



ANSON MILLS

Rich Sandwich Bread

Yield

One 2½-pound loaf

Time

About 30 minutes to make the dough, two resting periods totaling about 2 hours, and about 30 minutes to bake

Baking Notes

The gluten window we mention in the body of the recipe signals the strength and extensibility of the dough. You can test this by pulling up a bit of dough between the thumb and forefinger of each hand and stretching it. When the dough is properly kneaded it will stretch into a membrane thin enough to be transparent. That is the gluten window.

Deep, straight-sided loaf pans are called Pullman pans, and they make gorgeous sandwich loaves. Many of them come with a lid, but we achieved better browning and no less symmetry in our loaves when we left the lid off. We purchased our pan from King Arthur Flour.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a digital kitchen scale, a small saucepan, an instant-read thermometer, a small bowl, a whisk, a large mixing bowl if you choose to knead the dough by hand, a stand mixer with a dough hook attachment if you choose *not* to knead the dough by hand, a wooden spoon, a 13 by 4 by 4-inch Pullman loaf pan (lid not needed), a pizza stone, and a wire cooling rack.

Ingredients

1¾ cups milk, plus additional for brushing the loaf
4 ounces (8 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter, plus additional for the loaf pan
2 teaspoons sugar
1½ teaspoons fine sea salt
1 large egg, beaten
2 teaspoons instant yeast
1¼ pounds (about 5 cups) Anson Mills French Mediterranean White Bread Flour, cold from the freezer
Vegetable oil spray

Directions

1. Combine the milk, butter, sugar, and salt in a small saucepan and heat until the butter begins to melt and the liquid registers about 135 degrees on an instant-read thermometer. Remove from the heat and stir to dissolve the remaining butter. Let cool to the temperature of a hot bath, 95 to 100 degrees. Meanwhile, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk well. Drizzle about ½ cup of the warm milk mixture into the egg and whisk to combine, then whisk the egg mixture back into the milk. Sprinkle the yeast over the surface of the liquid, let it soften for a minute, and then stir to dissolve the yeast. (It will not dissolve completely—this does not matter.)

2. *To make the dough by hand:* Turn the flour into a large mixing bowl. Pour the liquid ingredients into the flour and mix with a wooden spoon to form a shaggy dough. Scrape the dough onto the countertop. Knead without additional flour until the dough is shiny, strong, and extensible enough to be stretched gently between the fingers into a translucent gluten window (see Baking Notes), about 20 minutes. Return the dough to the mixing bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let rise at room temperature until it doubles in size and looks spongy and pocked, about 1 hour.

To make the dough in a stand mixer: Turn the flour into the bowl of a stand mixer. Pour the liquid ingredients into the flour and mix with a wooden spoon to form a shaggy dough. Attach the bowl to the mixer and fit it with the dough hook attachment. Knead on low speed until the dough is shiny, strong, and extensible enough to be stretched gently between the fingers into a translucent gluten window (see Baking Notes), about 15 minutes. Remove the bowl from the mixer, cover with plastic wrap, and let the dough rise at room temperature until it doubles in size and looks spongy and pocked, about 1 hour.

3. Brush a 13 by 4 by 4-inch Pullman loaf pan with butter and set it aside. Turn the dough onto an unfloured work surface and stretch it gently into a rectangle just shy of the length of the pan and about 1½ inches thick. Roll it up from one long end, pressing along the seam that forms as you roll. Press along the final seam to seal and turn the ends of the loaf in. Roll the loaf seam side down and coax the dough into a uniformly thick cylinder. Place the dough in the prepared pan—it should make contact with the pan on both ends. Spray a sheet of plastic wrap with vegetable oil spray and place it greased side down over the top of the pan. Let the dough rise until it is within ½ inch of the top of the pan, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

4. While the bread is rising, adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position, set a pizza stone on the rack, and heat the oven to 450 degrees. When the dough has risen to within ½ inch of the top of the pan, brush it with milk and put the loaf pan on the hot pizza stone. Reduce the oven temperature to 375 degrees and bake until the bread is deep golden brown and registers 190 to 200 degrees on an instant-read thermometer, about 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool in the pan for 5 minutes. Invert the pan to unmold the loaf. Let cool completely on a wire rack.