

Ferman's Featherstone Farm French Bread

In a large bowl, combine:

1 ½ c. course ground rye flour

1 ½ c. steel cut oats

1 ½ c. unbleached white flour

1 tsp. active dry yeast

1- 12 ounce beer plus 12 ounces water (or substitute with 3 c. water)

Mix thoroughly, cover and let stand for 24+ hours (see note below)

Stir down the sponge. Add to it:

1 c. warm (not hot) water

1 heaping Tbsp. active dry yeast

1 heaping Tbsp. salt

Stir thoroughly

Stir in:

5 c. unbleached white flour

Turn out onto floured countertop. Knead dough for a minimum of 10 minutes, incorporating up to 1 additional cup of flour during the process. Do NOT add too much flour or bread will be dry.

Clean the mixing bowl. Oil the inside of bowl and place the bread dough in bowl. Cover and let rise until double.

Punch down dough. Divide into 4 or 6 equal size balls. Shape into 4 or 6 loaves. Place on parchment lined or generously oiled Featherstone Pottery French bread bakers (or traditional French bread pans). Cover with a cotton kitchen towel. Let rise until doubled or to desired height.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees for 30 minutes. Turn down to 400 degrees and bake for 20 minutes (6 loaf size) or 25 minutes (4 loaf size).

Notes regarding the “yeasty” taste of the bread:

The taste is affected by the length of time that you let the initial sponge sit (warmer air temps will cause the sponge to process faster). Twenty four hours is a reliable amount of time. If you do not care for such a “yeasty” taste, you may also reduce the amount of yeast added during the second phase. The rise may take a bit longer but you will achieve the same delicious results. Enjoy!

Featherstone Pottery

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