



## Honoré Farm and Mill

### 100% WHOLE WHEAT SOURDOUGH BREAD RECIPE

This simple whole wheat bread recipe makes a spectacular 100% whole-wheat loaf using sourdough starter and Honoré flour. Given that bread has just three ingredients, flour, water, and salt, the flour you use makes all the difference. I originally found Honoré’s sourdough bread recipe through a Mother Jones article which used a formula developed by Jonathan McDowell from Washington State University’s Bread Lab. I’ve adapted his recipe with techniques from the San Francisco Baking Institute, genius baker- Dave Miller, and Marin County’s own Craig Ponsford. If, as a home baker your question is “can I do this?” the answer is yes, absolutely! Bread baking requires practice and it might take a while to get your technique and rhythm down, but the reward is worth it. You’re not only producing one of life’s most elemental and ancient foods, but the practice of baking sourdough bread is inherently satisfying. Just wait until your family and friends start asking when you’re baking bread again.

**THE ENTIRE PROCESS REQUIRES THE BETTER PART OF A DAY, BUT LESS THAN AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME. THE REST OF THE TIME IS WAITING.**

#### EQUIPMENT

**4.5 quart 9.5” diameter Dutch Oven** - A heavy-duty pot with a tight-fitting lid will capture the steam from the dough to create the thick, blistered crusts one typically can only get from commercial baking ovens. Dutch ovens like Le Creuset with their enameled surface work especially well. However, a cast iron Dutch oven will also work. If you buy one, make sure it is well-seasoned so the bread does not stick. The size of this Dutch oven fits one loaf of Honoré sourdough bread. A larger Dutch oven will result in a flatter loaf.



**Digital Kitchen Scale** - A good digital kitchen scale is easy to buy and essential for bread baking. Make sure it has the “tare” or “zero out” function. I like this one from Escali because it’s so simple.



**Instant-Read Thermometer** - A regular meat thermometer does the job but takes time to get an accurate read. This means you'll be taking the bread out of the oven for longer periods of time. An instant read thermometer gives an accurate read in 2-3 seconds. Professionals use the Thermapen by thermoworks.com but any one will do.



**Stand Mixer with the Bread Hook Attachment** - In order to easily mix the dough, use a stand mixer with its bread hook attachment. However, you can also mix the dough by hand.



**Small Wooden Spoon, Straight or Half-Round Pastry Scraper (also called a Bench Knife), a small fine sieve, and a Food Storage Container or a 9x13 Pyrex Baking Dish** - Tools that will make your job so much easier.

**Proofing Basket** - A traditional banneton basket is optional, but it will both shape your loaf while it retards and make the gentle circular pattern on your loaf that gives it a professional look. A colander lined with a clean, floured linen towel will also work. Make sure your proofing basket is the same size, or slightly smaller, as your Dutch oven. It should also be the same shape as your Dutch oven.



## INGREDIENTS

### ONE LOAF

506 grams filtered water, room temp  
120 grams ripe sourdough levain  
290 grams Honoré Sonora whole wheat flour  
290 grams Honoré Red Fife or Bakers Blend whole wheat flour  
12 grams best quality sea salt  
  
½ C brown rice flour for dusting the proofing basket

### TWO LOAVES

1012 grams filtered water, room temp  
240 grams ripe sourdough levain  
580 grams Honoré Sonora whole wheat flour  
580 grams Honoré Red Fife or Bakers Blend whole wheat flour  
24 grams best quality sea salt  
  
1 C brown rice flour for dusting the proofing basket

## PROCESS

So much of baking bread at home has to do with technique. Professional bakers emphasize the importance of temperature. I mean all temperatures: dough temp, room temp, water temp! Translating this for the home baker is relatively straightforward with an instant-read thermometer. It's not essential to own an instant-read thermometer but it really helps. As a home baker you can achieve stunning bread without having to take a temperature read on all the elements, but knowing the dough temp and room temp can help with more predictable results.

## STEP 1: PREPARE AND TEST LEVAIN

Follow the **Honore Sourdough Starter Instructions** to make your levain. Levain that is ready to bake with takes a couple of days, so plan ahead. Once ripe, your levain will have expanded slightly; it should have a slightly sweet, fermented aroma, and have bubbles throughout. To test if your levain is ready, use the float test. Gently drop a small spoonful of levain into a glass of water. If it floats or sinks slowly, your levain is ready. See the **Honore Sourdough Starter Instructions** for more information on the maturation cycle of starter and levain.



## STEP 2: MIX THE DOUGH

For best results, mix the ingredients in the following order. First, place the bowl of your stand mixer on the digital scale, then tare your scale. Measure & add the filtered water to the bowl of your stand mixer. It's important to measure exactly to the gram. Tare your scale again and add the ripe levain, mixing gently with a spoon. Tare the scale again, then add the flour. Lastly, tare the scale once more and add the salt. Mix on low speed for 3 minutes, checking once during the mixing to make sure all the flour on the bottom of the bowl is incorporated.

## STEP 3: REST

After you're finished mixing, transfer the dough to an oiled (I use olive oil) food storage bin, glass baking dish or other non-reactive bowl. Check your ambient and dough temperature. The closer both are to 75° the better. If it is cooler than 75°, rest the dough a little longer. If it's warmer than 75°, rest for a shorter period of time. At 75°, the dough should rest for 25 minutes. Once you get the hang of this process, you'll learn how your dough responds at varying temperatures during different times of the year.

To help regulate temperature in the winter, you can also use your microwave. Boil a large glass measuring cup of water in the microwave, remove the water, and place your dough in the microwave and close the door. Or, if you're like me and you don't have a microwave, you can use your oven. Warm your oven slightly then turn it off, and place your bin of dough in the slightly warmed oven.

## STEP 4: STRETCH AND FOLD

After the first rest, it's time to give the dough structure by using the stretch and fold technique. Students in my classes call this "bread yoga!" With very wet hands, grasp the dough with both hands and pull the dough up as far as you can without tearing (see figure 1 below). Next, fold the stretched dough onto the remaining dough (see figure 2 below). Give the dough four (total) stretch and folds rotating the dough one-quarter turn for each stretch and fold. Use your rounded pastry scraper to help get the sticky dough off the sides of the dish and your hands. The stretch and fold technique replaces kneading. Do not stretch and fold more than four times, as the dough made with our freshly milled whole wheat flour does not need it.



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*

*Stretch and fold, then turn pan one quarter turn and stretch and fold again. Repeat until you made four folds.*

## STEP 5: REST

Let the dough rest for 25 minutes.

## STEP 6: STRETCH AND FOLD

With wet hands, stretch and fold the dough for the second time. Rotate the dough one-quarter turn for each stretch and fold, four total stretch and folds.



*Before stretch and folds*



*After: Notice how the process strengthens the dough and allows it to hold more shape*

## STEP 7: REST

Let the dough rest for 25 minutes.

## STEP 8: TURN OUT THE DOUGH

Generously flour the top of your dough while it's still in the food storage container or baking dish. Prepare a dry workspace on your counter, then sprinkle flour on an area slightly larger than the dough size. Use either Honoré Red Fife or Sonora flour for dusting. Tip the dough onto the floured counter so that the top of the dough, with the flour on it, will now be touching the counter. Sprinkle the top of the dough with flour again and flour your hands. The dough will be fairly loose and sticky.



*Tipping the dough out of the food storage container*



*Dust the top of the dough with flour*

## STEP 9: DIVIDE

If you're making two loaves, divide the dough in half using a bench knife.

## STEP 10: PRE-SHAPE

Pre-shaping the dough builds structure. Quickly shape the dough by loosely pulling the four imaginary corners of the dough up and over towards the middle of the dough. Flip the dough over so that it is seam-side down leaving a smooth, round top.



*Divide the dough*

## STEP 11: PREPARE YOUR PROOFING BASKET

Place a good amount of brown rice flour into a small hand-held sieve. Shake the rice flour to coat the bottom and sides of your proofing basket. You can also use your hands to sprinkle the rice flour but I find the sieve works better. If you do not have a proofing basket, you can line a round colander with a linen cloth and dust it generously with rice flour. A fine mesh cotton cloth will work, but linen is best. Make sure there is rice flour covering the sides and bottom, and also be sure that the colander is deep enough to really shore up the sides of the dough.



## STEP 12: SHAPING

This is the final step in shaping the dough. To do this, sprinkle flour on your work surface and hands again. With your hands, shape the dough as before by folding all four sides up, onto the dough. Flip the dough upside down so the seam is on the counter. Next, pull the dough across an unfloured area of the counter (the dough needs to grip the counter) to create surface tension on the top of the dough. You can use your hands alone or assist with a bench knife. Ideally, you will see the surface membrane of the dough stretch and become thinner. Don't worry if you can't do this in the beginning. Your bread will still turn out!



## STEP 13: FLOURING THE DOUGH

This step prevents the dough from sticking to the proofing basket. Chose a mixing bowl that is comfortably larger than your dough. Mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of whole wheat flour (Red Fife or Sonora) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown rice flour. Combine the flours in the bottom of the bowl. Very quickly pick up your dough and place it seam-side up in your dusting bowl. With your fingers, draw the flour up and around the dough to insure the sides of the dough are coated in flour. (I save this blend of brown rice and wheat flours-if any remains-in a labeled mason jar in my refrigerator for next time.)



## STEP 14: PROOFING

Proofing is the final step before baking, where the dough rises for the last time and takes the shape of the proofing basket. Gently lift the dough with both hands from the dusting bowl and place the dough, seam side up, into your floured proofing basket. Cover with a clean kitchen towel and let the dough rest for 1 ½-2 hours. To avoid over proofing, at 1 ½ hours, do the “finger test.” Lightly press your finger into the dough. If it springs back instantly, the dough is not ready. If it does not spring back at all, it’s gone too long. If it slowly rises up, it’s perfect. Don’t worry, if it over-ferments, just bake it anyway, and adjust for your kitchen’s temperature next time. It will still likely be the best loaf you have ever eaten. Note: Read step 16 as you will need to pre-heat your oven and Dutch oven for 1 hour before baking, which will be before your dough is finished proofing.

You can also choose to “retard” your bread instead of proofing at this point. Follow the instructions in Step 15.

## STEP 15: RETARDING (OPTIONAL)

Retard means to delay or hold back the progress of fermentation. Bakers do this for two reasons: it provides flexibility as to when you bake the bread and it enhances the flavor profile of the finished loaf. To retard the dough, once you place the dough in the proofing basket, cover it lightly with a linen cloth. (A 55° wine refrigerator is actually an ideal place to retard bread but a standard refrigerator works just fine.) Place the wrapped dough into your refrigerator.



*Retarding the dough overnight in the refrigerator*

I almost always let the dough retard overnight and bake it the next morning because it gives me flexibility as to when i want to bake and it enhances the flavor. You can also retard the dough for longer periods of time. A longer fermentation time results in a more sour flavor because the lactobacillus in the sourdough consumes the sugars in the flour, removing the sweetness over time. Keep the dough in the refrigerator until you are ready to bake.

## STEP 16: PREHEAT THE OVEN AND DUTCH OVEN

An hour before you want to bake, preheat the oven to 500° with the empty Dutch oven with lid inside, so that Dutch oven becomes blazing hot.

## STEP 17: PUT THE LOAF IN THE PAN

After an hour, remove the Dutch oven and carefully tip in the dough, seam side down.

## STEP 18: SCORE

Score or slash the dough across the top, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch into the dough's surface. Use a straight razor or a sharp-tipped serrated knife. Quickly cover with the lid to capture the steam and place in the oven. Scoring the dough's surface allows it to expand during baking.

## STEP 19: BAKE

Bake for 30 minutes with the lid on. Then, remove the lid of the Dutch oven and bake until the loaf is a deep brown- approximately 8- 10 more minutes. Insert an instant-read thermometer into the center of the loaf and check to see that it is 208°, the ideal internal temperature. If it's less than 208°, continue to bake for 2-3 more minutes. An under-baked loaf tends to have a soft crust.

## STEP 20: COOLING

Tip the loaf out of the Dutch oven and let cool on a metal cooling rack for at least one hour. 4-6 hours is optimal to let the loaf develop flavor. Once completely cool, store in a linen bread bag or in a heavy paper bag on your kitchen counter. Storing it in plastic will cause it to mold. Never store bread of any kind in the refrigerator; the cooler temperature draws out the moisture more rapidly than on the counter, causing the bread to become stale more quickly. You'll be surprised how long the whole wheat loaf stays fresh because of the gorgeous healthy fats which are naturally part of freshly milled whole wheat flour. The acidity in the sourdough also naturally preserves the freshness. The bread should last at least a week, if you don't eat it first! After several days on the counter, one can sprinkle some water on a slice of bread and then toast it. This is called "refreshing" and the bread will taste like it just came out of the oven. You can also slice the loaf when cool and freeze part of the loaf. it can be frozen as one piece or presliced. If you slice & freeze it, make sure to separate the pieces with a bit of parchment paper.

## NOTES

Making sourdough bread has helped bring a rhythm to my life, and you will find that making bread becomes a way to both care for those at your table and to center yourself. If you bake two loaves, you will derive tremendous joy in giving one loaf away.



*Tipping the dough into the Dutch oven*



*Scoring the dough*



The health benefits of sourdough bread are multifold. Here are some of the most important:

- Sourdough fermentation breaks down the phytic acid in the dough, freeing up the nutrients. Without sourdough, many nutrients are not bioavailable. So, bread baked with commercial yeast is less nutritious than bread baked with sourdough.
- Sourdough fermentation almost completely breaks down wheat gluten, making the bread easy to digest and beneficial for the gut.
- Sourdough bread has a much lower glycemic index than other bread, allowing you to save your sugar for a delicious berry tart or chocolate chip cookie!
- Sourdough bread has a longer shelf life. Mine usually lasts a week stored in a thick linen bread bag on the counter.

Due to the tremendous root structure and regenerative organic farming practices, using Honoré flour from heritage grains in your bread contributes to healing the water, soil, air and people in our communities. And, it tastes amazing!

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
<b>AFTER DINNER`</b>	<b>THE NEXT MORNING</b>	
Make levain.	Weigh ingredients, mix, rest, stretch + fold, rest, stretch + fold, rest, shape + retard in refrigerator.  Total time 1.5 - 2 hours, but only about 30 minutes of your time spread out through the process.	Place Dutch Oven in your oven and pre-heat to 500° for one hour. Bake.