

BACK TO BASICS

Old-World European bakers always mixed their bread dough by hand. Of course, they had no electricity or mechanical mixers to do it for them. To alleviate the backbreaking chore of kneading large, heavy batches, they would mix the dough, then allow it to rest for long periods. During this rest, the dough would slowly develop the strength necessary for the baker to shape and bake the loaves.

Though most bakers didn't know it, another natural process was taking place during that rest. The dough was fermenting. The longer it sat, the more fermentation activity took place, which contributed to the robust flavor, texture and aroma of the finished loaves.

With modern technology came automated equipment—a change that dramatically reduced the time and physical demands of breadmaking. Bakers discovered they could shorten long rest times if they mixed the dough longer. That meant they could produce more loaves in fewer hours, allowing them to sleep longer at night, spend more time with family and generally lead a more comfortable life. But at the same time, they noticed that the machine-mixed breads lacked the same eating quality. The loaves were bland and flavorless—the result of eliminating the long fermentation step with all the benefits it gave to the bread.

A new generation of bakers is reviving Old World European techniques to create breads crafted with top quality as the first priority. We're proud to take the time and care to bring you delicious, flavorful breads with thick, crackly crusts and moist, chewy interiors. We hope you enjoy the difference!

STORING YOUR BREAD

Our artisan breads are baked fresh every day. Because they contain no artificial chemicals or preservatives, they are best enjoyed within a day or two after purchase.

To maintain the taste, texture and crust of your bread, store it in an old-fashioned breadbox, or keep it in a paper bag with the top closed. Never store fresh artisan bread in plastic bags, because the plastic will actually accelerate staling, causing your bread's flavor and crust to deteriorate more quickly.

You should, however, wrap your breads carefully in plastic (or aluminum foil) if you plan to store them in your freezer. Artisan breads freeze well for up to a month. Slice the bread before freezing it so you can remove only what you need without thawing the entire loaf.

To refresh a loaf that has been frozen, allow it sit at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours until fully thawed. Heat it on a baking stone in a hot, 400°F oven for about four minutes. Then enjoy!