

English Cider 'n' Apple Bread

adapted from Jeffrey Hamelman's Normandy Apple Bread in Bread A Baker's Book of Techniques and Recipes



Makes 1 large loaf

To make a stiff levain

- * 15 g mature starter
- * 80 g strong white bread flour
- * 48 g water

Mix to a firm dough, cover and leave for 12 hours

For the final dough

- * 300 g strong white flour
- * 60 g very strong (high gluten) white flour
- * 50 g swiss dark flour (a fine wholewheat from Shipton Mill)
- * 10 g fine sea salt
- * 1/2 tsp active instant yeast (optional – your rising times will be longer if you don't use this)

Mix the three flours, salt and yeast (if using) together well in a bowl

Prepare the liquid part of the mixture by mixing the following together

- * 200 g English Sheppy cider (alcoholic) warmed in a pan and allowed to cool to lukewarm temperature and mixed with
- * 90 g water (aiming for an overall temperature of about 22 C)
- * 143 g levain – all the above (assuming you have some starter kept elsewhere for your next bake!)

When the dough is well mixed and you are happy with its consistency and gluten development add

* 50 g of dried apple pieces – I kneaded these in by hand after the dough had rested for about 15 minutes.

Please mix and knead the dough in a way that makes you happy!

The dough bulk proved for two hours at 22 – 24 C in my boiler cupboard, with one fold after one hour.

I made one loaf which went in a banneton dusted with swiss dark flour and then left till it had risen by half (not the same thing as doubling!) which was another 2 hours approx.

I scored a pattern into the top and baked on a kiln shelf at 235 ° C for twenty minutes, after which I reduced the temperature to 200 ° C for another 30 minutes . I used a small metal tray on the rack below the shelf as my steamer, adding boiling water to it immediately after loading the bread in the oven.

If you make this, please rely on your own knowledge of your oven for temperatures and times just using mine as a guide. This was a biggish loaf and so I gave it a full bake for 50 minutes. The top goes quite dark due to the sugars from the apple cider and the dried apples.

Do use apple juice instead of cider and fine wholemeal/wholewheat or other flours to replace the Swiss Dark flour.

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