ends and any seams closed. Lightly flour any sticky places on the dough. The dough should feel soft and smooth all over, but not at all sticky.

2 Sprinkle the cornmeal on the cookie sheet. Using the cutting board or two metal spatulas, transfer the loaf to the prepared cookie sheet. Cover with a tea towel and let rest at room temperature for 40 minutes.

3 About 30 minutes before baking, place the broiler pan on the lower shelf and the baking stone on the middle shelf of the oven. Preheat to 450°F (230°C).

4 Using a serrated knife, make five cross-hatch slashes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) deep, diagonally across the top of the loaf, exposing the moist dough under the surface.

EQUIPMENT

Three-sided cookie sheet

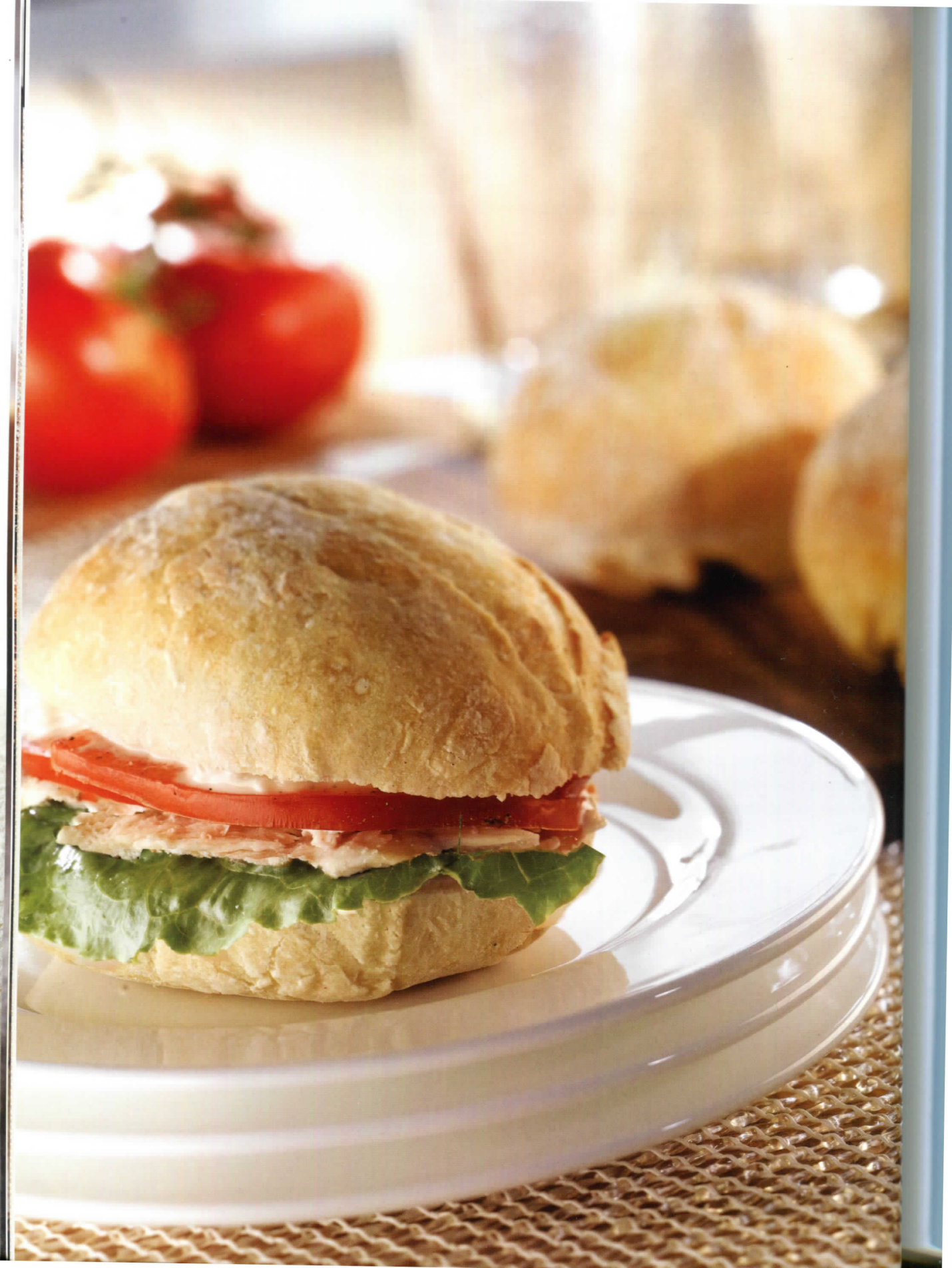
Flexible cutting board, floured, or two metal spatulas

Broiler pan

Baking stone

5 Carefully pull the middle rack of the oven out several inches. Hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the loaf will slide sideways onto the hot stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the loaf from the cookie sheet to the stone. If necessary, use a metal spatula to reposition the loaf. Push the middle rack back in place. Pull the lower rack out, pour the hot water into the broiler pan and push the lower rack back in place. Close the oven door immediately so the steam will envelop the oven.

6 Bake for 25 to 27 minutes or until the crust is dark brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of the loaf registers at least 190°F (90°C). Remove the loaf to cool on a wire rack.



Rolls

Makes 4 rolls

You can also make crusty artisan rolls with the master dough. They will look small before baking, but will at least double in size in the hot oven. They do not get as dark as the boule, baguette or loaf. These rolls are big enough to use for sandwiches — for burgers, grilled chicken or the filling of your choice.

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{4}$ recipe prepared Easy Artisan Dough (page 22), about the size of a softball

Unbleached all-purpose or bread flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 mL) cornmeal

2 cups (500 mL) hot water

EQUIPMENT

Three-sided cookie sheet, flexible cutting board or baker's peel

Broiler pan

Baking stone

METHOD

1 Place dough on a floured surface and dust very lightly with flour. Flour your hands. Working the dough as little as possible and adding flour as necessary, form the dough into an 8-inch (20 cm) cylinder. With a dough scraper, slice the cylinder into 2-inch (5 cm) pieces. Pinch the cut ends together. Lightly flour any sticky places on the dough. The dough should feel soft and smooth all over, but not at all sticky.

2 Sprinkle the cornmeal on the cookie sheet. Arrange the rolls in two horizontal lines, 4 inches (10 cm) apart, on the prepared cookie sheet. Cover with a tea towel and let rest at room temperature for 40 minutes.

3 About 30 minutes before baking, place the broiler pan on the lower shelf and the baking stone on the middle shelf of the oven. Preheat to 450°F (230°C).

4 Slash rolls with serrated knife. Using a serrated knife, make two cross-hatch slashes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) deep, in the top center of each roll, exposing the moist dough under the surface.

5 Slide rolls onto baking stone and add water to broiler pan. Carefully pull the middle rack of the oven out several inches. Hold the cookie sheet level with the rack so that the rolls will slide sideways onto the hot stone. With a quick forward jerk of your arms, slide the rolls from the cookie sheet to the stone. If a roll lands too close to another, use a metal spatula to reposition it. Push the middle rack back in place. Pull the lower rack out, pour the hot water into the broiler pan and push the lower rack back in place. Close the oven door immediately so the steam will envelop the oven.

6 Bake for 15 to 17 minutes or until the crust is lightly browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of a roll registers at least 190°F (90°C). Remove rolls to cool on a wire rack.

Pizza Blanca

Makes 1 pizza, to serve 4

This artisan-style pizza features simple toppings — olive oil, garlic and cheese — but can be customized with the toppings of your choice.

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{4}$ recipe prepared Easy Artisan Dough (page 22), about the size of a softball

Unbleached all-purpose or bread flour

2 tbsp (25 mL) olive oil

1 clove garlic, minced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) grated Asiago, Parmesan or Romano cheese

2 cups (500 mL) hot water

EQUIPMENT

Rolling pin

12-inch (30 cm) round perforated pizza pan

Broiler pan

Baking stone

METHOD

1 Place dough on a floured surface and dust very lightly with flour. Flour your hands and the rolling pin. Working the dough as little as possible and adding flour as necessary, roll out the dough into a 12-inch (30 cm) circle. Lightly flour any sticky places on the dough as you roll. The dough should feel gently taut and smooth all over, but not at all sticky.

2 Drape the dough over the rolling pin and transfer to the prepared pan. Pat into place. Cover with a tea towel and let rest at room temperature for 40 minutes.

3 About 30 minutes before baking, place the broiler pan on the lower shelf and the baking stone on the middle shelf of the oven. Preheat to 450°F (230°C).

4 In a small, bowl, combine olive oil and garlic. Brush onto the dough and sprinkle with cheese.

5 Place the pizza pan on the hot stone. Pull the lower rack out, pour the hot water into the broiler pan, and push the lower rack back in place. Close the oven door immediately so the steam will envelop the oven.

6 Bake for 15 minutes or until the edges of the crust and the cheese have both browned.

TIP

This type of thin-crust pizza is not meant for heavy sauce, cheese and meat toppings. Instead, use toppings that add bold flavor without bulk, such as thinly sliced onion, prosciutto or crisp-cooked pancetta, grated aged cheeses, chèvre, feta or blue cheese crumbles, olives, pesto, roasted red pepper, cooked Italian sausage crumbles, thinly sliced mushrooms, fresh herbs, fresh tomatoes, oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, thin asparagus stalks or arugula.

