



Sourdough Starter

Great sourdough bread starts with great sourdough starter. That's why commercial bakers protect their starter like Fort Knox and since they aren't likely to share their starter; you won't be getting yours from them.

There are three basic ways to obtain a starter. First, you can obtain one from a friend. Mine is actually from my mom and is 32 years old. Second, you can buy a commercial starter in either dry or wet form. Lastly, and most fun, you can start from scratch. It's science in the kitchen.

A few things to remember when making and handling starter:

- 1) Never use metal bowls or utensils. Use glass, plastic or ceramic containers and wood or plastic spoons for mixing.
- 2) Non-carbonated bottled water or boiled and cooled tap water is best to use as it will be chemical free.
- 3) Pink or green liquid on the starter means discard and start again.
- 4) Be sure the starter storage container is twice the volume of the starter to allow for expansion.

For detailed recipes and directions for making your own starter, take a look at these websites:

Sourdough Starter Recipes

<http://www.sourdough-starter.com/2009/06/simple-sourdough-starter.html>

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/cooking/bread/recipe-sourdough.html>

<http://www.io.com/~sjohn/sour.htm>

Potato Water Sourdough Starter Recipe

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/emeril-lagasse/potato-water-sourdough-starter-recipe/index.html>

Grape Sourdough Starter Recipes

<http://allrecipes.com//Recipe/wild-grape-starter/Detail.aspx>

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/cooking/bread/recipe-grapeyeast.html>

The starter can be used for so much more than just bread. Recipes exist for everything from biscuits to waffles. Books on sourdough starter can be found at the library and the internet has an incredible amount of information making and using starters.

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