Bread
magazine

ISSUE **SIXTEEN**

Issue 16 (2/2015)
ISSN: 2341-7730

https://bread-magazine.com/
http://breadfeed.tumblr.com/
https://facebook.com/interested.bread/
contact@insanelyinterested.com


TRAIL
adventure equipment
WALKER 20

CONTENTS

WELCOME

The photo on this issue's cover (and the one above) presents one of my favorite moments from this summer so far. I shot it at my parents' summer cottage on midsummer night as my mom and dad, all three of my brothers and their families, as well as two of my grandparents were gathered to enjoy the cold[1] and bright summer night together.

The midsummer bonfire was down to embers, well past its fierce beginnings but still full of energy. We chatted. We threw small pieces of wood into the fire. We took lots of photos.

And we baked bread.

Yes. I'm always mixing bread making into the lives of my family members…

A year ago, I experimented with baking bread in a cast iron pot stowed in the bonfire (the bread got baked, but it was also pretty burned from the top and a little doughy from the bottom). This year, I wanted to involve everyone—especially the children—in the bread making.

I had just chatted with Emmanuel Hadjiandreou, a great baker and author you'll meet in this issue, about baking bread with children and decided to see if I could inspire the group to have some fun around bread.

1 By now, through all of these "welcome" articles, I'm sure I've convinced you that Finland is a cool place indeed!

Applying Emmanuel's tips, I chose a bread that required no preparation from anyone but me and provided quick gratification. And a change to play with fire! Stick bread.

We collected fresh sticks from the forest, rolled the dough around them, and baked the bread on the bonfire. Some of the breads were charred black. Others were doughy from the inside. My mom wouldn't stop eating the dough straight from the bowl. Everyone had a great time.

And the next day, the children asked me if we could do this again.

In her baker profile in this issue, Clare Jackson, the self-taught baker at The Bread Kiln wrote something that got me thinking: "[I] started to value my own judgment and see my lack of 'le tradition' and the fact that I wasn't 'time served' as a freedom of sorts: I could mix and score and bake from my bones and background with a respect for, but without the shackles of, convention."

She found that she could be a good baker *because* she was self-taught, not despite it.

The long tradition of bread making is something worth celebrating. But tradition in itself isn't what it's all about. All those little quirks and personal touched that industrial—and purist—bakers would see as signs of lack of discipline are not mistakes, they are what make a loaf of bread unique and worth celebrating. They are what give hand made bread its meaning: they allow a piece of you show in your bread.

When our little group gathered around the fire to play with dough (and the fire), we experienced some of this idea in action: every bread told a little story about the person who made it. My brother, Jetro, always meticulous in his cooking, kept rotating his stick carefully for the entire bake, leading to a light brown, well cooked stick bread. My son Altti was quite the opposite: he ate his bread well before it was even cooked from the inside!

Of course, this doesn't mean you shouldn't practice and aim high. As craftsmen and craftswomen, practicing and trying to learn and improve every day is a part of who we are. Clare has worked hard, baking bread after bread, practicing, analyzing others' breads. Because of all this work, combined with her personal touch, she bakes lovely breads today.

What this thought does mean, however, is that you are allowed to get creative. It means you can have fun with your bread. And most importantly, it means you don't need to let anyone else decide how you define great bread.

Great bread comes in all kinds of shapes and styles. And the world is so much richer for it.

❊ ❊

Clare's baker profile isn't the only inspiring bread making story in this new issue of Bread Magazine. We also peek into our long-time contributor Raluca Micu's brand new bakery and the journey of sweat, paint, beautiful bread, and not all that much sleep leading to it. Presian Petrov, a young baker from Bulgaria talks about following his passion for bread in a country that has largely lost its bread making tradition. Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo shares her experiences from organizing a baking retreat in the beautiful Southern Sweden, together with Beesham Soogrim.

We'll also our hands in the dough and bake bread together. First, with Emmanuel Hadjiandreou (in an article that is very special to me as my son Oiva helped me interview Emmanuel) we'll explore baking with children. We'll also give baguettes a go, looking for ways to best get started with the iconic French bread. Sandwich breads also get some well deserved attention.

Happy baking!

Jarkko

BREAD ON A STICK

When making this bread, the dough is almost secondary: the experience of baking the bread around the fire is what matters.

So, feel free to use any kind of yeasted bread dough you like. I went with a sweet version based on the Finnish sweet bun, *pulla*, with milk, sugar, an egg and some butter. That said, there's nothing wrong with using just flour, water, yeast and salt. To account for the missing second fermentation, I added a little more yeast than I normally would.

Ingredients	Quantity	Baker's %
All-purpose flour	500 g	100%
(Full fat) milk	290 g	58%
Egg (shelled weight)	70 g	14%
Caster sugar	90 g	18%
Salt	10 g	2%
Active dry yeast	11 g	2.2%
Butter (at room temperature)	20 g	4%

1. In a bowl, mix all ingredients except the butter until evenly mixed.
2. Take the dough out of the bowl, then work it on the table for five minutes, or until the dough starts to become smooth and elastic.
3. Add the butter in small pieces, then knead the dough for another five minutes.
4. Put the dough back into its bowl, cover, and leave to rest until about doubled in size (45 minutes to an hour, depending on temperature).
5. While the dough is resting, gather your group of bakers and light the fire. Use the waiting time to tell a story or share a few good laughs.
6. When the dough (and the fire) is ready, take a piece of dough (roughly 100 grams, but baking outdoors, it's best to just eye-ball it) and gently shape it into a baton, about the width of your index finger.
7. Starting from the tip of the stick, roll your dough around it. Bend the ends of the dough under themselves to lock the bread and keep the it from falling from the stick as it is being baked.
8. Bake the bread. Be careful not to bring it too close to the fire or else it'll burn… Unless you like a burned bun, that is.

Enjoy the bread straight from the stick, with some jam if you like.


Peace Hill
with ME

HONEST BREAD FROM HOLMA

Words: BARBARA 'ELISI' CARACCIOLO
Photos: KÅRE SJÖHOLM,
BARBARA 'ELISI' CARACCIOLO,
and BEESHAM SOOGRIM

It all started with a post on my Facebook wall: I wrote that I intended to take a baking class with a renowned Swedish baker.

"Don't waste your money!", was the surprising comment from my talented bread pal Beesham Soogrim, "He does not bake with sourdough only, you would not like it."

Alright, I said, that is kind of true: I have come to be a sourdough *bread head*, and natural fermentation techniques are what I am really after. Other bread pals got on board and started contributing to the thread. Suddenly, the grand idea of getting together and having our own baking class popped up.

Master baker *Manfred Enoksson* stepped in, offering to lead the class and share his deep knowledge of natural fermentation and hand-crafted bread baking. Manfred had indeed been the main inspiration and guide to Beesham, a first class vegetarian chef working in Holma, an organic farm in Southern Sweden.

So it went quite smoothly: Beesham would take care of all the logistics, having the possibility to host the workshop in the spacious Holma kitchen and would help Manfred with the tutoring, while I would spread the word.

When the workshop was announced, we were quite nervous: Would we manage to get enough people to Southern Sweden for a sourdough baking class? But how could we have doubted it! The course was fully booked in just a few hours, and so the first *Holma International Workshop in Handcrafted Naturally Leavened Bread* happened.

The workshop gathered bread heads from all over the world, creating a very nice mix of cultures with a common passion: bread leavened with sourdough.

A RETREAT FOR BAKERS

The magic was repeated last fall when we announced the upcoming dates for a second Holma International Workshop. This time I helped Beesham with the teaching, as Beesham was now feeling ready to spread his wings without his master—even if Manfred remains a great friend and main reference.

Again, passionate bread bakers from different countries gathered in Southern Sweden. Most of them were skilled home bakers, but there was also a young professional baker in training, and a chef. All with the same wild interest in wild yeast.

And they were in just about the perfect place for it.

The workshop was special for me also in another way: it was the first time I actually baked with others. My passion has developed in the solitude of my own kitchen—as is the case for most self-made home bakers. Being with like-minded people sharing the same soulful approach to bread and natural fermentation was incredible.

The way Holma is structured enables the participants and the teachers to stay at the farm, sharing meals and late chats about bread in the evenings. The setting is extremely bucolic. The beautiful Swedish countryside helps to get into this spiritual retreat mood, which I believe is part of the charm of these workshops—and possibly one of the reasons why all of the available spots get sold out in the space of two hours.

"My passion has developed in the solitude of my own kitchen—as is the case for most self-made home bakers. Being with like-minded people sharing the same soulful approach to bread and natural fermentation was incredible."


Beesham S.

"This coming August, the happy marriage between baking and scientific lectures will be repeated, and again, after spending two days with my hands in the dough, I will have the chance to express the latest results of my search into heritage grains. Could I possibly ask for more?"

GUARDIANS OF A HERITAGE

Holma has also another point of attraction for those interested in *real* bread: the farm is connected to the local heritage wheat movement.

This connection started ten years ago, Beesham told me, when Arne Sjöström, the head of Holma Stiftelsen, started collaborating with Hans Larsson, the founder of Allkorn, an association devoted to the preservation of local heritage grains and biodiversity. Arne started to grow ancient varieties of wheat such as *Ölandsvete*, an old variety that Hans has—thanks to a lifetime of research and field work—made known and available to Scandinavian farmers.

So at Holma, Beesham had the good luck of having the best masters: Manfred, the head baker of Saltå Kvarn, the major organic grains distributor and mill in Sweden, from whom he learned the way to natural fermentation, and Hans, who introduced him to heritage wheat and organic farming. To finish this golden wheat circle, Hans also introduced Beesham to Bengt-Göran Karlsson, responsible of the Skåne Region financed project Our Beloved Bread (Vårt Älskade Bröd) that has the main goal of spreading the interest for baking with organic, wholegrain, and heritage flours.

The collaboration is ongoing and last March, after our intensive two-day workshop, in which I got to—happily but rather clumsily—teach some of my Italian breads, we had a morning organized by Our Beloved Bread, all dedicated to Heritage Grains and Health. I was pleased to be one of the speakers, together with Hans Larsson and our overseas bread pal and heritage grains advocate Don Sadowsky.

This coming August, the happy marriage between baking and scientific lectures will be repeated, and again, after spending two days with my hands in the dough, I will have the chance to express the latest results of my search into heritage grains.

Could I possibly ask for more?

HOLMA SCHEDULE

FRIDAY EVENING

Mixing the dough for the Danish
First feed of the levain for Saturday

SATURDAY

6:00 Second feed for the levain
7:45 Breakfast
8:15 Theory
9:00 Mixing dough (Baguette)
9:30 First series of folds (Danish)
10:00 Mixing dough (Country Loaf)
10:15 Second fold (Danish)
10:30-11:00 Grinding rye and heritage wheat
11:00 Third fold (Danish)
11:30 Mixing dough (rye and heritage wheat)
12:00-13:00 Shaping Country Loaf and Danish
13:00 Lunch
14:30 Shaping Baguettes
15:00 Baking Danish
15:30 Fika
16:30 Mixing dough (Focaccia)
19:00 Dinner
20:00 Folk music
21:30 Mixing pizza dough
22:00 Mixing dough (Zoccoletti)
22:15 Stiff and liquid levain builds for Sunday

SUNDAY

6:30 Pre-shaping Zoccoletti
7:40 Baking Zoccoletti
8:15 Breakfast
9:00 Autolyse for Ciabatta
9:15 Autolyse for Pane Nero Castelvetrano
9:30-11:00 Scoring techniques and baking
11:00 Mixing dough (Ciabatta)
11:20 Mixing dough (Pane Nero)
11:50 Shaping Pane Nero Castelvetrano
12:30 Pizza dough to room temperature
12:30 Lunch
14:00 Explanations and questions
14:45 Shaping Ciabatta
15:00 Baking Pane Nero di Castelvetrano
15:00-16:00 Walk in the botanic garden
16:15 Baking Ciabatta
16:30 Shaping pizza dough
17:00-18:00 Seminar on heritage grains
20:00 Pizza making (and eating)

QUESTIONS FOR A HERITAGE WHEAT BAKER

People working with wholesome bread and flours are wonderful. I feel blessed to have had the chance to get to know so many inspired and inspiring folks: professional bakers promoting heritage wheat, our Beesham Soogrim through his local and international workshops, and Don Guerra in Arizona with his to-die-for heritage wheat based community baked bread.

As both Don and Beesham work with natural fermentation, I asked Beesham why is it so relevant to use wild yeast rather than commercial yeast, and why not to mix the two.

Beesham's answer was extremely simple and right on target, just like with about everything he says: "It's just fascination with the process, plus this is how people have been baking for thousands of years."

"For me, it is really a challenge, as very few are doing pure and clean baking without commercial yeast, even when baking pastries, like cinnamon and saffron buns, or filled and bi-color croissant and Danish, all with natural fermentation. And it comes out that the end result is even better and it keeps its freshness for days, while bread and pastries baked with commercial yeast get stale quickly."

"We all know it is a long process and requires planning. One needs to have patience, rather than expecting a bread ready in one and a half hours from start to finish (as the one we can make with commercial yeast)."

To the question of where he takes his inspiration from, Beesham replied: "I develop new formulas all the time, and with time I have elaborated my own methods, which are of course inspired by all the bakers I admire."

But Beesham always manages to make his breads personal, by constantly finding new, creative ways to produce even the same outcome.

"It's just fascination with the process, plus this is how people have been baking for thousands of years."


CAPRIO
BIO IDEA
OLIO D'OLIVA

Then I inquired about different sourdough cultures, as one of the strong points of Beesham's workshops is that he freely gives away samples of his super powerful starters to the attendees.

He told me: "I always have a couple of sourdough starters at hand, plus wild yeast waters from dry fruits. The last sourdough culture I have been working with is from Germany, a 90-year-old rye starter. Plus I have a wheat starter, and the original German rye culture Manfred game me the first time I met him ten years ago and with which I have been baking ever since."

"I use different starters for different breads, because it gives a different character and flavor to the final product." Beesham added.

"For instance, I want a rye bread to be sour as it supposed to be, and a baguette or a pastry bun to have a milder tang".

My final question was what it is that Beesham aims to achieve with his workshops.

"My goal is to show and teach people how one can bake good bread at home in a normal oven with the equipment one has. I also care for people to learn to use organic flours and go the natural way with fermentation", he said.

I would add that the techniques Beesham teaches go beyond "good". His breads are outstanding, and he gives freely of what he learned mostly on his own, with constant application and true intelligence.

Beesham is planning to write a book in the future, with his tips on how to make beautiful breads with creative scoring and stencil techniques, and his precious sourdough pastries formulas.

And I am writing a book on… guess what? Heritage wheat baking. This way Holma's experience will not be confined to the few that manage to make it to our classes.

So, see you around. Either in Sweden or somewhere else. We will all keep on baking and sharing what we learn on the way.

"My goal is to show and teach people how one can bake good bread at home in a normal oven with the equipment one has. I also care for people to learn to use organic flours and go the natural way with fermentation"

– Beesham Soogrim

A FEW PERSONAL NOTES ON GLUTEN FREE AND HERITAGE WHEAT BAKING

What would you do if, just after managing to become a "dough wizard", you realized that your body has unpleasant reactions to wheat? Would you give up baking?

The recommendation for gluten intolerance—even of the non-celiac type—is to stay away from wheat. And this is what I did, for a while, when I found out I had symptoms of gluten intolerance but was not affected by celiac disease.

I stopped eating the bread I was still baking for my family and avoided every other source of gluten. My symptoms stopped.

However, while I could easily eliminate pasta, cookies, and anything else wheat-based from my diet, living without eating bread was simply impossible. Growing up in a quarter of Rome in the 70s, we used to have freshly baked bread with every meal and so, bread to me was the real king of the table (and my favorite food).

So I started to bake gluten-free bread, using a kefir-derived sourdough culture and different grains naturally free of gluten, such as sorghum, quinoa, rice and corn. With time, I tried also teff, tapioca and buckwheat.

It was all quite exciting.

Many seemed interested in my experiments but I wasn't quite satisfied; although the

loaves I baked looked good from the outside, their taste and consistency were not at all what I tend to associate with bread.

The tough truth is that a dough made with 100% gluten-free flours would never really rise. I needed to use additives in order to make the loaves spring. This is because that almost magical miracle of leavened bread never happens in the absence of gluten proteins.

The best gluten for leavening is obviously that contained in common wheat (*triticum aestivum*), which is the reason why this cereal has been given so much importance in the last 2,000 years or so.

If we think of it, selection of wheat varieties has been mostly driven by the search for the perfect loaf: the better the baking properties, the higher the chances for a specific variety to be selected for the next round of cultivation.

Why? Well, as Michael Pollan nicely puts it in his latest book Cooked, a properly risen loaf not only contains carbs that are already transformed in more easy to digest forms, but is also the only type of loaf that can properly bake.

The most recent research on non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS) shows that people reporting subjective sensitivity to wheat and gluten do show a significant increased production of CXCL10 (inflammatory marker) in their intestines, as compared to controls, after the ingestion of wheat.

In the same study it was shown that the inflammatory response was significantly lower when the ingested wheat was a heritage/ancient variety. The wheat varieties which were compared were: Manitoba and Claudio (two common modern varieties) versus Khorasan and Senatore Cappelli (two ancient/heritage varieties). The Senatore Cappelli, a heritage Italian durum wheat, produced the smallest inflammatory response.

Interestingly, also the controls had an increased inflammatory response after the ingestion of wheat, but NCGS had significantly higher levels of it. As in NCGS, in the controls the inflammatory response was lower after ingestion of heritage/ancient wheat as compared to the ingestion of modern dwarf wheat, suggesting that the health benefits of heritage wheat varieties are not limited to people with reported symptoms of gluten sensitivity.

(Valerii et al. Response of peripheral blood mononucleated cells from non-celiac gluten sensitive patients to various cereals sources. Food Chemistry 2015; 176: 167-174).

This happens because a well-developed gluten structure allows the gases produced during the fermentation to "stay" inside the loaf. And when the loaf is placed in a hot oven, steam derived from the evaporation of the water contained in the dough will be able to diffuse into those air pockets. The steam gets very, very hot and cooks the bread around those steamy holes faster and—well—better. Cooked cereals are more digestible than raw ones, on this we may all agree.

So that's it, really. In the absence of gluten, my loaves made with alternative flours were almost never properly cooked in their inner cores. Moreover, the additives used to make the bread rise were conferring to them either an unpleasant aftertaste or a gummy consistency. Plus after baking, the loaves tended to lose their freshness extremely quickly.

I started to look into further alternatives.

Some people—researchers and laymen alike—were saying that one possible reason for the emerging phenomenon of non-celiac gluten intolerance were genetic modifications to wheat. May that have been true?

I already knew that spelt, rye and barley were no good for me. Not the modern varieties I could easily have access to, at least. I could eat einkorn, but have you ever tried to bake a 100% einkorn loaf? I did, and the resulting bread was hard to chew on.

So, I went on trying the rare non-modified varieties of common wheat still around. But it was not easy to get hold of them.

An additional problem consisted of the difficulty to find sifted flours, as most heritage wheat is sold unsifted or as whole wheat berries. Nothing wrong with whole wheat, but my not that efficient stomach has nowadays problems not only with modern varieties of gluten but also with wheat bran in general.

In addition to this, many heritage wheat varieties have generally poorer baking properties compared to modern ones. To go for a 100% heritage wheat bread and at the same time for 100% whole wheat will most certainly affect dough development and ultimately reduce digestibility.

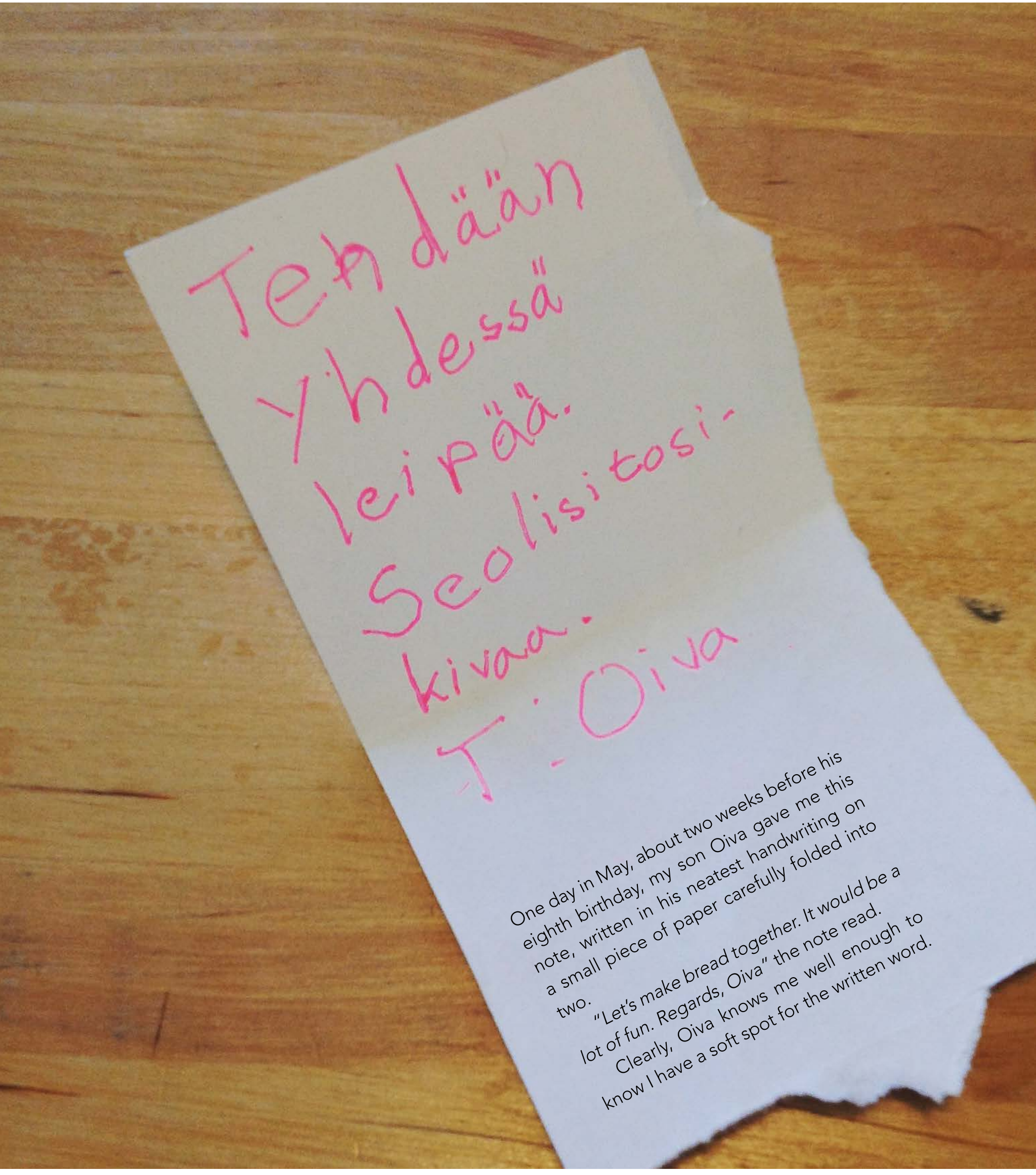
To make a long story short, I have managed to find a few refined heritage wheat varieties I seem to have generally no reaction to and that give me a well risen (and therefore properly cooked) bread.

In Sweden, Ölandsvete is available partly sifted, in Italy I could get hold of tasty Sicilian hard-wheat varieties that Filippo Drago makes now available also in a refined version—after I explained to him the rationale for doing so.

In the US, I have found a flour that is highly digestible and awesome to bake with, refined Turkey Red, which I could get here in Sweden thanks to the extremely approachable millers Marty and Darrold.

Make sure to search for your closest heritage wheat seller and try it. New old seeds are re-planted every year.

— Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo is an Italian bread lover living in Sweden. In her daily life, she is a scientist and in her spare time she bakes, eats, and writes about bread at Bread & Companatico and for the Italian Bread Baker's Guild Journal "L'Arte Bianca."



One day in May, about two weeks before his eighth birthday, my son Oiva gave me this note, written in his neatest handwriting on a small piece of paper carefully folded into two.

"Let's make bread together. It would be a lot of fun. Regards, Oiva" the note read. Clearly, Oiva knows me well enough to know I have a soft spot for the written word.

MAKING BREAD WITH CHILDREN

Words: JARKKO LAINE

Photos: JARKKO LAINE, THE SCHOOL OF ARTISAN FOOD

And so, just a few minutes later, I had set my work aside and we were leafing through the pages of Emmanuel Hadjiandreou's family-oriented bread making book, Making Bread Together, looking for a recipe to try out.

My boys, Oiva and Altti, have been surrounded with bread since an early age and we've tried a bunch of different recipes together with them, but ever since I received the book from Emmanuel last year, it's become our go-to resource when it's time to bake bread with the boys. Full of photographs and creative yet approachable bread recipes—"I won't say child friendly recipes, but just fun recipes you can do together", Emmanuel explains—the book inspires them to try new things in their bread making.

Even if they still mostly enjoy the basic soft sandwich loaf with lots of butter in it!

I had been wanting to explore baking bread with children in this magazine for a long time, and so, talking to Emmanuel felt like a natural match.

After a period of planning and making our schedules meet, one spring morning, Emmanuel and I sat down for a Skype call.

"What you find is when you teach, you're only making one loaf, one loaf, one loaf, and as soon as you go to the bakery and all of a sudden you have to do ten or twenty, your hands are not used to working with so much dough."

With Emmanuel's wife Lisa and son Noah getting ready for work and school in the background, we chatted about baking bread as a family, bread making in general, and his bread making books.

Originally from South Africa, Emmanuel learned his craft at a German-style bakery in Cape Town. Then, he traveled Greece and Germany to learn more about bread making and its different techniques before settling in the U.K., where he has now been living for over fifteen years, baking bread and watching the bread revolution grow from only a handful of good bakeries into a big trend—a trend he played a part in as well.

After all, before jumping to teaching full time, the award-winning baker spent years baking bread for Flour Power City in London, Gordon Ramsay, the Savoy, Daylesford in Oxfordshire, and finally Judges Bakery in Hastings, the town he and his family call home today.

Having left the day-to-day bakery work behind, Emmanuel now makes his living teaching artisan bread courses at various cookery schools such as The School of Artisan Food in Nottinghamshire, Bake with Maria in London, and as a new addition at Bread Ahead, a bakery and baking school in London created by his friends from the Flour Power City times.

But you can't keep a curious baker from his passion for experimenting and learning more about bread making: In his "free time", Emmanuel is again baking bread for sale, in a small micro-baking venture he started with a local pub in Hastings—just for fun, and to balance the writing of his third book with some hands-on work, he says.

"What you find is when you teach, you're only making one loaf, one loaf, one loaf, and as soon as you go to the bakery and all of a sudden you have to do ten or twenty, your hands are not used to working with so much dough."

MAKING BREAD TOGETHER

To tell the story of how the bread making book for children and families, Making Bread Together, came to be, we have to begin with Emmanuel's first book, How to Make Bread, published in 2011—a book that grew out of his teaching work, almost by accident.

Emmanuel wasn't planning to write a book when he received a letter from a photographer named Steve Painter who had been to one of his bread courses two weeks earlier. And not any letter, but a letter suggesting they make a book together. Emmanuel describes Steve as a quiet man who didn't make much noise about himself. Nice, but mostly in the background. So, at the time, he wasn't sure who this person getting in touch with him was.

"I thought it was a hoax." Emmanuel recalls, "I thought somebody was playing a joke on me."

Hoax or not, this sounded like an opportunity worth checking out: "We answered them and said 'Yes, it sounds interesting', thinking that we would never get anything back."

Well, only two days later, they did.

It was a contract for a book, to be completed in six months.

"That's when I said: Well I've never written a book in my life before. Let's have a meeting and see what happens." Emmanuel says.

Well, what happened was an inspiring, highly visual—with tons of step by step photographs—introductory book on bread making, shot in real-time at Steve's house as they baked through the book's recipes.

"A kind of collection of recipes that I enjoyed doing" Emmanuel says.

After the first book's success—*How to Make Bread* has been translated into 16 languages, it received the Guild of Food Writers Award for Best First Book, and readers are still emailing Emmanuel with questions, comments, and photos of their breads—the publisher started talking about a follow-up.

But instead of doing a follow-up, Emmanuel decided he wanted to go backwards and make everything a little bit more simple: "In between the first book and the second book, I had a lot of people asking me questions about specific recipes, especially with things like sourdough, the basic kneading technique... Some things we were missing from the first book. I said to the publishers: 'Look, what I'd like to do is I'd like to go backwards.'"

This resulted in an even more visual book with less recipes but more general information and clever experiments such as "gluten wash" or filling a balloon with the carbon dioxide produced in fermentation.

"If you've got a book with like fifty recipes and so, you might not do all those recipes. But if you've got a book of thirty recipes, you might do, say, half of them. So you can actually say: 'I've bought the book. It was worth it. I've gone through half of the recipes.' Then maybe later on when you are a little bit older you might do something a little bit more difficult." Emmanuel adds.

"But instead of writing a follow-up, Emmanuel decided he wanted to go backwards and make everything a little bit more simple."

This focus on basics and answering reader questions paired up with Emmanuel's experiences working with schools and children lead to the idea of a book that would inspire parents and children to bake together. Not just a baking book for children, but for the whole family.

MAKING BREAD WITH CHILDREN

After choosing a recipe, the bread making begins. Oiva, Altti, and I all mix our own doughs—the boys are making a basic white bread, I'm going for my favorite sourdough—and start working them on the table.

In the method taught by Richard Bertinet, we lift our doughs up in the air, slap them down on the table, then fold them over themselves.

Yes, it's messy. Yes, there's flour everywhere. The five-year-old's hands are covered in dough—he says he invented a new kneading technique, one he calls the *highway method*. To me, it seems this method is all about covering the table with dough, but I'm sure there is more to it...

Then, to clean his hands, he uses his teeth.

I guess it's no surprise that later, when I asked him what he thinks is the best thing about baking bread, the answer came without hesitation: "Eating dough."

So, making bread with children is not clean. It's not easy, and it's often not even relaxing. If you like to think of bread making as a way to practice peaceful meditation, when you involve children, you'll have to come up with a new metaphor.

"First of all, there's the time factor, because it has to be quick, and second of all they will do their own thing." Emmanuel says, continuing that especially the second item is difficult for parents: we want to teach and guide our offspring, sharing all of our best bread making tricks and tips with them.

And just like I've seen in my own experience, Emmanuel too says the mess factor is always present:

"It's very difficult to be hundred percent clean with children around, because they are just going to have fun and they want to play around dough, they want to eat the dough. I mean I know when my son makes cakes and stuff it's always best to double up the ingredients..."

"It's very difficult to be hundred percent clean with children around, because they are just going to have fun and they want to play around dough, they want to eat the dough..."

Still, making bread with children is rewarding and useful in many ways.

For one, making bread together is a way to get busy, stressed out families communicating and doing things together again.

"You spend time with your kids. You know, they want to make whatever you're making with them. And at the end of the day, you might go to a party or you might have the whole family around and say: look what we've made!" Emmanuel says.

"The nice thing about bread is that flour isn't that expensive, and if you can get hold of yeast, brilliant! You can do all sorts of exciting things."

And as a nice bonus, especially for parents with picky kids, after making these exciting things, children are more likely to try them out! Something you've baked yourself is always more likely to be good than something made by your parents or some strangers.

"If they make it on their own, no matter what it is (a lot of children here in the U.K. don't eat brown bread) [...] to their parents complete shock—they eat it." Emmanuel says.

There's also the pride you can see in a child's eyes when she presents the bread she made: "I made this; this is me on a plate. I enjoy what I made."

"And you know for a baker it's the same thing: You've got the shop and you're standing by the counter, and your customers come in. It's just exciting because they appreciate what you are doing." Emmanuel says.

"You spend time with your kids. You know, they want to make whatever you're making with them. And at the end of the day, you might go to a party or you might have the whole family around and say: look what we've made!"

On the more technical side, bread making can teach skills from a broad range of topics: maths (scaling recipes, measuring ingredients), biology (where ingredients come from, what happens in fermentation), even focus and following instructions.

"It's difficult to keep them there for over two hours, but again, you are teaching them there's an order of doing things—in other words, this has to go first, then that, then that." Emmanuel says, and adds:

"I think a cooking aspect that's also very important is that you're teaching your children that when you're doing something, you have to clean up afterwards."

But you need to be careful to keep all this learning happening in a "by the way" kind of way, almost by accident:

"They're learning it because at the end of the day, they're going to make a cupcake or a loaf of bread or whatever. But in between they're actually learning things that just come naturally and are fun to do." Emmanuel says.

When you find the right recipes and good methods of keeping the children interested (quick breads like soda bread are a good starting point, as are overnight loaves where you can make the dough and forget about it until the morning), you'll see that children are curious and eager to learn.

"You get a lot of questions and they are asking you interesting questions because kids aren't stupid, they are quite clever. They are very innocent in some ways and you know they'll ask they'll actually ask you very relevant questions." Emmanuel says.

"Job satisfaction is amazing when you're teaching kids to bake! The next day they'll say 'Hello Mr. Bread Man.' You know, they'll remember you."

MAKING BREAD AT SCHOOL

The most obvious place for baking bread together is at home, with your own children or grandchildren, the way it has been done for ages: find a recipe that you know your children will enjoy eating, then get them involved and participating in the process as much as they can, depending on their age and skills.

However, if you are a bit more ambitious, you may want to take your experience to your children's school and give a class an introductory course or workshop in bread making.

When I asked Emmanuel about this, it turned out he had done a bunch of such projects, and was happy to share some tips and experiences with us. I have collected a summary of them on the next page in the form of a list of tips for a successful baking workshop for children.

Emmanuel says some of his best teaching experiences have been with children of age of about five or six:

"They're nice because they are not too independent: they listen. [...] I went to an older school were we had year nines, so we're looking at about—say—fifteen, sixteen year old kids. That was quite difficult because a lot of them didn't want to do it. They didn't want to be there" But the younger kids are so much fun to work with." Emmanuel says.

"Job satisfaction is amazing when you're teaching kids to bake! The next day they'll say 'Hello Mr. Bread Man.' You know, they'll remember you. It's amazing. One of those little kids, he called me Mr. Hadjiandreou! I mean, I've never in my life been called that, and so I started to laugh... My wife said to me: Why are you laughing? You know he's probably spent hours trying to practice your name!"

All you need is to make sure you do the proper preparations to make everything run as smoothly as possible and you're good to go!

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL AND FUN CHILDREN'S BREAD MAKING WORKSHOP

1. **Just ask**. Most of the time, teachers and schools are more than happy to bring parents in to teach the children something outside the regular curriculum.

2. **Bring your own equipment.** While schools will be happy to have you, they most likely won't be able to provide you with a lot of assistance.

   "The more you can give them, the easier it will be. Best is if you can say, 'The only thing we need is the time and an oven to bake the bread in—and it doesn't have to be a big oven.'" Emmanuel says.

3. **Fit the bread making within a normal school day's schedule**. In bread making, there's a lot of waiting, and children have a short attention span.

   "When we did the book, we found that the attention span of young kids is about, say, two hours and that's pushing it." Emmanuel says.

   So, to make the schedule work, split the baking into steps.

   "If you've got them for an hour, you have to keep them busy for an hour. If you have a fifteen minute a gap in between, they're going to get bored."

4. **Start with just one recipe.** Don't be too ambitious and try to teach the children many recipes at once. Think of the workshop as an introduction rather than a complete bread making course.

5. **Prepare a dough in advance.** One way to speed up the bread making process and to make sure the kids get to try every step is to prepare a dough already before you take the kids in.

   This way, they can for example mix their own doughs while using your dough for shaping their breads.

6. **Make sure everyone gets to bring a loaf of bread home.** You may have to skip steps in between—"If you've got the dough prepared for them, that's great. If they're making the dough, that's great as well. If you get them to weigh out ingredients, that also works." Emmanuel says—but as long as they see the basics and get to take their final result home with them, the children will have the tools to try again on their own or with their parents.

   "They'll say: It's not that difficult to make it at home, so why don't we try?" Emmanuel says.

Currently, in between teaching bread making classes, picking his son from school and baking bread for the local pub, Emmanuel is working on his third book, an approachable sourdough bread making book anyone can pick up and start making bread with.

"I'm trying to show people that sourdough is easy to work with. I think we're going to start off with a basic recipe and explain how to make a sourdough, how to make a sourdough loaf, going through the whole process. And then have a whole collection of different kinds of sourdough recipes in there, including gluten free, whole grain, ancient grain…" Emmanuel says.

"The key thing is maximum fermentation, but trying to make it as easy as possible."

Just like with his other books, he is working hard to achieve what he sees as the greatest test for a cook book:

"Especially with bread books, the important thing for me as an author is I want to make a book that in twenty years' time somebody can pick up and say, well let's make bread—and it's still as exciting as when you bought it twenty years ago." Emmanuel says.

* *

To learn more about Emmanuel Hadjiandreou, his courses and his books, check out his Twitter and Instagram profiles.

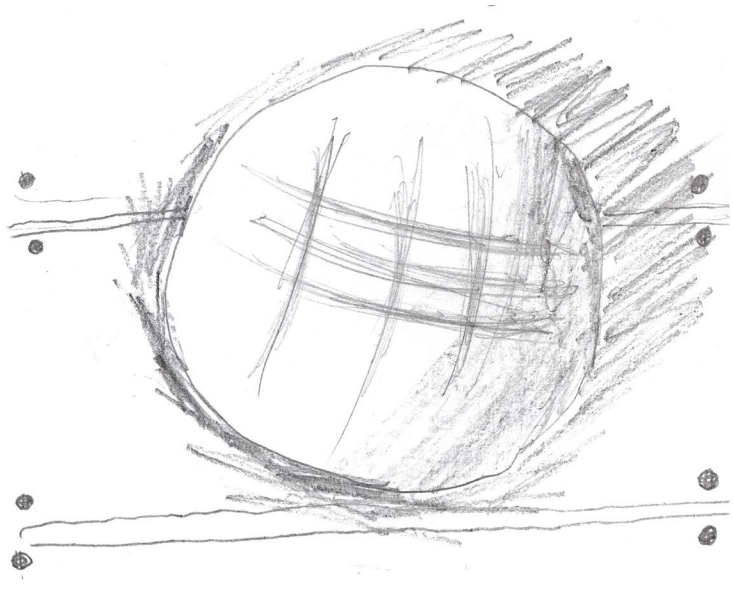
FIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT BREAD

Interview and drawings: OIVA LAINE

One of the first ideas I thought of when I started planning an article about making bread with children was that I wanted to involve my son Oiva in one way or another. Oiva has been following my Bread Magazine journey with a lot of interest so now was my chance to make him a journalist and help me out a little!

So, here it is, Oiva's contribution. After my chat with Emmanuel Hadjiandreou, Oiva came up with five questions, which Emmanuel kindly answered via email.

❊ ❊



***Oiva**: Why is there so much waiting in bread making?*

Emmanuel: Making bread is like growing a plant from a seed: you have to watch it grow and wait until it is ready so that you can pick the fruit or enjoy it when it flowers.

So in bread, it takes a long time because you have to grow the yeast which makes the bread rise and gives it a great taste and that is only the dough, then there is another wait for the baking and cooling before it is ready to eat.

***Oiva**: Why do you like to make bread?*

Emmanuel: Bread is magical. You start with flour, salt to give it flavour then water to make it come together and yeast or sourdough to make it rise and give it a great flavour.

When you make bread there are so many changes that happen that make it a lot of fun. In the beginning the mixture is in a crumbly state then it becomes elastic then it rises, then the smell for it as it bakes and lastly the crunch of the crust as you bight into it not to forget you can even toast it.

Bread making is definitely magical!

***Oiva**: What types of bread do you like the most?*

Emmanuel: I like bread that has lots of flavour and crust so when you bite into it, you have to chew and the crust makes it taste great.

Good bread made properly will have great flavour and you only need to eat it with good quality butter or dip it into a bit of olive oil.

***Oiva**: Are there any breads you don't like?*

Emmanuel: I don't like bread that is made very quickly and has lots of yeast and many other ingredients that you can't spell and pronounce. It normally has no crust and is soft and pappy.

Don't get me wrong, soft bread is great but it be made with few basic quality ingredients which will give it great flavour that is developed over time.

Oiva: *How long did it take for you to make your book, Making Bread Together?*

Emmanuel: Making Bread Together took me about 6 months to 1 year to get all the recipes together, and taking the pictures took a bit of time. Steve is a great photographer and without his pictures the book would not be so visual and easy to use.

If I am learning to do anything, I like lots of pictures so when writing this book, I wanted the photos to help with the making of each recipe. It makes it easier to understand the recipes when you can see the steps in photos as well.

"Good bread made properly will have great flavour and you only need to eat it with good quality butter or dip it into a bit of olive oil."

I always wished for an obsession but as the least obsessive person you could ever meet it seemed unlikely that I would find my muse...

A BREAD OBSESSION

Words and photos: CLARE JACKSON

But before we get to bread, let's go back in time a little bit.

I attended Edinburgh College of Art, where I studied interior design and furniture design. On leaving college, I spent some time in Italy before returning to my roots in the rural North East of Scotland. I worked in many areas: community development, youth work, arts development, and as a craft worker and volunteer.

Throughout this "suck it and see" time, I always painted—oils mostly—and my interest was in translating the landscape with my brush. I exhibited locally and further afield and had a reasonable talent but lacked 'the muse' which I felt was essential in the life of the artist. The ability to sacrifice requires an obsession and without one I was sporadic in my work.

When I married, I became a step mum and went on to have my own children. My life became smaller and time shrunk further as we spent our time renovating and building—and growing our little people. What, though, was my purpose?

Was I an artist?

Was I a mother and wife?

Was I a builder?

I suppose I was all of these things. None of them, however, felt a complete fit so one day in July 2012, I sat down with a notepad to find it.

The answer, as it turned out, was fairly obvious. I had baked bread and pizza on and off for friends over the years, so I thought: if I can do this for free why not try to make a living from it? If I made no money, nothing had changed!

I threw myself into business planning and even applied for some funding with the idea of becoming a community supported baker. Meanwhile, I had found plans for a wood fired oven developed by the Germans for use in Uganda. It was an exciting time and I was developing and selling some delicious, healthy, yeasted breads.

"Everything became bread: I baked bread, I thought bread, I dreamt bread. I was bread!"

However, as many of you know, trying to fit the demands of dough around the needs of a young family isn't easy. I was selling from a local community food shop—up at four A.M. three times a week, baking maybe 24 loaves plus scones and buns in my two domestic ovens whilst getting the kids up and dressed and breakfasted and off up to the school gate with the car smelling amazing and the kids not so much...

I had, as was becoming clear, found my obsession—definitely a case of "be careful what you wish for!" Everything became bread: I baked bread, I thought bread, I dreamt bread.

I was bread!

About a year later, I discovered the Twitter baking community and my lonely bread world expanded a hundred fold. All of a sudden I was connected to some of the great artisans of Britain and beyond, and arrogantly I felt belonged. It was a heady time but I was proud to call myself a baker and I chased down the best. Ha! I was a bread predator!

I became, I suppose, ambitious.

This was a new thing. I was on tracks now and I could see very far into the future and know that I would never be bored of dough as it was impossible to learn everything—even in a lifetime.

It wasn't long before I startled meddling in the dark art of naturally leavened bread and some six months later, I totally abandoned the predictability of instant yeast in favour of my sourdough starter.

This was when things got really tough.

I was out of my depth, and with no training, I made some big mistakes and all but destroyed a very loyal customer base: the majority of local people didn't know what sourdough bread was, let alone have an interest in eating it. But I was on a mission!

All throughout this crazy time, we were plugging away at converting an outbuilding in our garden and building the above mentioned 1.2 square metre, two deck 'rocket' oven. My brilliant husband learnt to weld and I did the ground works, but it was all getting a bit messy and my obsession was wearing everyone down.

I was marooned on planet bread and happy to be so but I was still baking and raising a family and there never seemed to be time to work on the bakery. It was then I decided it would be sensible to stop baking and crack on with the DIY.

Of course, I returned to bread fairly quickly—I couldn't function without it—but now, I was gaining confidence and the pieces of the jigsaw were beginning to fit together; my abilities were improving with every bake.

I was slowly losing the chip on my shoulder as a woman and a home baker and started to value my own judgment and see my lack of *"le tradition"* and the fact that I wasn't *"time served"* as a freedom of sorts: I could mix and score and bake from my bones and background with a respect for, but without the shackles of, convention.

Today, my beautiful wood fired oven and bakery are finished, and we have recently made improvements to the fire breathing beast that have taken the bread to a different level.

I'm keen to make it clear that my domestic oven bakes very pretty bread—I haven't achieved that yet in the rocket oven (perhaps I shouldn't even try). The adjustments we have made, however, have really improved the bake: in the photographs on the next page, the loaf on the left was baked in my domestic oven using a roasting tray, Dutch oven type method and on the right is the rocket oven fired bread.

Make no mistake though: a wood fired oven adds another dimension to baking and it's not for the faint hearted. But if you like a challenge and always fancied being a dragon tamer, then it could be for you.

I have expanded my baking world further still with Instagram—and even set up a sort of bakers' take on a book club that pays homage to the work of the wonderful Jeffrey Hamelman.

#igbreadclub started out as a simple way of connecting with other bakers, both professional and amateur. Every couple of weeks or so, on my Instagram page, I suggest a recipe from Bread: A Bakers Book of Techniques and Recipes. Then, bakers of all abilities can set their work side by side using the recipe's individual hash tag. It's not an ego trip but a way of learning, connecting and improving and I can tell you it works. Why not get the book and join in?

Of course, so many of us are indebted to Hamelman, but he is just one of the many brilliant bakers to whom I owe a great deal. I would like to thank the generosity of my in print and virtual baking "Compagnons" and the many people across the world who follow my ups and downs through the social networks. They have supported me when I have hit the wall and without them I really wouldn't have got this far.

I have worked damn hard, but in the end I had no choice: there was an ancient baker's ghost inside of me and it would and will not rest until it can look at my work as the master looks at the efforts of the apprentice and nod, finally, in satisfaction.

"In the end I had no choice: there was an ancient baker's ghost inside of me and it would and will not rest until it can look at my work as the master looks at the efforts of the apprentice and nod, finally, in satisfaction."

Yes, there will be good bakes and not so good bakes, and I have so much to learn, but I am ready at last to stand proudly beside my bread.

So where, you ask, do I stand with my bread?

The community food shop where I sold my yeasted bread closed it's doors and it's pop up offspring has an uncertain future. You see I live in one of those parts of Britain that was taken over by the big name food retailers—for example, the last fruit and veg shop in Moray closed over twenty years ago when our civic leaders sanctioned the expansion of the out of town supermarkets in the area's civic centre the town of Elgin.

Recently, I spoke to a retired baker who told me that in the 1970's he worked in one of four bakeries in the coastal town of Cullen (population 1500). Now this town has no baker at all. Of course people are open to the idea fresh bread but getting them to commit to a time and a place when there are two large superstores open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week a short drive away hasn't been easy.

At the moment I bake for a small indoor community market once a month and events crop up regularly when I am asked to come along with my bake. Soon though, I will have a web site and customers will be able to order online. I'm hopeful that one or two nearby locations will act as pick up points.

Remember, I didn't choose bread, it chose me! And I can tell you something else: when the bake is good, the people come—it's weird but they just do.

I would also like to offer a few words of advice that might have helped me in my darkest bread moments: When you open that oven door and your heart either sinks or soars, take that feeling and put it straight into your next day's dough. It's a vital ingredient for truly great bread.

❊ ❊

To follow Clare as she explores her bread obsession, check out her Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles.

"When you open that oven door and your heart either sinks or soars, take that feeling and put it straight into your next day's dough. It's a vital ingredient for truly great bread."

A GOOD SANDWICH BREAD

Words and photos: JARKKO LAINE

If there is a bread related secret I'm ashamed to admit, it must be this: my wife and sons buy basic sandwich bread from the supermarket.

At first, I felt hurt by them choosing the most industrial of industrial breads over my lovingly handmade loaves. But then, I realized it was for a reason: some of their favorite bread toppings simply work better on a soft sandwich loaf. Toppings such as the Dutch hagelslag that my family fell in love with last fall when my son's classmate brought some to class, or pålægschocolade, the thin chocolates from Denmark that we found this summer.

And I guess, there is something fun about toasting a bread in an electric toaster as well…

Whatever the reason, instead of feeling sorry for myself, I decided to take over and learn to make "real" bread that feels just like the one made in a factory: soft, with small uniform bubbles, with no distinctive taste.

I'm not quite there yet—my sourdough sandwich bread still tastes a little sour, and the bread needs a longer time in the toaster before it starts browning—but I'm close enough, for now. The family is still buying sandwich bread, but now it's because my production just can't keep up with their speed of eating the bread.

WHAT MAKES A SOFT SANDWICH BREAD?

Making a sandwich bread is not hard at all, and there is no shortage of recipes: most bread making books start with their variation of the basic tin loaf. There's even one at the end of this article.

But more than finding the perfect recipe, I wanted to understand what makes the sandwich bread different from its siblings, the more chewy sourdoughs or even basic yeasted breads.

"But more than finding the perfect recipe, I wanted to understand what makes the sandwich bread different from the more chewy sourdoughs or even basic yeasted breads."

After all, in the spirit of the old saying, *"give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime"*, I believe understanding why we do something is always more useful than finding even the perfect recipe: when you know why you do something, you can bake with confidence even when you have no one or no book around to guide you.

So, let's take a look at the changes that will turn a basic bread formula into a soft sandwich bread.

A sandwich bread needs to be soft, with small, uniform air pockets that keep your toppings from falling on your lap. The bread also needs to have some sugars left in it after it has been baked—otherwise it won't brown properly when toasted.

The industrial bakeries cheat by using additives and pumping air into the dough—they don't list all these ingredients, but the fact that most don't include milk nor fats is a good lead... But as you'll see from these tips, we'll do just fine with natural ingredients only.

So, building on our basic bread formula, here are some tips that you can use to turn it into a sandwich bread. Try making changes one by one, go all in, or experiment with different combinations, and in no time, you'll start seeing what ingredient or technique is responsible for what effect in the final bread.

❊ ❊

1. **To soften the dough, replace a part or all of the liquid with milk**. Powdered milk can be used to make hydration calculations and comparisons easier: by treating the milk powder as a separate ingredient, you can use water in the same way as in the basic formula. If you use fresh milk, you'll need to take into account the fact that cow milk is only about 87% water—so 100 g of milk corresponds to just 87 g of water when it comes to hydration.

2. **To soften the dough and to make its bubbles more uniform, add some fat.** Milk already has fat in it so it's enough in most cases—we're not making brioche. On the other hand, if you don't want to use milk, oil will do most of its work. Aromatic oils are great if you like the taste, but for most sandwich breads (and my family) a lighter one works better.

3. **To get the bread to brown when toasted, try to keep some free sugars in the bread still after it's baked**. In my experiments, this has been the trickiest part—my bread just doesn't brown as quickly as the store-bought one. Browning happens because of Maillard reactions, complex reactions that occur when foods containing sugars are heated.
   In the fermentation process, yeasts eat sugars, converting it to alcohol and carbon dioxide. So, you can approach this quest from two angles: First, add a little extra sweeteners such as sugar or some good honey in the dough. Second, try to keep the fermentation short enough—by adding some yeast (the favorite trick in the industry), or maybe using a higher percentage of sourdough starter, or pre-fermented flour in your dough.

4. **To keep the crumb structure (alveolage) tight and uniform, shape the dough tightly.** As much as we admire irregular air pockets in baguettes, ciabattas and country sourdough breads, this is not the time for them. So, when shaping the bread, make sure to split the gas bubbles into smaller ones, first by carefully degassing the dough and then by shaping rather tightly.

   Fats, as well as the natural emulsifiers present in milk help too.

5. **To get the right shape and prevent too much crust from forming, bake in a tin, at a slightly lower temperature.** For a complete store-bought sandwich bread look, use a Pullman pan! As for temperature, many baking tins will not tolerate temperatures above 230°C (446°C), but that's OK, 210°C (410°C) or so is very good for a bread of this type.

   I like to use steam, but it is not as important as with many other types of bread.

MY WHITE SOURDOUGH SANDWICH BREAD FORMULA

Putting the tips presented above together, I have experimented with different methods and formulas, adding and removing ingredients. And truth is, there are many different ways to make a good sandwich bread. So, I suggest you go ahead and create your own!

That said, it's often nice to have some formula to start with. So, if you don't already have a good, trusted sourdough sandwich bread recipe, here's one that works for me (the one pictured in this article's photos).

❊ ❊

The night before you want to mix your dough, refresh your starter with an equal amount of white flour and water (I usually go with 200 g each), and a tablespoon or two of your storage starter (stored either in the refrigerator or at room temperature). Stir well, then leave the mix at room temperature, covered with plastic.

The next morning, check on your starter to see if it is bubbling vigorously. If all is good, mix the dough:

Ingredients	Quantity	Baker's %
All-purpose or bread flour	500 g	100%
Ripe young wheat sourdough starter	100 g	20%
Sea salt	10 g	2%
Fresh milk	340 g	68%
Liquid honey	25 g	5%

Notice that 340 grams of milk includes approximately 300 grams of water, so the dough's hydration, taking into account the 50 grams of water in the stater is 70% rather than 78%.

Proceed according to the basic steps of bread making as outlined on the magazine's web site.

A LIFE OF BREAD

Words: JARKKO LAINE

Photos: PRESIAN PETROV

In the two years since Presian Petrov and his younger brother Theodor started their bakery and artisan baking school, BakerBrothers (БратяХлебари in Bulgarian) in 2013, Presian has only had two days of vacation. Now, this August, he is finally planning to take some time off—to bake some more bread! First in Denmark and then in London, together with a friend who is opening a new bakery there.

When I point out to him that there seems to be no way for him to escape bread, he says: "Yeah, I don't want to escape. I really like it."

So, I don't think I'm exaggerating too much when I say this 25-year-old baker from the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, lives and breathes bread. Through his bakery and artisan baking school, he is determined to make a difference in his home country, where the traditional ways of making bread and growing bread cereals were mostly forgotten during the years as a part of the Soviet Union.

"The normal way of farming in Bulgaria before the communist era was to raise millet and barley and wheat together as they fight different diseases." Presian says. This lead to a flour similar to the rye and wheat mix, *méteil*, once popular in France[1].

"At least 10% was millet, and 20% barley, and the rest was wheat." Presian says.

"After the communists came, they stopped raising barley and millet. They brought Russian wheat that is really strong and doesn't get any diseases. They just focused on production, and we just lost the way of the people before that, my great-grandfather's time."

Presian says he isn't trying to bring back the past. Instead, he wants to "see what's really good in the past and take it, but then think about what can be improved and what is not so good."

At the beginning of June, I had the pleasure of chatting with Presian about bread and his eventful journey into baking so far.

The way Presian talked about his explorations was lively and authentic and I found myself sitting at the edge of my seat, listening to it like a good adventure story.

And now, I'm happy to be able to share it with you. Let's get started!

* *

1 See our Autumn 2014 issue for an article about Pain de méteil.

***Jarkko**: Let's start with your background and how you got started with bread and baking...*

Presian: I was born in a small city of 150,000 people—now I think it's small because I was in South Korea for a few months; the cities there are really big! Here in Bulgaria, the biggest city is one million and a half people.

On weekends and during summer and winter vacations, most of the people were living in the villages around the city. And like most of the people at the time, I too lived in the village most of my free time between semesters. Between the first and second semester of middle school and then during high school, I was living with my grandfather.

My grandfather studied cross-breeding plants, which he did for 45 years.

His specialty was wheat, and one of his dreams was cross-breeding hard wheat and making it produce a lot of grain while being really nutritious and really easy to raise in the special climate and soil that we have. He was cross-breeding it with different ancient wheats, like einkorn, crossing it with the normal type of durum that we have now.

I actually didn't know that he did that until much later!

I grew up with him and I studied a little about farming and raising plants and trees and animals and whatever, but at some point, I wanted to live on my own. So, I went to study in a university in another city, becoming a chef first before becoming a baker.

But the situation with restaurants in Bulgaria isn't very good. There are things like when a chef drops meat on the floor, he will pick it up and cook it again, and then serve it to the customer. I didn't feel comfortable in a situation like this; if I put the meat back, I don't want to eat it, and I don't want customers to eat it either. But the owners are telling you to do that so you don't have any choice.

So, I decided that while I wanted to do something with food, restaurants were not my thing.

Then, I remembered my childhood dream of seeing what happens in a bakery. In the past, when I was a child, the bakeries were really small. Just a window that you go to and take the bread from. It's like a tunnel where you see that there's something at the end, but cannot really see what happens inside. As a child, I was wondering what people were doing there at night—how they were doing some magic stuff and then you had bread.

***Jarkko**: There was some mystery about the bakery.*

Presian: Yeah. So, I already had a degree in cooking—European cuisine, mostly Bulgarian cuisine—but I decided to quit cooking.

I went to a bakery in another city, an even smaller city actually, and told the owner that it was my dream to see what happens in the bakery. He said, "It's 2:30 A.M. in the morning every day. Is that OK with you?"

I said, "No problem."

He said, "Just come here the next day."

And so, I started going there every day for four months, without salary. Just worked and learned as an apprentice.

The problem was that the kind of bread we were making was the normal easy bread that everybody makes. The bread had no flavor, no taste, nothing. When you take it out of the oven it's really good, but after one hour, after two hours, it becomes just worse and worse.

The master baker that I was working with, she said that bread is really, really, really good, and we should all eat it ten minutes after baking. After that, she said, don't touch it, it's not good. She was talking like this, but she didn't do anything about it.

"As a child, I was wondering what people were doing there at night—how they were doing some magic stuff and then you had bread."

***Jarkko**: I suppose she thought that was normal for bread then...*

Presian: At that time, I was reading about sourdough bread on the Internet and so I asked her, "What is sourdough?"

She said, "There is nothing like sourdough in the world. It's bullshit."

I said, "Is yeast the only thing to make bread with?"

She said, "Yes, it's amazing. Yeast is really, really amazing."

She didn't want to talk about anything else. I tried every single day, again and again and again and again.

Nothing.

After a while, the bakery's owner wanted to open another bakery and appoint me as the head baker there. To test how my bread was improving, he asked us to mark our breads. We marked the breads with dough—he didn't know which mark was mine and which mark was hers.

We baked the bread and then he came in and looked at the mark. That time I had marked my bread with dough and the head baker hadn't marked hers.

The owner said, "Oh this bread with the mark, it's amazing. It looks like the master baker's bread. It doesn't have any flaws. It's perfect. But look at the other one. The other one is really bad."

She was really angry and started shouting at him.

He said, "Oh, really? That's Presian's bread and that's yours? Oh my God..."

After this, the head baker didn't work comfortably with me. I felt really bad, and decided I had to move on.

There is one really famous sourdough bakery in Sofia, in the capital. I applied and they invited me to talk.

A week later, they invited me to work for them, and so I moved again. This was in 2011. I was still studying at the university, going to the capital to work there, and then going back to the university city to do exams, then back for work, and then back again. It was really difficult, so in the fourth year of my degree, I just canceled it. It was too difficult for me to work and study at the same time.

I focused only on the bread.

And after that I have worked only at sourdough bakeries.

In 2012, I traveled to France for a while to learn more about bread making.

At the bakery in Sofia, we had a stone mill that we used to mill our own flour, so I took ten kilograms of flour and twenty breads, and went to Southern France to meet my teacher. There, he was operating a bakery that had been built in 1793, I think. A really old bakery. Even the oven was still the same oven built in 1793!

"When I brought the bread and gave it to him, he threw it in the trash bin, saying it's not even good for the dogs! Then he took the flour and said it was really bad quality, no good for bread."

When I brought the bread and gave it to him, he threw it in the trash bin, saying it's not even good for the dogs! Then he took the flour and said it was really bad quality, no good for bread.

I felt really bad because, at the time, that bakery was so famous that everybody said that we were the best bakers in Bulgaria. Maybe even the Balkans. I was one of the best bakers at the bakery and I felt that I was a really good, skilled baker. And then I got to this baker in France and was made to feel like I cannot even make bread!

The baker asked me to leave the bakery and stay outside for a little bit. After a while, his wife asked me to go inside again. He told me not to say anything, to just keep quiet and watch him as he made bread.

Actually, the only thing I think I learned there, because I don't care about the recipe and I don't think a recipe is important in bread making, was patience.

In Sofia, we were always in a hurry to make the bread. Faster, faster, faster, faster. And because of this, the quality of the bread was really bad. In his bakery in France, this baker never hurried anything. He was taking all the time that he needed to make the bread as slowly as he could at room temperature—he wasn't retarding the dough. Then he baked it in a fire oven, a really, really, really good fire oven.

His bread was not sour. His bread didn't have those big air pockets that are popular these days. But his bread was really good.

When I came back, I tried to change the baking style of the bakery in Sofia, and several times ended up in arguments with the owner. Then they started decreasing my salary because of the arguments.

So, three months after France, I decided I had to quit. I found one bakery, then fought with the owner. Then found another one, then fought again with the owner...

***Jarkko**: Sounds like they weren't ready for change, would you say so?*

Presian: Yeah, people here are not open minded. For example, people think if you have an idea that earns money, it doesn't matter if the idea is good or bad. If it earns you money, you have to keep earning money until you cannot earn money anymore.

Which, for me, is not working well.

I really don't like being stuck in the same thing over and over again. Especially if I know it's not good. If I meet a baker and he's really skilled, I want to become as skilled as he is.

I'm trying to change. I'm changing my bread. I'm changing everything.

But people here don't do that.

Even the customers talk like this... If you change the bread, the customer thinks there is a problem with the bread. They want the same thing over and over again.

It's really, really difficult.

"Actually, the only thing I think I learned there was patience: In Sofia, we were always in a hurry to make the bread. Faster, faster, faster, faster. And because of this, the quality of the bread was really bad."

***Jarkko**: I guess there is some need for safety at play there: It feels safe to do the same thing again and again. But it's not a good recipe for a future success.*

Presian: Especially in artisan bread baking! For example, you know, when you're working with sourdough, you can't expect 100% the same result every day. The result can be different every day but you have to just watch the process and make the best of it.

I wanted to teach that to them, but it didn't work well. People didn't want to take a chance with that. They just wanted to do something where you can be sure of the result.

So, in 2013, I started the baking school with my brother. One year after that we started baking bread at home.

We decided that the brand name should be *BakerBrothers* because we're brothers and we're bakers, and because of our grandfather's heritage in wheat and ancient grains.

When we started the baking school, I was still head baker at another bakery. So, I started the baking school in order to teach people what bread is, thinking that if I teach home bakers, then they will teach their friends, and their friends will teach other friends, and then I will have a lot of customers!

That was my original idea, but after a while, I realized that even if the bakery earned more money, I wouldn't earn more money because I was just a baker!

So I moved on and quit that bakery and focused just on teaching.

In that process, I started to understand what people see in bread, what they want in bread, what they look for in bread.

I started communicating with a lot of families with children. There were even some mothers who ate only sourdough bread when they were pregnant—the whole pregnancy. Then the babies also got only sourdough bread from the first year on. One of the babies is now three years old and when they try to give her yeasted bread, she starts spitting it out, saying it's not good. She doesn't want to eat it!

It's a really good experiment for me, but at the same time I think it's really good for the family. I think the child will be really healthy.

***Jarkko**: Tell me about who your students mostly are? Who comes to your classes?*

Presian: I think 60% are mothers who just gave birth or who have really small children. They are not doing it for themselves, they're doing it for the children. They want to feed them something really good so they come to us to learn how to make sourdough bread.

Other students are people who were my customers but at some point couldn't buy my bread because it was sold out really quickly.

They want to learn how to make bread, but they also still continue to buy bread: Sometimes they buy my bread, sometimes they make their own bread.

I think only 10% are people that want to become bakers. So far, I have had around 160–170 students, and out of them only 14 or 15, or 16 are becoming professionals. I think most of them are really frightened to become bakers because they don't want to work for another bakery that makes yeasted bread with chemical additives and so on. They also don't want to work with me because I have a lot of requirements for the bakers. My shifts are really long and I make a lot of breads now. They're scared of that.

And maybe they don't have money to start their own bakery either.

***Jarkko**: It sounds like you're staying in touch with a lot of the people who come to your classes?*

Presian: Yes. Actually, in 2014, we created a group on Facebook called Virtual Baking School. We gather all the students that have come to my classes, and then we talk about everything, sharing experiments and formulas, and everything else.

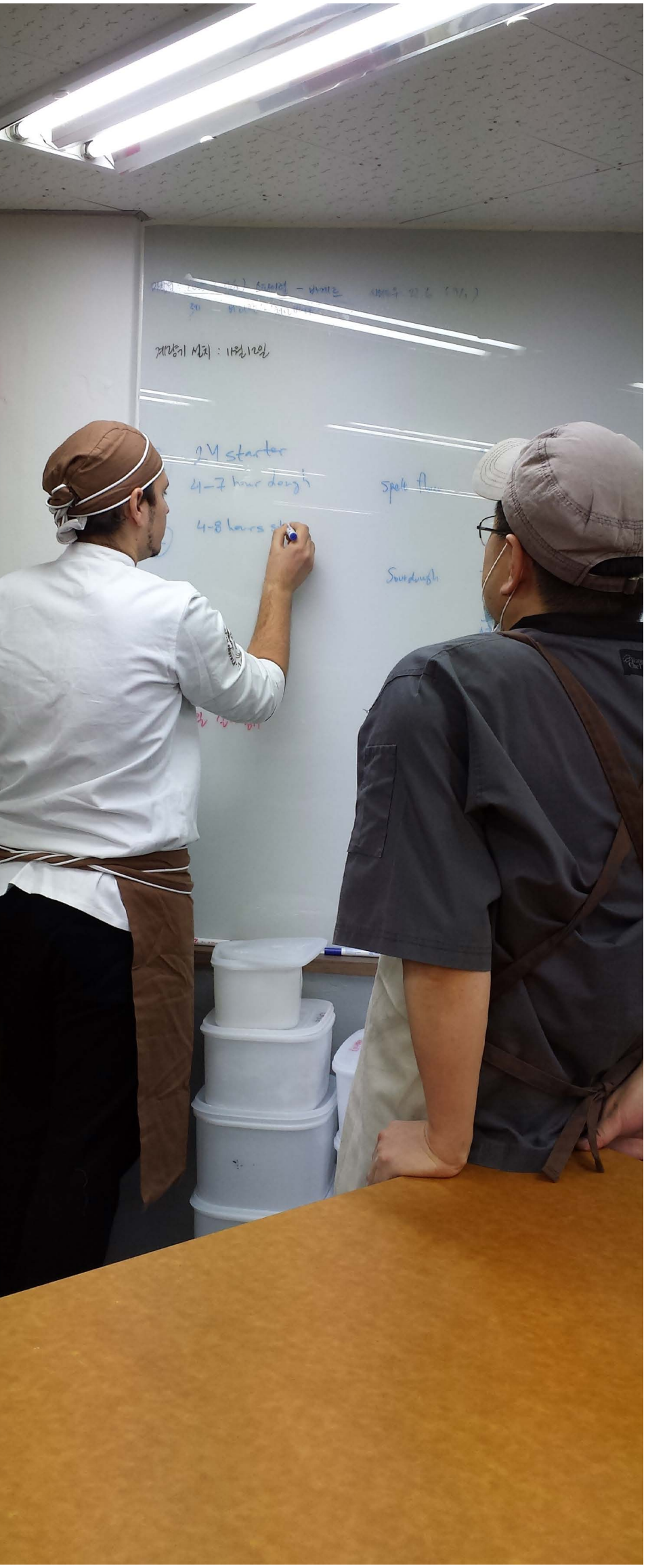
***Jarkko**: I see. Do many people come back for another class?*

Presian: Around 30% come again.

How I see it, the other people are not so interested in making bread; they really wanted to see why my bread is good, and they wanted to see how my bread is good, how I make my bread. After the class, they feel confident about my bread, and then they continue buying.

30% come again and continue making bread quite passionately.

"I think only 10% are people that want to become bakers. So far, I have had around 160–170 students, and out of them only 14 or 15, or 16 are becoming professionals."



***Jarkko**: You mentioned other trips, South Korea…*

Presian: After I went to France, I stayed in Bulgaria for maybe almost a year.

I had a Korean teacher here in Bulgaria that I studied Korean cuisine with. I continued making food, but I started cooking for the Korean Embassy in Bulgaria—Korean fermentation food. I wanted to learn more so I went to Korea with my teacher, and lived there with him to study fermentation. Not bread but fermentation.

It was a totally different experience: I wasn't living in a village, I was outside the village in the mountain, in the forest, and I was using spring water. The air was really good.

We build a really small fire oven and baked the bread over the stones.

It was a really good opportunity because it lead to me experimenting with other types of bread. I started making Korean fermentation, then making a starter from that—and then making bread using the starter.

Actually, there were hundreds of different fermentation processes, but the most interesting for me was something they call *enzyme tea*: They're fermenting something (fruit, vegetables, tea, it doesn't matter what it is) together with something they call *fermented sugar,* which they produce themselves.

When it's fermented for 100 days, it becomes really intensive, like syrup. They mix it with water and drink it like tea. It can be cold or hot or whatever.

As an experiment, I tried to mix this enzyme tea with flour: after three days it had doubled or tripled in volume! Then I used it in the dough, fermenting it for 72 or 80 hours.

And after that, I baked it and it was looking like perfect bread! I think there is a lot of yeast in this syrup.

Now, here in Bulgaria, I use fermented honey. Sometimes, there are bubbles over the honey (when collected directly from the bees), lots of bubbles. It starts oxidizing or something like this. My honey supplier, he's collecting only this part of the honey that ferments really quickly and giving it to me. I then put it to ferment with fruit.

I think I'm going to have more information about this soon because my honey man is going to bring this honey to a laboratory to see what exactly is happening inside so we can understand the process a bit better.

***Jarkko**: That'll be interesting, yeah.*

Presian: I have started using this type of syrup in bread to make sweet breads. Last week, we made strawberry bread and chocolate bread, using this syrup from strawberries. It makes the bread sweeter, but not too sweet—and everybody that tried the bread said that the bread tastes like strawberry!

It's also really healthy because it's fermented for a long time: Easy to digest and doesn't add a lot of additional energy as the microorganisms already ate most of the sugar.

***Jarkko**: Sounds amazing! But, to do this, do you need to have this special honey?*

Presian: I did try it with regular honey, and fermentation happened in a longer period of time. But the taste was not that good.

I think it's connected with the fermented honey, but it's OK, I'm not running out of fermented honey any time soon. The person that gives me the honey, he has a lot of bees. I take all the fermented honey for myself.

***Jarkko**: There is not much competition for who gets it.*

Presian: At the moment. My students are trying to buy the fermented honey.

***Jarkko**: So, you'll have competition soon!*

Presian: I'm teaching my own competition!

After I came back from South Korea, I took a bus to Hungary, and then to Austria to see a really famous company, Komo, for stone mills.

I went to their headquarters to see the production center because I wanted to become their representative in Bulgaria.

In Bulgaria, there was no good stone milled flour at that time, in 2014, so I wanted to learn how to mill really good flour using a stone mill. I also went to another company that makes commercial mills, really big ones, again stone mills.

Then, I also visited several bakers in Austria to study German style bread.

"I want to work with the grain bank in Bulgaria to start raising the heritage wheat that our ancestors were raising in the 16th century, 17th century, 18th century—and my grandfather as well. His wheat."

***Jarkko**: Sounds exciting. Will the milling of the flour also be part of the future at Baker Brothers, then?*

Presian: I'm working with one producer that has 10,000 acres of land. They bought a stone mill and started milling flour. But they're not millers, they're farmers.

So, we're working together to make really good flour for me: unbleached, unsifted white flour. The color is great, and they're producing seven types of bread wheat. But it's not heritage wheat. It's just normal, current, modern bread wheat.

I talked with them last week saying that we have to start developing heritage wheats, because Bulgaria has a lot of heritage wheat that's influencing the world. For example, in America and Canada there is one really popular wheat called *Red Fife*—it's actually coming from Bulgaria, then going to Ukraine, then from Ukraine going to Canada, then from Canada to America. We had it before, but our farmers didn't care for it so we lost the species.

I want to work with the grain bank in Bulgaria to start raising the heritage wheat that our ancestors were raising in the 16th century, 17th century, 18th century—and my grandfather as well. His wheat. We're going to plant small areas to just experiment this year and to see how it goes, and then continue more and more.

After Austria, we went to Sweden with one Swedish master baker we had classes, and one Indian master baker who is actually Swedish now., Beesham Soogrim.

We had classes with him[2]. Actually it was really good to be with him because it's really funny how he's from the island of Mauritius, and then he became Danish and he married a Danish wife, and then he became Swedish, and then from chef he became a master baker.

So many changes!

His way of doing bread is also really similar to mine. We had a lot of things in common.

It was really interesting to study together and see the danishes and croissants and everything that you do with butter, using only sourdough, without any commercial yeast!

After this, I went back to South Korea for a little over three months—but this time to work in a bakery called Artisan Bakers, in Seoul. They do a sourdough bread that is not sour at all. They use only white flour and they do low temperature retarding at four degrees.

***Jarkko**: That's quite a low temperature!*

Presian: Yeah, so it's really slow, but they use a lot of sourdough, like 50, 60, 70% of the final dough. But when the bread comes out, it doesn't taste like sourdough bread at all! It's like just normal bread, but looks like sourdough, and inside the air pockets are like sourdough.

"It's really slow, but they use a lot of sourdough, like 50, 60, 70% of the final dough"

Really, really interesting bread. The owner, the master baker, explained that Korean people don't like a sour taste in bread.

They want a sweet taste, so he decided that his job is to not make it sour. He succeeded, and people started buying sourdough bread!

---

2 Quite the coincidence, while I was chatting with Presian, Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo was writing her article about her and Beesham's workshop!.

***Jarkko**: It's quite strange that using a lot of sourdough starter can make it less sour.*

Presian: Yeah, I was thinking it would be the opposite way.

***Jarkko**: Yeah, me too.*

Presian: In Sweden, the master baker asked us, "If the starter is sour and you put a lot of starter, will the bread be sour?" I said "No," but the master baker said, "Of course, it will be really sour."

The Korean master baker, his bread was never sour. He used a lot of starter... Maybe the starter was really young and not sour at all.

***Jarkko**: Sounds like something to experiment with.*

Presian: Yeah, actually when I came back to Bulgaria, I tried to do the same recipe at my bakery but it didn't work at all.

His temperature is four degrees, but my refrigerators are around 9-10, 11 degrees. If I use 60% of starter, after six hours, the dough comes out of the box.

Now, we are using 5 or 10% of starter in the dough. It's really good for us. But then I went to Korea in November and they gave me flour and starter and everything and asked me to make bread. I made the bread with the Bulgarian recipe, and it didn't work at all!

They were arguing that I couldn't make bread. They were insulting me and the bread.

***Jarkko**: It sounds like the environment changes the baking a lot.*

Presian: I think so. Which makes it really difficult if you're a traveling baker… You have to adapt every time. Now, I know this.

Before I didn't know this.

***Jarkko**: Going back to BakerBrothers. At the moment, what's your division of work between baking and teaching like?*

Presian: We're baking bread from Tuesday to Friday. Saturdays and Sundays we're teaching classes, and this week and the last week and the next week we're teaching another set of classes Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

We're working in the bakery from 10:30 in the evening until 7:30 in the morning, baking the bread, packing it. And then we have other people that come with cars and deliver the bread. We have three shops that we sell the bread in, and three online markets—the online markets are the best because we bring the bread to their office, storage room, and then they deliver it home to everybody.

After that, I start the classes around 11 before lunchtime, and then finish the classes around 5:30.

***Jarkko**: When do you sleep?*

Presian: Rarely. When I have time. I don't know. Sometimes.

***Jarkko**: Sometimes? I see… Well, as the last question, do you have some tips or ideas that you would like to share with people who read the article and like to bake bread. Whatever you want to add or say.*

Presian: There is one baker that I follow in San Francisco—not Chad Robertson, another one, Josey Baker[3]. He's really young, just a little bit older than me, I think.

I read one blog post from him that was wild, bold, dark, and something like this. I was thinking about this... It's really important for the bread baker to be bold: Experiment with everything you want because there is unlimited possibility of everything.

Several years ago I was nobody. I was just a normal person, but then I started doing everything I want in the way I want—even if I knew something wasn't going to work, I still did it.

For example, what happens when you mix one kilogram of flour with two kilograms of water? Nothing good, but still I did it! After some point of time, I started getting different processes and just experimenting more and more and more.

Now, I'm still really young, 25 years old, but there are a lot of things that I have done that bakers who are 40 or 50 never did. I am at a place in my life that even people from far away countries are sending me messages and talking with me, and sharing passion between each other. And other master bakers are saying that my skills are good and my knowledge is not bad.

That proves that if you want to follow your dream, you just need to do it—and do it again and again and again. You need enthusiasm and you need to be really bold and you need to follow your dream and be stubborn about it. Don't care about what anybody says!

In my career, in the beginning, everybody said I'm stupid or I shouldn't do that or the baker's job is really nothing, not good. Now, the same people are saying "Oh, it was a great decision to become a baker..."

"I'm still really young, 25 years old, but there are a lot of things that I have done that bakers who are 40 or 50 never did. "

3 Check out our October 2013 issue for an interview with Josey Baker.


professional
level classes
"Jeffrey is so caring-willing to share a wealth of knowledge!"
With
ARTISAN BAKERS
Korean Artisan Bakery Association
Bread ON
boulangerie
TOSTEM
/주/토탈베이커리스템


writer , Master Baker Jeffrey Hamelman in Seoul Korea
1st Feb. ~ 7th
2015
With
ARTISAN BAKERS
Korean Artisan Bakery Association
Bread ON
boulangerie
TOSTEM
/주/토탈베이커리스템
BREAD
Jeffrey Hamelman

❊ ❊

Presian's next goal is to move the bakery to a bigger location with a storefront that will allow customers to see the bakers at work.

"They want to see us when we're making the bread and we're hidden." he says.

"I'm thinking that the bakery would be something like a café and a bakery at the same time, serving a little bit of salads and fermented cakes and stuff like this. I'd also like to start doing professional classes there."

And despite an Indiegogo campaign that failed to reach its goal and a bank loan that was denied, the bakery is happening!

Presian's bold can-do attitude has inspired people from different professions, from architects to web designers, and they are all donating their time and skills for the project, a new bakery opening in September!

"For me, bread is something that I can use to change the lives of people. It doesn't matter how. When I teach bread, I change people. When I give them good bread, I change them. When they give bread to their friends, it changes them. When my students give bread to other people, it changes them. When children grow up with real bread, it changes them. I think it's just really big change. Just one simple thing that we make from really simple ingredients with really complicated process, it can change everything. That's what bread is for me." Presian says.

❊ ❊

To follow Presian as he lives his life thinking about nothing but bread, check out his Instagram feed.

INSANELY INTERESTED PUBLISHING IS A PUBLISHER OF MICRO MAGAZINES FOR THE CURIOUS.

A micro magazine is a magazine that focuses on a very specific topic, published online or off by a small but passionate team of writers.

I am Jarkko Laine, a software developer and startup entrepreneur, a writer, the publisher of this magazine, and a creative guy interested in almost everything, from Vantaa, Finland.

I believe that as humans, we are born curious and need to keep learning about different things to enjoy our lives to the fullest. *Insanely Interested* is here to deliver a small part of that healthy diet for a curious brain.

My love for a dark crust on a soft white crumb combined with a need to find out how things are made lead me to create the magazine you are now reading.

Through little steps, as I keep learning about online publishing, I am building the magazine into a sustainable, long-lasting business that can serve the world by presenting and sharing ideas and stories from people doing things they believe in.

Having you with me on this journey brings me joy.

BAGUETTES FOR BEGINNERS

Words: JARKKO LAINE
Photos: JARKKO LAINE, PAUL ASMAN, JILL LENOBLE, and KATHRYN CARTWRIGHT

The baguette is not a traditional bread—not in the same sense as a classic country sourdough or a slow fermented 100% rye bread is traditional. Made in a quick process using fine sifted white flour, bakers' yeast, a hot oven with a lot of steam—an innovation brought to France in 1839 by a Viennese baker named August Zang, the baguette is clearly a product of the industrial age.

But one of its most delicious products!

The exact history of the French bread known and appreciated all over the world is not completely clear, and as Jim Chevallier writes in his small but well-researched book, About the Baguette: Exploring the Origin of a French National Icon, a lot of its history is probably fabricated by people who make their living selling the bread, French culture, or just good stories: "Whatever the case, the reader will find much here about the traditional breads and much about the baguette, but very little about the 'traditional baguette'."

The word *baguette* wasn't used to describe—at least in writing—a type of bread[1] until, almost out of nowhere, it appeared in newspapers and ads in the 1920s.

But was there a specific event that created the baguette, such as the often mentioned law forbidding bakers from working between 10 P.M. and 4 A.M. and thus forcing them to bake longer and thinner breads to make them all in time for breakfast? Probably not, Chevallier concludes.

Culinary history is not an easy topic for study, but looking at the long line of long (and sometimes thin) breads in the history of French bread, it's easy to see that there was no shortage for baguette predecessors.

At the end of the 19th century, visitors were amazed by the huge breads, up to two meters or six feet long, that people were selling and carrying on the streets of Paris!

1 Before this, most often it referred to a magic wand, as in *baguette magique*.

The biggest difference between the baguette and other long breads was probably just the state of bread making in general. Chevallier writes: *"In fact, any differences may have more to do with the state of bread-making in this earlier period than in any fundamental difference in the breads. By the time the baguette (under that name) appeared, not only had ovens improved in general but many bakers used a special steam oven. Too, even the best eighteenth century flour of the time was inferior to most nineteenth century flour. [..] In other words, it is not out of the question that the baguette is merely a modern version of these breads; but nor (lacking precise definitions from either then or now) is it certain that it is."*

Raymond Calvel offers a similar explanation: "Following the first World War, the technology was at last in place to produce light and delicately flavored loaves with a crispy crust. Mixing machines, stronger flours, yeast-based recipes, steam injection ovens, etc., all contributed to this."

"Whatever the history, what remains true is that the baguette is the most popular bread in France (and any of its former colonies) today."

Whatever the history, what remains true is that the baguette is the most popular bread in France (and any of its former colonies) today. According to the official web site of the French government, it makes up to 80% of bread consumed in the country and is eaten at every meal. And every year, bakers compete on making the best baguette in Paris, the winner becoming the official supplier of baguettes for the president's residence for the year.

The baguette also inspires artisan bakers, both amateur and professional, around the world, again and again. Unlike the original French bakers, we mix in sourdough and push the limits of the fermentation, making the perfect baguette a lot like the holy grail of bread making. But for this amazing adventure, we have the French to thank.

Enough about history, let's get to work and make some baguettes ourselves!

A deceptively simple bread, baguettes are usually made with nothing but wheat flour, water, yeast, and salt—and maybe some unspecified additives such as ascorbic acid and added gluten.

I don't know why, maybe because of the short list of ingredients, or maybe—as Samuel Fromartz writes in In Search of the Perfect Loaf—because the baguette is so well-known, many of us try making a baguette early on in our bread making adventures: "At that time, the baguette defined bread for me and I saw no reason why I shouldn't try to bake it, even as a beginner."

"This isn't unusual. Many novices start out with this iconic loaf. And that's where the trouble begins, because it's like the equivalent of wanting to knock out a Beethoven sonata when you sit down at the piano for the first time." Fromartz writes.

But let's not mystify the bread too much either! Sure, making a good baguette isn't easy, and yes, if you aren't already making other types of breads, you shouldn't attempt to make a baguette. But that said, don't stay away from it for too long: the only way to learn to make great baguettes is to make lots of bad ones!

I'm far from mastering the perfect baguette myself, but sometimes having another beginner explain what he has learned is just what you need to get started. So, in what follows, you'll find my lessons learned from the past six months of practicing my baguettes (together with some material from some great books...).

❊ ❊

"Don't stay away from baguettes for too long: the only way to learn to make great baguettes is to make lots of bad ones!"

Among French bakeries, the most typical baguette is a lean yeasted bread made with wheat flour. Often, a portion of old dough saved from the previous day's batch—known as *pâte fermentée*—is added to bring some more complexity to the flavor.

Some artisan bakeries make *levain* baguettes, but they are still in the minority: baguettes are eaten almost immediately after having been baked, so most people see no need to complicate them too much.

This type of simple baguette dough is also the one we'll make in this article. Before we get there, however, let's take a look at alternatives. After all, while this is an introduction to baguettes, I'm sure you'll want to go further and try some more advanced baguettes soon!

One option you'll often see in baguette recipes in books and on-line is using *poolish*, a pre-ferment similar to the *pâte fermentée* but without the salt. The poolish is usually created using equal amounts (in weight) of flour and water, so it is more liquid than the old dough we'll use in this version.

Then, moving forward, you'll find recipes—such as the one Chad Robertson presents in Tartine Bread—that combine poolish with some *levain*, or sourdough starter. And then there's the 100% sourdough baguette, like those you saw on page 64.

Despite the often-heard claim, there is no French law defining the legally correct baguette, and so I think it's fair to say that a baguette, just like any other type of bread, is open for experimentation. In Asia, bakers add rice flour, and in Finland—even though I'd say this is maybe stretching it too far—some bakers are even making 100% rye baguettes!

THE RECIPE

In this article, we'll first mix a simple (but good) yeasted baguette dough and then look more closely at shaping and baking the breads. After all, it's not the recipe that makes a baguette, it's the technique.

If you like, you can use pretty much any yeasted or sourdough bread recipe to get started. Just don't make the dough too wet at first. Yes, a lot of artisan bakers—both home bakers and professionals—push the hydration to create bigger and bigger air pockets, and I agree, their breads look fabulous.

But as we saw in the Sam Fromartz quote earlier, you shouldn't start from Beethoven's sonatas. You'll need to play something easier, like Old MacDonald Had a Farm first... So, when you're just getting started, a firm dough is much easier to handle, and thus better for practicing the shaping. And, in general, I've found that most baguette formulas actually aren't all that wet. A hydration of about 65% in bakers' percentages is very typical.

So, here's my version:

Ingredients	Quantity	Baker's %
All-purpose flour	500 g	100%
Water	325 g	65%
Sea salt	10 g	2%
Active dry yeast	2.5 g	0.5%
Pâte fermentée	150 g	30%

The first time you make this dough, you won't have old dough left from a previous bake. No worries! You can either skip it for now or create some old dough using the same formula the night before. Just scale it down to 50% or so, so you won't end up with too much old dough.

In The Bread Baker's Apprentice, Peter Reinhart says that you can vary the amount of old dough as you like, up to 50% of the flour weight.

To make the bread:

1. Mix the ingredients until all of the flour has been incorporated and no dry lumps remain.
2. Work the dough for ten minutes by hand. A strong gluten structure will make the dough easier to shape and will result into a nice oven spring later on.
3. Put the dough back into its bowl, cover, and let it rest until it has doubled in size and shows visible air bubbles. For more flavor, you might want to delay this step by placing the dough in the refrigerator overnight. At room temperature, the first fermentation takes about 1 to 1.5 hours.

   If you like, a stretch and fold about half an hour into the first fermentation never hurts.

After the first rest is ready, we get to the most interesting part in making baguettes: shaping!

In Parisian bakeries, baguettes usually weigh 250 grams and are about 60 cm long. Baking at home, that's not very practical, and so, I usually bake much smaller baguettes of roughly 150 grams each. They make nice sandwiches and are rather easy to handle.

The key in shaping a baguette is to create a strong spine—as Richard Bertinet calls describes the process in Dough—by rolling the dough towards you simultaneously closing the seam tightly (while still trying to not knock out all of the air from the first). This will create strength to the dough so that when you bake it, the oven spring bursts to the correct direction: up.

Most baguette making instructions tell you to close the seams using the palm of your dominant hand. While it may be a good technique, I always struggled with it (I have rather big hands...). If you too have trouble with this method, I've found that using your (floured) fingertips works just fine.

WHEN TO ADD THE SALT?

In the past, I've often recommended leaving the salt out of the initial mix and adding it only after having kneaded the dough for a while—or even after the first half hour of fermentation.

The theory goes that adding salt in the beginning would capture some of the water and thus make the hydration of the flour less effective. Salt might also slow down fermentation, but in most cases, that's not a bad thing at all…

Recently, I have been experimenting with mixing salt in right at the beginning with the rest of the ingredients, and—at least when baking in small quantities at home—I have noticed no change in my bread.

As it's easier to mix the salt in the flour than to sprinkle it on top of an already kneaded dough, I'm ready to recommend this method for most home bakers.

On the next two pages, you'll find photos of the different steps. Also, as shaping is often easier to show in action than to explain in text, here's a small video I made to explain this "simplified" shaping technique.

4. Divide the dough into pieces of about 150 grams each. Preshape as loose balls, cover, and leave to relax for 15 minutes.
5. Flatten the ball gently, then, starting from the edge furthest from you, fold the dough into the middle of itself. Close the seam with your fingers—or the palm of your hand.

6. Repeat the folding and sealing three to four times. Now you have a nice baton shape. Roll it gently on the table, slowly moving your hands from the middle towards the edges. Be careful to keep the desired length in mind. If you make your baguette too long, there's no good way to bring it back to a shorter length. (A good length is one that fits your baking stone easily.)

7. Place the shaped baguette on a "couche", a floured, coarse linen cloth (or a clean floured towel if you don't have one made specifically for this purpose).

   I have found that placing the couche on a baking sheet makes it a lot easier to handle (see photo on next page).

   After placing the baguette on the couche, lift the cloth to create a wall in between this baguette and the next. Add some flour on the couche if needed, and then continue by shaping the next baguette.

8. When you've finished shaping the baguettes, sprinkle some flour on them, then cover them to keep the dough from drying out.

   Here, placing the couche on a baking sheet helps: if you can find big food grade plastic bags (I found mine from the local supermarket), you can just lift the baking sheet and place the entire batch of breads inside one. If you're not worried about germs, blow into the bag as you would be blowing a balloon and close the bag tightly.

9. Let the baguettes go through their second fermentation. I prefer a longer fermentation in a cool location as it builds flavor and makes the baguettes easier to handle, but at room temperature, following the recipe above, this should take about an hour.

10. Preheat your oven to 250°C (482°F), with your baking stone in the oven.

    As we saw earlier, a big part of making a great baguette is to have steam—lots of steam—in the oven as the bread starts baking. Everyone has his or her favorite way of achieving this, but I like to go with a cast iron pan placed on the bottom of the oven: The pan is heated together with the oven. Then, right after placing the breads in the oven, I pour some boiling water in the pan and quickly close the oven door.

11. When you are ready to bake your baguettes, first heat some water in a water kettle. Then transfer baguettes from the couche to your baking peel. I usually bake four or five baguettes at a time, two to three per peel. When moving the baguettes, try to touch them as little as possible. A small baguette peel—just a thin piece of wood, really—helps a lot: first flip the dough upside dough on this tool and then rotate it back on the peel, upside up.

12. Right before sliding the baguettes into the oven, it's time to score them. According to Jeffrey Hamelman (in Bread: A Baker's Book of Techniques and Recipes), the right tool for scoring baguettes is a curved lame. But the right tool isn't always the easiest, and so, if you're having trouble controlling the lame, you may want to try using a razor blade with no handle at all...

    "The lame is held so that the razor is at about a 30-degree angle to horizontal. Keeping the wrist rigid, a swift, straight slice is made toward the far end of the loaf. The goal is to slice a thin flap of dough. [...] The second cut (and each subsequent cut) overlaps the prior cut by 25 to 30 percent of the length of the cut." Hamelman writes.

    Do the slashes with quick, decisive movements, but don't panic, there's plenty of time to plan your slash before actually making it.

    This video by Ciril Hitz is also a great resource for anyone practicing scoring baguettes.

13. Once you have scored all of the baguettes that fit your oven at once, slide them in. Then, cover the oven window with a towel and pour the hot water in the cast iron pan (be careful not to burn your hands—the steam is hot!).

    Quickly close the oven door and lower the temperature to 230°C (446°F).

    If you have another batch of baguettes to bake, place them in the refrigerator so they won't over proof before you get to baking them.

14. Bake the breads for 15 minutes, then remove the hot water. If you have more baguettes going into the oven, just pour the water into the sink and place the now empty pan back into the oven so it gets time to heat up again. Then bake the baguettes for 5-10 minutes more until they are golden brown.

15. Cool on a wire rack, then enjoy!

MAKING A DREAM COME TRUE

Words: JARKKO LAINE

Photos: DIANA ANGHEL and RALUCA MICU

"If you happen to visit London, you might find this interesting," a friend prefaced a link he shared on my Facebook wall this March. The link pointed to a web page filled with beautiful bakery photos that had gone somewhat viral on the Internet—photos from a bakery that had opened just nine days earlier, on March 19th.

What this friend didn't know was that this wasn't just any bakery. It was a bakery I had been following right from the beginning. A bakery created and run by Bread Magazine's very own Raluca Micu!

Raluca's journey in opening her artisan bakery, OCTOBER 26, is an inspiring example of the power of what can happen when you move from planning to doing.

While Raluca has been baking for years as a home baker, it was just last December that she wrote about her first Christmas fair: "I've been an amateur baker for quite a while now, but apart from selling my bread to a couple of friends and feeding my colleagues with sweets and bread and butter, I haven't done anything of this scale ever before."

Only three months after this article, she opened the doors at her own bakery in Askew Village, London! To me, that stands as an amazing testimony for the power that lies in moving from planning to doing!

Now that the bakery, which Raluca describes "a love affair with sourdough bread," has been running for a bit over three months, I decided to ask Raluca a few questions about the project, setting up a bakery, and how everything is going today.

❊ ❊

***Jarkko**: When was the first time you thought of starting your own bakery?*

Raluca: In all honesty, I don't really remember.

I've always been interested in food: I wrote a couple of food blogs, cooked and—as my friends would say—behaved a bit like a "food snob."

At some point in this food journey, I realised that bread was what I really wanted to make. I remember telling my husband that one day I would love to have a bakery. I've been in love with the smell of freshly baked bread ever since I was a little girl—trust me, this made my teenage dieting years quite difficult—so opening a bakery felt like the right thing to do.

"I've always been interested in food: I wrote a couple of food blogs, cooked and—as my friends would say—behaved a bit like a 'food snob.'"

***Jarkko**: What was the push that finally made you take the jump?*

Raluca: I suppose there were lots of factors involved. I had been doing my Product Manager job in the marketing department of a telecom company for almost 10 years and I had reached that point where I'd sit at my desk every day thinking "What am I doing here?!" and constantly moaning to my colleagues: "I don't want to be here! I want to have my own bakery!"

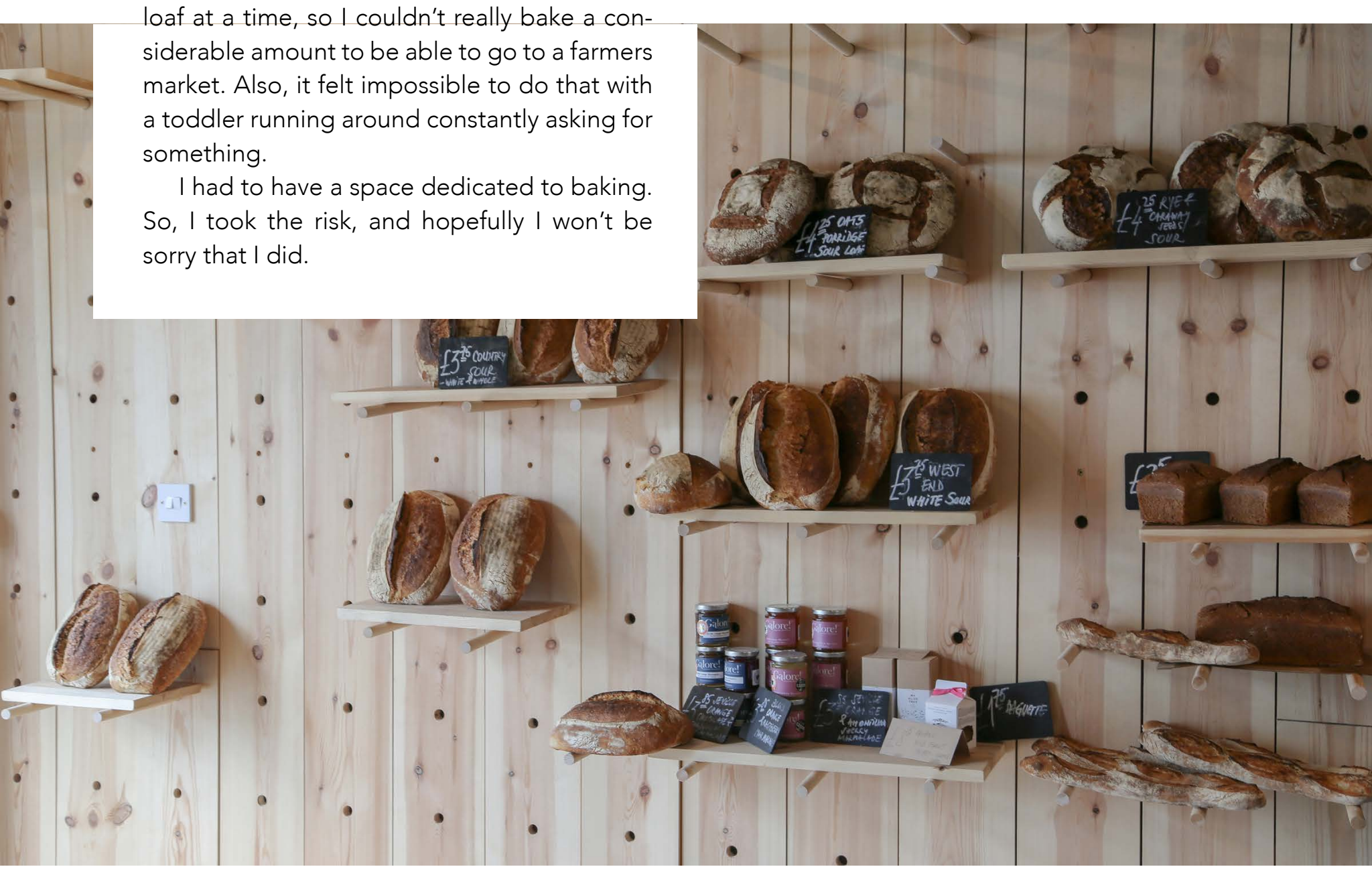
I was lucky enough to meet a great woman who mentored me for the last months in my job and gave me a bit more courage to try and follow my dreams. I had to try and do it now or else I knew that I would probably never do.

"I had to try and do it now or else I knew that I would probably never do."

***Jarkko**: Some people start small, via the "micro bakery" method of selling to neighbours and on farmers' markets. Instead of doing this, you went all in. Why did you choose this route?*

Raluca: I wanted to be able to start small, but it wasn't really possible. The flat that we used to live in had a tiny oven that would only fit one loaf at a time, so I couldn't really bake a considerable amount to be able to go to a farmers market. Also, it felt impossible to do that with a toddler running around constantly asking for something.

I had to have a space dedicated to baking. So, I took the risk, and hopefully I won't be sorry that I did.




SHOP
TO LET

***Jarkko**: At least looking from the outside, OCTOBER 26 went from idea to reality very quickly. Can you run us through the time line from idea to opening the doors?*

Raluca: It did! I knew what I wanted to do, but I didn't have the money to start, and honestly I was a bit afraid too.

However, the opportunity arose to leave my job with a pay package—not a huge amount but good enough to start something small—so after a few sleepless nights and chats with my family and friends, I took it and left the company on the 9th of January. The bakery's doors opened on the 19th of March.

It happened very fast after I left my job and I am ashamed to say that I still haven't got a proper business case for the business.

Even before I left work, I was very much hoping that one of my friends would help with the design and build of the bakery. He was moving to Canada in a month, so we had to move fast.

Initially, I wasn't looking for a shop front, but an arch or an industrial unit where I could bake and then sell the bread to restaurants and shops and deliver to individuals. However, as they say, not everything goes to plan. And so, one day walking around in my neighbourhood, I found this sign stuck to a shop's window. The rest is history.

A couple of days later my friend George and I visited the place. Within the next two hours my mind was set on it and we already knew how we wanted it to look like and what we needed to do and buy. I had a couple of nerve wrecking days of going back and forth on the offer, but it was finally accepted and I received the keys on the 12th of February.

This was me opening a bakery, but it took a couple of weeks of me painting the walls and the dark grey ceiling, of waiting for a plumber to come in, for an electrician to come in, for the counter to be built and fitted.

George helped a lot with building the wooden wall and designing everything. If you are reading this, a big thank you! I wouldn't have done it without you. And know that I hate you every day for all the beautiful mountain bike rides and bakeries out there in Canada!

During all this, I had to work through a list of ingredients and providers and also some paperwork on the company and permits.

I learned a lot in this process about painting walls, fitting a plug, buying pipes... All skills I needed as a baker! ;-)

"I learned a lot in this process about painting walls, fitting a plug, buying pipes... All skills I needed as a baker!"

***Jarkko**: What kind of planning was involved in designing the bakery?*

Raluca: The easy part was the name. I already knew what I wanted to call it: OCTOBER 26. I thought it really needs to be something to represent me, and this was it. This is the date that, it may sound cheesy, shaped my life.

Yes of course it's my birthday, but it's also the day some of the most important events in my life have taken place—both joyous and sad—so it had to be this.

I was lucky enough to have an amazingly talented friend who helped me with the branding and I think he did an awesome job. Thanks very much Iancu! The logo is clean and simple yet so clever in the fact that any way you look at it, it is still a 26 and you can still read all the words.

As I said, the time we had was very limited and in all honesty so was my budget.

I decided what I wanted to do is a "working bakery," a place where people can come in and see me work and bake. This was both to offer them the transparency and opportunity to see what I was doing, but also to allow me to both bake and serve them at the same time.

We went for a clean look with lots of wood to give it warmth. I also added family pictures to the wall to give it some soul.

The back "wall" allows for bread to be displayed and at the same time separates the serving area from the prep area. So far it's working very well and people seem to appreciate it.

"This was both to offer them the transparency and opportunity to see what I was doing, but also to allow me to both bake and serve them at the same time."

Jarkko: What were some of the surprising things you wish you would have known in advance before getting started with the bakery project?

Raluca: To be honest, not that many.

There were some unpleasant surprises, like plumbers not coming when they were supposed to, or realising I will need to buy a water heater that wasn't budgeted for. I suppose some of them could have been prevented with better planning and project management, but there will always be something that you will miss and I've been over-thinking everything for far too long—this time, I needed action!

I think the main surprise was that customers love it. They love the bakery and above all, they love the bread and want to support their local independent shops.

Jarkko: Now that the bakery has been running for a bit over four months, you must have settled to some kind of a daily rhythm? Can you tell a bit about your average day at the bakery?

Raluca: Yes, the bakery has been running for four months now and I do have a bit of a rhythm now, but not the best.

For the first two weeks, I was there from 5.30 A.M. until 11.30 P.M. That was rough! I lost 4 kilos in the first two weeks as I didn't even have time to eat. These days, I have a more humane schedule: 5.30 A.M. to 7.30 P.M.

I usually start the day by turning the oven on, then move on to mixing the pre-ferments for the next day's breads. Some days, I bake the eclair casings in the morning, I fill them and glaze them. I then pre-shape and shape the baguettes and start baking.

On dedicated days, I also shape and tin the whole wheat and whole spelt breads. I then move on to mixing the doughs for the next day while the oven is still baking.

"For the first two weeks, I was there from 5.30 A.M. until 11.30 P.M. That was rough! I lost 4 kilos in the first two weeks as I didn't even have time to eat. These days, I have a more humane schedule: 5.30 A.M. to 7.30 P.M."


£1.25
CITRUS
& BROWN
BUTTER
MADELEINES

My ROFCO B40 oven is tiny: it only fits nine of my loaves at a time, which means I bake almost all day, which can be frustrating for customers if they arrive while the bread is in the oven. On the plus side, there are always chances to find hot bread.

In the evening, I pre-shape and shape the breads and load them in the fridges. As I mentioned, I am at the moment doing this on my own and by hand, plus I also chat to and serve customers everyday.

***Jarkko**: Who are your customers?*

Raluca: My customers are the mainly the Askew Village community. People who live around Askew Road where the bakery is set. I never knew this, but they are a very tight community, which worked out very well for me as word of mouth has done wonders!

They are usually past their first youth and they can afford to buy a loaf even though they still find it expensive, or families with children. Not many young customers, just a few—most of them are French or Spanish and they just miss good bread.

There is a very interesting Russian prince character, the geeky politician, the "I said bye bye to my waistline the day I met you" guy, the chef, the pastry chef, the food critic, the piano teacher, the cute two-year-old who comes every Wednesday with his grandma.

They are awesome and I am very happy I started this business because it has given me the opportunity to meet a lot of amazing people.

"There is a very interesting Russian prince character, the geeky politician, the 'I said bye bye to my waistline the day I met you' guy, the chef, the pastry chef, the food critic, the piano teacher, the cute two-year-old who comes every Wednesday with his grandma."

It's been almost two years since I wrote my first article / interview for Bread Magazine. So much has changed and yet much has stayed the same.

I am still writing for Bread Magazine, but today I am doing so while eating strawberries on a chair in my own bakery while the pre-ferments for the breads are developing and the chocolate ganache for the éclairs is thickening on the stove!

I did it! I talked and talked and talked about opening a bakery and this year on the 19th of March I have opened those doors to a whole new world!

Is it a dream come true?

Yes it is, and hopefully it will be successful and the dream will grow. But don't be fooled: Dreaming is great, dreaming is easy. Doing it is bloody exhausting and stressful and scary — but boy does it feel good!

I haven't got much time these days, for things like combing my hair or buying new shoes, but every night when I go to sleep, my entire body in pain, I can look back on the day and be proud of myself, of my day, of giving people something made with love, something healthy and tasty and, lucky for me, something addictive that keeps them coming back.

I want to say follow your dreams, but it will sound like such a cliche, so I'll say this: Try! Give it a go! It may or may not work. I am not sure what's gonna happen to October 26 yet either, but I will give it my best and I know that I will never sit on a chair one day thinking: I should have done it!

Happy baking everyone!

- Raluca

***Jarkko**: We've already seen a lot of your bread in previous issues of Bread Magazine, but I'll still ask: What kinds of products do you offer at OCTOBER 26? Have you already noticed some customer favourites?*

Raluca: At the moment, I offer eight types of bread, two types of éclairs, three types of cookies, madeleines, meringues and croûtons, plus a range of marmalades hand made in the UK and Greek honey and olive oil.

The breads are all sourdough, including the baguette, and made with Shipton Mill organic flour[1].

- A white sourdough (similar to the recipe in the "Girl Meets Flour" experiment in the Summer 2014 issue of Bread Magazine)
- A country sour—a mix of white and brown flours
- A sesame seed country sour
- A walnut and raisin loaf that I now bake on Fridays, as not all my customers are willing to try the combination and this way the ones that love it know when to come for it
- An oats porridge loaf inspired by one of the recipes in Tartine Book 3
- A rye and caraway seeds loaf: a mix of white wheat flour with medium rye flour and caraway seeds
- A wholemeal wheat loaf almost 99% whole wheat flour
- A wholemeal spelt loaf
- Sourdough baguettes that are a mix of white and rye flours

In terms of which one is the most popular, it's really difficult to say.

1 See our October 2013 issue for Raluca's article about her visit to Shipton Mill.

It is probably a fair fight between the white, country sour, and baguettes. However, people who have tried it love the oats porridge loaf and are now just coming back for that one.

***Jarkko**: Back when starting the bakery, who or what resources helped you the most in getting started?*

Raluca: In terms of baking, I have learned a lot from The Fresh Loaf, following Codruta Popa and Pips's bread blogs and buying and reading lots of bread baking books.

The most help I got from my husband, as he had to manage everything else while I was busy with organising everything — he is still doing an awful lot, so massive thank you goes to him!

My friend George was a great help with the design and build as mentioned and so was Iancu with the branding.

Everyone has been really supportive and positive and that meant a lot! It also helped that doing business in the UK is relatively simple and it's easy to start a small business and the businesses you work with are usually striving to offer the best service too!

***Jarkko**: Where are you now compared to where you see the bakery in a year from now? Five years?*

Raluca: Oh, I don't even think I have scraped the surface. The bakery is paying for itself, which I think, is great. However, soon enough I will need to get paid too.

Hopefully, next baby steps will be to start making sandwiches for lunch and get a nice coffee machine and afford to employ a great barrista so we can make the best coffee on the street. Then, I would like to start supplying some small shops / cafés / restaurants. But today my capacity is limited and I also have no time to go do the selling — so if they come to me with an order I try to make it happen.

For the next five years, I don't really know. One thing is certain: I hope the bakery will still be here in the next five years. If so, I would love to turn it into a small café that serves a range of tartines on top of offering the best bread in the area.

***Jarkko**: What's been the most rewarding aspect of being a professional baker so far? How about the hardest part?*

Raluca: The most rewarding has been the response I've had from my customers. They are so encouraging and tell me the most wonderful things, like "Your bread is out of this world!", "You are the best thing that happened to Askew Road!"

All of this, and that "Sold out" sign I usually hang on the door on a Saturday afternoon are the most rewarding things about being a baker.

The most difficult part is not spending enough time with my family, especially my young daughter, and instead spending a lot of time alone.

I am lucky I can be with me for long periods of time, but I do miss them a lot!

***Jarkko**: Finally, do you have any tips to share with others who dream of taking the jump and following you as their inspiration?*

Raluca: Oh, I can hardly be called an inspiration, but here are some things I have learned so far:

- Always be honest to yourself and to your customers! Do the best you can and if it's not perfect don't despair. Tell your customers the truth. They will love you even more for it.
- Plan as much as you can, but know that nothing will ever be perfect. So, plan but start doing too! You will realise that your plan will need adjustments as you go along!
- Have a story! Your business needs to tell a story. On top of offering the best product and customer service you can, your customers need to understand the story, why you are doing this, who you are.

  They will connect so much better with you and you with them—some might even become your friends!

Good luck!!

* *

If you are in London, visit OCTOBER 26 at 153 Askew Road.

To follow Raluca's baking adventure online, check out the bakery's web site, Facebook page, and Instagram feed.


SOLD OUT!
BACK ON
TUESDAY!

WHAT'S NEXT?

You have now reached the end of this second issue of Bread Magazine in 2015.

I hope you had a great time with the magazine and feel inspired to bake some bread and follow your dreams—a theme that I never planned but which, looking back at all the articles in this issue, pops up again and again. And why not, it's a great theme!

The next issue will be published as Autumn makes its way to Finland, with yet another batch of bread making inspiration and information.

If you are already subscribed for the whole year, you'll receive the issue as soon as it's out. If you only bought a single issue, pre-ordering the rest of the year's issues for $7.99 is the best way to make sure you're not missing out.

If you have ideas, questions, or feedback, send them to me via email!

As always, thank you for reading, and happy baking!

Jarkko Laine
Publisher

PHOTO CREDITS

Cover: Jarkko Laine
Page 2: Very Quiet (CC BY-SA 2.0)
Pages 4, 6: Jarkko Laine
Page 7, 8: Kåre Sjöholm
Page 9: Kåre Sjöholm (left), Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo (right)
Pages 10-12: Kåre Sjöholm
Page 13: Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo (top, bottom right), Kåre Sjöholm (bottom left)
Page 14: Beesham Soogrim
Page 15: Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo
Page 16: Beesham Soogrim
Page 17: Kåre Sjöholm
Pages 18-21: Barbara 'Elisi' Caracciolo
Pages 22, 23: Jarkko Laine
Pages 25, 31: School of Artisan Food
Pages 32,33: Oiva Laine
Pages 34-40: Clare Jackson
Pages 41-46: Jarkko Laine
Pages 47-61: Presian Petrov
Page 63: Michele Ursino (CC BY-SA 2.0)
Page 64: Jarkko Laine
Page 65: Paul Asman and Jill Lenoble (CC BY 2.0)
Page 66: Kathryn Cartwright (CC BY-SA 2.0)
Pages 68-75: Jarkko Laine
Page 76: Raluca Micu
Pages 77-79: Diana Anghel
Pages 80-82: Raluca Micu
Pages 83-90: Diana Anghel
Page 91: Raluca Micu
Page 93: Jarkko Laine