



The Bread Bible: 300 Favorite Recipes

Beth Hensperger , Harry Bates (Illustrator)

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The Bread Bible is the one book on the subject no kitchen should be without -- and now it's available in paperback. A trusted authority on baking, Beth Hensperger has brought together hundreds of time-tested recipes, both classic and intriguingly original, from Gruyere Pullman Loaf and Farm-Style White Bread with Cardamom to fragrant Tuscan Peasant Bread and Classic Buttermilk Biscuits. And don't just think loaves. Steamed Pecan Corn Bread, pancakes, golden brioches, flatbreads, focaccia, pizza dough, dinner rolls, dessert breads, strudels, breakfast buns -- the choices are endless. The recipes are foolproof, step-by-step, and easy-to-follow. Busy bakers will also appreciate the excellent selection of recipes for bread machines and food processors. With a glossary and easy-to follow tips such as how to store and reheat bread, *The Bread Bible* is "a keeper for anyone who likes to bake or plans to get started." -*Chicago Tribune*

The Bread Bible: 300 Favorite Recipes Details

Date : Published October 14th 2004 by Chronicle Books (first published 1998)

ISBN : 9780811845267

Author : Beth Hensperger , Harry Bates (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 496 pages

Genre : Food and Drink, Cookbooks, Cooking, Food, Nonfiction

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From Reader Review The Bread Bible: 300 Favorite Recipes for online ebook

Angie says

Having been baking bread for as long as I have, I've been through a billion and one different recipes, although I often use my own impromptu concoctions based on my mood (or stomach). However, knowing I'm a bread fanatic, my husband picked this up for me, and I couldn't be happier about it.

This book has everything, and I really mean that. It's got the basics, the explanation, the why's and wherefores and, most importantly, the recipes. Oh, my, the recipes. Every kind you can imagine. Simple breads, complex breads, sweet breads, whole grain breads, buns and rolls and pizza doughs and on and on.

If you love making your own bread (or if you want to learn), you need this. Yesterday.

Dee Roll says

Great detail ! Bread making for dummies is what I needed

Trish says

I use this book pretty consistently now. All the other million bread books I have are referenced only occasionally and this stays with me when I need something I know is going to turn out well. In addition, I offered my breads 'once-a-week delivered' a part of the auction for a local farm where I volunteer, and all the breads came from this book. it was a huge success.

The breads range from savory to sweet, and some of the breads, e.g., Pain de Campagne, and Pain de Campagnard, are something to be remembered. I have used them for enormous family gatherings, and one of the best things I can say about them are, that although they "take three days to make," each day is a tiny contribution so that the whole feels effortless:

Pain de Campagne: This whole wheat country loaf is the home-style version of *boule de Poilâne*. The Boulangerie de Poilâne at 8, rue du Cherche-Midi is perhaps the most famous bakery in Paris, on the site of Presmontres, a twelfth-century convent. Steep winding stairs descend to the vaulted cellar where the bread is mixed, rises, and is baked around the clock in brick ovens. This big round loaf has been made in Paris since the Middle Ages. It is the flavor of France, utilizing the age-old baking wisdom of *la technique*, which brings out the best flavors in bread. A healthful bread with no fat, it is baked to a deep brown on the third day after it is first mixed. It has a chewy texture and complements both elegant and casual meals. Because it uses a starter, this loaf will stay moist for two to three days at room temperature.

I must mention also the Eggplant, Pepper and Artichoke Pie, which is really a torta in a yeasted crust. It is such a gorgeous presentation, and hearty enough for a crowd, that it is worth any effort, though again, this is one of those things that can be prepared in steps over days.

Katharine says

I've bookmarked a ton of recipes from this book and hope to try them next week. The instructions are clear and written as if someone you know wrote the recipe down for you, along with notes and options (like if you want to freeze it, or you might want to save a loaf for toast the next day since it tastes best then, etc). Looking forward to trying some recipes. In response to a previous review - the book clearly states how to make buttermilk, on page 55. Pour regular milk in a cup and add a squeeze of lemon juice, let sit about 10 minutes until it thickens.

Phule77 Erickson says

This is one of the first books on baking that I picked up, after seeing it on the stacks repeatedly at Amazon.

It's a fairly simple book, for all that it contains a bunch of recipes, but I think that the large benefit to it is that it is simple, and is basically just a lot of good starting recipes. I've made many variations off of the white mountain bread, and the challah recipes in it are still my favorites, even compared to that of Rose Levy Berenbaum. It's not necessarily the best book for advanced technique, but it's a good start.

Victoria says

This is truly a bible of bread recipes and techniques as it will make you BELIEVE, with the faith of a zealot, in the power of home baked bread. This is not to be confused with Rose Levy Beranbaum's cookbook by the same name which is academic and sits on the shelf collecting dust. We were originally introduced to Hensperger's recipes in her equally useful book for bread machines and eventually graduated to this volume. Every recipe is superb, she provides clear step-by-step instructions, variations on the recipes where warranted and additional information to enhance technique. We look forward to working our way through every recipe, though we can't seem to get past the scrumptious Petits Pains au Lait.

Adri says

the title of this book is perfect. The Bread Bible reads like a bible: huge book with fine print and no pictures. By golly its so hard to use!

I am happy with the recipes I've used, and I can tell the author is very knowledgeable about all kinds of bread making techniques. I've been baking bread for over 15 years and I learned a thing or two! Kinda fun to learn new things after baking so long.

Kim says

Bought this because I wanted a good basic bread baking book. I admit I was drawn in by the photo on the

cover, but the recipes I have made from this book (Tuscan Peasant Bread, White Mountain Bread) have turned out well, even for this novice baker. I enjoy how the recipes have options built in to them, which is helpful for those of us that are so new to baking that we're unsure of what we can substitute for what. Will continue to use this, and hope to try out a challah loaf for Christmas dinner!

edited to say that as I make more of the recipes, the amounts of flour, cooking time, etc. can vary. I'm sure that's normal, since bread baking seems to be a more 'by feel' thing than something that always follows a very specific recipe. I have now made a few other loaves, and I'm getting more of a feel for bread baking. I hope to try and make one recipe multiple times and see if my technique improves. I've already seen vast improvements in my kneading ability! Yay!

Tricia says

I checked this out from the library just to make sure that I liked it before buying it. I made one of the recipes so far. It was really good, but I had to make a few adjustments in the water to flour ratio, but other than that, it was super simple. I think that I will buy this one because I look forward to trying out many of the recipes.

Becky Cook says

As an avid baker this is my favorite bread book. The recipes are written for everyday people so they are easy to understand and everything that I have made has come out amazing. One of the first recipes is for French Bread. It is a crowd pleaser. Top it with your favorite bruschetta and you. It would also make an amazing bread bowl for your favorite soup. If you love to bake and want to give bread a whirl this is your book.

Elizabeth says

I must say that I would loved to have had this book all those years ago, when I was first starting to be serious about making all our bread. I really like how straight-forward the instructions are. I also like that Hensperger includes all methods, from hand-mixing to machine-mixing (whether with bread machine, stand mixer, or food processor). But the book appears to be geared towards people with electric mixers. Virtually all the recipe instructions begin with how to mix the dough in a stand mixer. Many recipes also state that they are suited to be mixed in a bread machine.

It's not really a surprise that Hensperger is slightly dated with her hand-kneading technique in this book that was published in 1999, with no mention of "no-knead" or "autolyse", or "stretch and fold". There is a decided lack of weight measurements as well; all recipes have volume measurements only in the ingredients lists. There is a table of equivalents at the end of the book but it does not include weights of standard ingredients such as flour, salt, yeast, butter, milk.... Also missing from the recipes are baker's percentages for scaling.

Anyone wanting to delve into the world of natural yeast (sourdough) breads will be disappointed. This book is an excellent source of recipes calling for commercial yeast (dry, instant, cake). However, after introduction to Farmstead Sourdough Bread, "Before the invention of commercial yeast, bakers used starters to make breads rise. American settlers and pioneers kept naturally fermenting sourdough starters on hand to make pancakes and biscuits as well as bread", she goes on to call for adding commercial yeast.

Her "Classic Sourdough Starter" calls for commercial yeast, honey, milk powder, yoghurt, and bread flour! She does include a recipe for "Sourdough Starter from a Commercial Sourdough Strain" but surprisingly, there are no instructions for how create a Culture from scratch.

Oh my. For the purists like me: No, thank you.

That being said, anybody who has never made bread before and is sick of paying ridiculous prices for store-bought bread (who isn't?) would do well to plunge in and delve into the many really good looking recipes. And for those who have bread machines, there are recipes galore that are specifically designed to be made with the bread machine.

Favourite passages:

It is a mystery to me how the art and craft of baking a fine sandwich-type white pan loaf disintegrated into a bland commercial product such as Wonder Bread. [...] This type of bread has unfortunately given white bread a bad name and reputation it does not deserve. time to set the record straight. (Back to Basics: White Breads)

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*Buttermilk is a creamy, tangy, cultured milk product, no longer the byproduct of butter making. [...] It acts as a tenderizer in quick breads and is an excellent ingredient in biscuits and pancakes due to its addition of a delicate sharp flavor. (Back to Basics: White Breads, Baker's Wisdom)*

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Semolina: The finest white flours are ground exclusively from the endosperm of whole-grain wheat. Cream-colored semolina flour, also known as durum flour, is the finely ground endosperm of durum wheat. It makes a delicious, high-protein addition to Italian-style breads. Semolina flour is not the same as semolina meal, which is a coarse-ground cereal like farina (which is the ground endosperm of spring or winter wheat) or Wheatina (which is ground whole-grain wheat) and is used in a manner similar to coarse cornmeal. (Semolina Sesame Seed Twists | Traditional Roots: Country Hearth Breads, Baker's Wisdom)

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*One of the greatest pleasures of gingerbread is the intoxicating fragrance that pervades the kitchen-the whole house, in fact-while baking. (Sugar and Spice: Gingerbread)*

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Avoid commercial brands of candied fruit peels. They are laced with preservatives and artificial colors and lack the intense bittersweet flavor and texture of homemade. Make your own candied peels or substitute dried fruits. You can keep a variety of dried fruits on hand in the freezer for up to one year. (A Slice of Divinity: Celebration and Dessert Breads, Baker's Wisdom)

Caroline says

I've made a bunch of the recipes in this book. The banana bread, zucchini pancakes, white sesame bread, focaccio, pizza, eggplant pie, whole wheat sesame, buttermilk biscuits, many more. I started baking bread a few months ago. It's way easier than I ever thought and then you get to eat it, which, most of the time, is a good thing. Well, it's something I really wanted to do, so I went ahead and baked bread, and it wasn't so

scary after all.

The fine art of slicing fresh bread has been lost to my husband's generation.

I like putting pumpkin seeds in my bread. I've got enough flour to keep me cranking out new recipes for some time to come. I really want to make the Anadama corn bread, which is a yeast white bread dough mixed with cheese and cornmeal mush. For some reason this sounds really good to me. But I like soft, gushy polenta as well.

Ah, food! Anyway, I keep reading this book over and over, it's getting a little obsessive. But then it is the Bible ...

Ps the challah recipe is terrible.

Corbin says

Titling a reference book a "Bible" is a bold statement. While I've used a few of the recipes and ideas from Hensperger's book, it falls short of being an exhaustive compendium such as Joy of Cooking.

I didn't have buttermilk when I wanted to make the cornbread, for instance. - No mention of alternative recipes or substitutions. And why not include some delayed fermentation techniques in bread baking? While I am getting tired of Reinhart's arrogant-tainted writing, he does make a mean bread book. Cooking for the Whole Family is gem of a family cookbook that is 1/4 the size of Hensperger's but includes some delayed fermentation in the bread section.

Hensperger has travelled the globe in search of the holy grails of grain products, but I believe she falls short of attempting to reproduce these for the even the lay-baker. All in all, not a horrible book, but not even close to a bible.

Ann Williams says

Sorry...if this is a recipe book, I am a firm believer that there should be pictures. Maybe not a picture for each of the 300 recipes, but gimme something! What I found was a reference to recipe names that I know nothing about (as a beginner) and the same lame illustrations used over and over and over again! FAIL.

Kalliope says

Baking bread is the ultimate test of patience. And passion. And dedication. And the rewards are beyond anything I've felt while making art. It is truly beautiful, and this book helped me understand some very simple but terribly important skills that can't be taught. You have to really want your bread.
