

Oblong Baker

Instructions for Use

The oblong baker traps the steam and maintains an even baking temperature to give you moist bread with a golden, even and crackly crust and light crumb.

The oblong baker traps steam produced by the baking dough and maintains an even temperature to give your loaf the perfect environment. It is especially useful for overcoming the drying effects of fan ovens and the unevenness of most. Use it for rolls or a baguette-style loaf by placing your dough for its final prove into the baker and then put the risen dough and baker with its lid on into the hot oven for 30 minutes (depending on your specific recipe), and take the lid off for the last 10 minutes for a beautifully golden and crackly crust. Alternatively, preheat the Oblong Baker and carefully place your proven dough into it before returning to the oven.

Before using the oblong baker for the first time, apply a light coating of vegetable oil (not olive oil) to the inside base and heat the oblong baker before first use.

To clean the oblong baker, allow it to cool and then wipe it clean - do not use soaps - and over time, the oblong baker will darken as it becomes seasoned.

Based on ancient Greek and Roman baking traditions, the baker is made from Superstone®, a natural stoneware, fired at over 1000°C. It is oven and freezer proof and is easy to clean, requiring only to be soaked in warm water so that any baked on food may be scraped off.



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Olive Oil Bread in an Oblong Baker

Recipe

This loaf has a wonderful crispy crust and is a simple recipe all about the flavour of delicious olive oil in a delightfully crusty white loaf. The olive oil gives it a light even texture, which goes wonderfully with olives and cured meats. Be wary of over proving, you are far better slightly under proving than over proving.

Method

Sprinkle the yeast into the water and allow to dissolve. In the meantime blend the three flours and the salt. Add the flour to the water and yeast then mix to a sticky dough. Do not panic about it being sticky. Cover and leave for about 30 minutes.

Mix in the olive oil and turn the dough out onto a floured surface. Knead until smooth for about 10 – 12 minutes. Alternatively you can do this in a stand mixer – it takes about half the time.

Cover with a damp cloth and prove for about 1 hour, or until half as big again in size. Turn out onto a floured surface; gently tuck the corners under themselves into a ball shape, keeping the seams down, before rolling gently into shape. Try and keep the centre thick and taper the ends to get a French style bâtard look. Don't worry if it doesn't look perfect the first time, it takes time. The important bit is keeping your hands really light, so as not to knock all the air out and keep your hands well dusted so you don't stick to the dough.

Place your bread either on a peel dusted with semolina, and cover again or on a couche cloth if you have one. Leave for about 45 minutes until it has almost doubled. In the meantime pre-heat the oven to 220°C. When ready, transfer your dough to either to a preheated oblong baker. Bake the bread for 20 minutes on the stone or 30 minutes in the oblong baker then turn the temperature down to 200°C and cook for a further 15–20 minutes, with the lid removed, until the crust is golden, and the loaf sounds hollow when tapped. Turn out on to a cooling rack. This bread will stay fresh for up to 3 days – if you can keep others away.

Ingredients

Makes: 2 800g loaves

- 9g Organic dried yeast (1 sachet)
- 600g water
- 550g Strong White Flour, ideally Organic Saponi Antichi Flour
- 50g Organic Durum Semolina
- 275g Organic Wholemeal Flour
- 12g Cornish sea salt
- 125g Extra Virgin Olive Oil from Pelia

