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French boule bread recipe

First, combine yeast, water, and bread flour in a small bowl to create a thick pancake-like batter, then let it rest at room temperature for 8-12 hours. Next, mix yeast and water in a liquid-measuring cup until the yeast dissolves. In an electric mixer with a dough hook attachment, combine the poolish mixture, both flours, and yeast mixture. Mix on medium-low speed until a sticky dough forms, about 2 minutes. Add salt and increase the speed to medium-high; mix for another 9 minutes or until the dough is smooth and elastic. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and shape into a ball using oiled hands. Let it rise in a warm spot until doubled in bulk, 1-2 hours. To create the boule's distinctive folds, pat the dough into a 12-by-10-inch rectangle on a lightly floured surface. Fold the dough into thirds, then fold it in half. This completes one turn. Flip the dough over and gently shape it back into a ball. Let it rise again until doubled in bulk, about an hour. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees with a pizza stone and cast-iron skillet on the middle racks. Remove any extra racks from the oven to ensure even cooking. Place a sheet of parchment paper on a pizza peel or baking sheet and lightly dust with flour. On a lightly floured surface, repeat the folding process for another turn. Gather the dough's corners and pinch them together, then flip it over and shape into a tight ball. Transfer the dough seam-side down to the prepared pizza peel, adjusting its shape as needed. Loosely cover the dough with oiled plastic and let it stand in a warm spot until puffy and full of air, about 45 minutes. Using an oiled razor blade or sharp knife, lightly dust the surface of the bread with flour and score it in a decorative pattern. Working quickly, slide the parchment from the peel onto the pizza stone and add ice to the heated skillet before closing the oven door. Bake until the bread is deep golden brown and reaches 205 degrees internally, 45-50 minutes. Transfer the bread to a wire rack and let it cool completely before serving. This traditional French boule with poolish preferment yields an artisanal loaf that's perfectly chewy on the inside and features a stunning dark brown crust on the outside. Even novice bakers can master this recipe with practice, making it a great addition to any baking repertoire. To create a French boule with a crispy crust and tender crumb, you'll need to make a poolish pre-ferment using a combination of flour, water, and yeast. Unlike sourdough starters, poolishes are higher in hydration, which intensifies the bread's aromas and flavors. Mix 50% of your flour with 62-65% water and a small amount of yeast, then let it ferment for 10-24 hours. For added chewiness, use bread flour like Bob's Red Mill Artisan Bread Flour. Whole wheat flour can also produce great results, as seen in our testing. Be sure to follow the recipe instructions for the water temperature, as it's critical for high-hydration doughs. To make the poolish, mix 50% of your total flour with 62-65% water and 0.5 grams of yeast until combined. Cover the container and let it sit for 10-24 hours. For the boule, mix the remaining flour, salt, and yeast in a separate container. Add the remaining water to loosen up the poolish mixture. Combine the two mixtures and fold the dough until combined, then cover and rest for 20 minutes. Fold the dough every 20 minutes for 60 minutes to develop its structure. After proofing for 2 hours or until it's tripled in size, form it into a ball and transfer it to a bread-proofing basket or surface. Preheat a baking stone to 500°F and let it sit for 30 minutes. Score the top of the dough with a blade before adding it to the hot stone. Cover the dough with a heat-proof metal bowl to trap steam, which will help develop the crust. Bake for 30 minutes covered, then uncover and bake for an additional 15-20 minutes until golden brown. 20-25 minutes. After baking, let the bread cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes to prevent sogginess and allow crumb setting. Slice and serve with butter or use as a dipper for hearty soups like Boeuf Bourguignon, Split Pea Soup, and Ham and Lentil Soup. French boule bread is perfect for Croque Madame or Monsieur. You can store the bread at room temperature for up to 2 days or refrigerate for up to 10 days or freeze for up to 3 months. For the poolish, use water between 80°F to 82°F for slow fermentation. For the final dough mix, use water between 105°F to 107°F to activate yeast. Be patient and let the poolish ferment ideally for 10 to 24 hours to develop complex flavors. Handle the dough gently to avoid deflating it. Uncovering the bread during the last 20-25 minutes of baking is crucial for achieving a crunchy, dark brown crust. Ingredients: 650g Bread Flour 500g Whole Wheat Flour 858g Water 24g Coarse Salt 4.5g Active Yeast Instructions: 1. Mix 550g bread flour with 550g water at 80°F to 82°F and 0.5g yeast to create a poolish. 2. Cover and let the poolish sit for 10-24 hours or until tripled in size. 3. In a separate container, mix together remaining 100g bread flour, whole wheat flour, salt, and remaining 4g yeast. 4. Add 308g water at 105°F to 107°F to the poolish mixture to loosen it up. 5. Combine the poolish mixture with the flour mixture and vigorously mix for 3-4 minutes. 6. Cover and let rest for 20 minutes. 7. Fold the dough by stretching and turning it 6-8 times every 20 minutes for 60 minutes. 8. Let the dough rest for 2 more hours or until tripled in size. 9. Form a tight ball, move to a floured surface, and proof for 60-90 minutes. 10. Score the top with a blade and bake on a preheated pizza stone at 500°F for 20-25 minutes. Bread onto the hot stone. If using a bread basket, then invert the dough directly onto the stone, score, cover with a large metal bowl and bake for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake for another 20 to 25 minutes or until the outside of the bread is dark brown. Set it on a cooling rack for 30 minutes. Make-Ahead: Letting the boule bread sit for 24 hours before slicing and serving is common in France. This resting period allows the flavors to develop fully and makes slicing easier. How to Store: Wrap the boule bread in a paper bag or a clean kitchen towel and store it at room temperature for up to 2 days. For more extended storage, consider cutting the loaf into fourths, wrapping them in plastic, and refrigerating for up to 10 days or freezing for up to 3 months. Let the bread sit at room temperature for a few hours to thaw. Slight variations in water temperature can make or break a boule. For the poolish, the water must be 80°F to 82°F to promote slow fermentation. For the final dough mix, the water must be 105°F to 107°F to activate the yeast. Be patient with the poolish. The longer the poolish ferments (ideally 10 to 24 hours), the more intense the aroma and flavor. Handle the dough very gently to develop the gluten without deflating the dough. I usually keep the bread dough on a piece of parchment for easy movement. Uncovering the bread during the last 20 to 25 minutes of baking is crucial for achieving a delightfully crunchy, dark brown crust. If you live in a dry climate, you might need to add extra water to the dough to achieve the proper hydration level. In humid climates, slightly reducing the water can prevent an overly sticky dough. Calories: 338kcalCarbohydrates: 69gProtein: 12gFat: 2gSaturated Fat: 0.3gPolyunsaturated Fat: 1gMonounsaturated Fat: 0.2gSodium: 6mgPotassium: 209mgFiber: 6gSugar: 0.3gVitamin A: 5IU Vitamin C: 0.001mgCalcium: 25mgIron: 2mg salt is preferred for its natural flavor and purity. Having high-quality ingredients will enhance the overall taste of French Boule. Gather necessary tools: Large mixing bowl, Dough scraper, Kitchen scale, Proofing basket, Baking stone or thick baking sheet, Sharp razor blade or bread lame, Cooking thermometer. Preheat oven to 450°F (232°C). Now let's make French Boule Bread. First, mix ingredients together. Combine flour, water, yeast and salt in a bowl. Add salt last. Next, mix dough with your hands until it forms a shaggy mass. Knead the dough for 10-15 minutes or until smooth and elastic. Let the dough rise for 1-2 hours or until doubled in size. Shape the dough into a rough ball and let rest for 15 minutes. Stretch and shape the dough into a tight ball, tucking edges in. Roll the dough on counter to create surface tension. Let the shaped dough rise again for 30-60 minutes. Preheat oven while the dough rises. Use sharp blade or lame to score X or pattern on top of bread. Bake the boule on hot stone or baking sheet with a pan of water at bottom for 30-35 minutes, or until crust is golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped. To make French Boule bread, you will need basic ingredients like bread flour with high protein content for better texture, water, salt, and yeast. Some recipes use a mix of all-purpose flour and bread flour. You might also want to consider using a sourdough starter for added flavor, but keep in mind that it affects the yeast quantity needed. The process involves several hours: 20-30 minutes of active preparation time, 4-8 hours for fermentation, depending on the environment and recipe used. Longer fermentation times at cooler temperatures can result in the best flavors. This includes steps like mixing dough ingredients, letting them ferment, shaping the boule, and finally baking it until it reaches an internal temperature of about 200°F (93°C). After baking, allow the boule to cool completely on a wire rack to set the crumb properly. You can freeze the baked boule for up to three months by wrapping it tightly in plastic. To enjoy your homemade French Boule bread, consider serving it with cheese, soup, or using it as the base for gourmet sandwiches. By refrigerating the dough overnight, you can develop its flavor and enhance its texture, resulting in that classic chewy crust and airy interior characteristic of French Boule. Shaping the dough is crucial for achieving a beautiful, round loaf with good structure. Start by gently flattening the dough on a lightly floured surface to release excess gas, then use a bench scraper to fold the edges towards the center, creating tension. After pre-shaping, let the dough rest for 20 minutes before performing the final shaping. This time, create a tighter ball while maintaining tension. Transfer the shaped dough to a floured proofing basket for the final rise before baking. You can add ingredients like seeds or herbs to give your French Boule a unique twist. Simply mix them in during the initial mixing stage or bulk fermentation process. Keep in mind that adding dry ingredients won't impact hydration, but wet ingredients might require adjustments. If your French Boule didn't rise properly, it could be due to yeast quality, inadequate fermentation time or temperature, or poor monitoring of dough temperature. Store your French Boule bread at room temperature in a paper bag or bread box to preserve its freshness. Avoid plastic storage, as this can trap moisture and make the crust chewy. If you won't finish the bread within a few days, consider freezing individual portions wrapped tightly in plastic wrap or aluminum foil. To revive this baguette, simply slice off the desired portion, let it thaw at room temperature or warm it in an oven for a few minutes to restore its crispy crust. Our easy boule bread recipe requires just four basic ingredients you likely have on hand and doesn't need any kneading, making it perfect for beginners. The result is a beautifully crusted exterior giving way to a soft interior.