

Homemade Fougasse (French-Style Flatbread) with Crispy Edges & Chewy Center

Prep: Day 1: ~5 minutes active + 12–24 hours rest; Day 2: ~1½–2 hours mostly resting • Cook: ~20 minutes

A rustic Provençal flatbread enriched with olive oil, baked thin for crackly, golden edges and a satisfyingly chewy center, and slashed into a leaf-like shape for extra crispness. A simple overnight biga preferment adds deep flavor and sturdy structure.

Ingredients

- bread flour
- whole wheat flour
- instant or active-dry yeast
- salt (table salt)
- water
- olive oil (for dough, greasing bowl, and brushing before baking)
- to taste flaky sea salt
- to taste rosemary (fresh) or thyme (chopped, for topping (optional))
- to taste Herbes de Provence (dried) (for topping, optional alternative to fresh herbs)
- black olives (pitted and chopped, optional add-in)
- sun-dried tomatoes (chopped, optional add-in)
- Gruyère or Parmesan (grated, optional add-in)

Instructions

1. Day 1: Make the preferment (biga). In a bowl, mix the biga ingredients (flour, water, a small amount of yeast) until combined. Cover and let sit at room temperature 12–24 hours, until doubled and very bubbly.
2. Day 2: In a large bowl, whisk together bread flour, whole wheat flour, yeast, and salt.
3. Add the preferment, water, and olive oil. Mix by hand or with a dough hook until a shaggy dough forms.
4. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead 3–5 minutes, until smooth and slightly sticky but workable.
5. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and rest for 45 minutes (a bit longer is fine).
6. Do 1 round of stretch-and-folds: with oiled fingers or a spatula, lift and stretch the dough from the 12 o'clock position and fold over to 6 o'clock. Rotate the bowl 90 degrees and repeat until you've made 4 folds around.
7. Cover and rest the dough another 45 minutes.
8. Shape: On parchment, press the dough into a rounded triangle about 12 inches long and 6 inches wide at the base. Cover and rest 30 minutes to relax the gluten.
9. Using a sharp knife or kitchen shears, make one long slit down the center (leaving 1 inch at each end), then 3–4

diagonal slashes on each side. Gently stretch openings so gaps are about 2 inches wide.

10. Rest 30 minutes more while preheating the oven to 450°F (232°C). Place a baking stone or an inverted baking sheet in the oven to preheat.

11. Brush the shaped dough with olive oil and sprinkle with flaky sea salt and herbs (such as chopped fresh rosemary or dried Herbes de Provence).

12. Slide the parchment with the dough onto the preheated stone/baking sheet. Bake about 20 minutes, until deeply golden and it sounds hollow when tapped.

13. Cool slightly on a rack and serve warm, with extra olive oil for dipping if desired.

Tags: French, Bread, Flatbread, Savory, Herby, Yeasted

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