

Pane (Bread)

INGREDIENTS

Biga:

1/2 Tsp. Active Dry Yeast
1 Cup Lukewarm water
2 Cups Strong white flour

Pane:

2 Cups Warm Water
1 Tsp. Active Dry Yeast
5-6 Cups strong white flour
2 Tsp. Salt



Preparation

Biga: Mix the yeast and water together, and then slowly start adding the flour, mixing well. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for up to 6 hours. Refrigerate overnight.

Preparation -Bread Place the water in a large bowl, sprinkle the yeast overtop and mix well. Let sit 10 minutes until bubbly. Add the biga, flour, and salt and stir with a wooden spoon (or mix with your hands) until everything is mixed. The dough will be fairly wet and sticky at this point. Cover and let stand in a warm spot for about 1 to 1 1/2 hours until doubled in volume. Punch down the dough, folding it over on itself two or three times, cover and let rise once more until doubled, about 1 hour. If you choose, you could refrigerate your dough at this time and leave it overnight to prepare the next day. Turn out your dough onto a floured baking sheet, and without overworking it too much shape into one large or two smaller round or oval shaped loaves, using as much extra flour as needed to keep it from sticking. Slash across the tops of the loaves with a serrated knife or razor just prior to baking. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. and place a casserole dish with boiling water on the lower oven rack. Bake your bread 30 minutes, turn the baking sheet around, and reduce the heat to 300 degrees and bake for another 30-45 minutes. At this point your bread should be golden brown and should sound hollow when you tap the bottom. Allow the bread to cool to room temperature and serve.