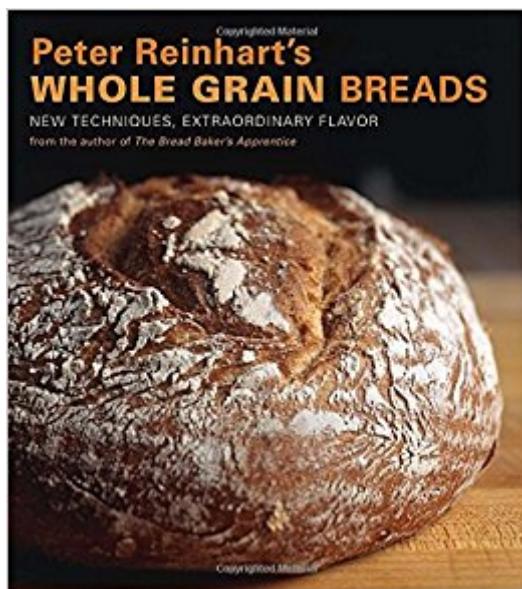


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# Peter Reinhart's Whole Grain Breads: New Techniques, Extraordinary Flavor



## Synopsis

In this follow-up to his award-winning book *The Bread Baker's Apprentice*, Peter Reinhart offers groundbreaking methods for baking whole grain breads that taste better than any you've ever had. We know whole grain breads are better for us, but will we actually eat them, much less take time to bake them? Yes, says beloved baking instructor Peter Reinhart, but only if they are very, very good. So Reinhart, with his decades of experience crafting amazing artisanal breads, has made it his mission to create whole grain breads that are nothing short of incredible. And because his approach is also simpler and less labor intensive than conventional techniques, you'll choose to make and eat these breads. His fifty-five recipes for whole grain sandwich, hearth, and specialty breads, plus bagels, crackers, and more, incorporate widely available whole wheat flour as well as other flours and grains such as rye, barley, steel-cut oats, cornmeal, and quinoa. Each is so rich with flavor and satisfying texture that white-flour counterparts pale in comparison. Written in Reinhart's famously clear style and accompanied by inspiring photographs, these recipes were perfected with the help of nearly 350 testers. Introductory chapters provide a tutorial, with step-by-step photographs, of the delayed fermentation method that is at the heart of these recipes, as well as a crash course in baking science, discussions of grains other than wheat, and more. Advanced bakers will relish Reinhart's innovative techniques and exacting scientific explanations, and beginning bakers will rejoice in the ease of baking wholesome breads with such extraordinary flavor.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bread is back, Reinhart (*The Bread Baker's Apprentice*) asserts, and it's better than ever after being villainized during the anticarbohydrate diet fads; his manifesto of renewal, this enthusiastic tome featuring the kinds of whole grain breads he sees as the way forward, will be eagerly received by serious bakers. In three useful preliminary chapters, Reinhart describes how he developed the delayed fermentation process that makes these breads delicious as well as wholesome, dissects wheat's route from stalk to loaf and patiently walks through the new technique's theory and process, in order to arm bakers with every bit of information before they start kneading. The level of technical detail and demand for scientific precision may overwhelm amateurs, but anyone with some experience working with bread dough and starters, as well as a desire to get to the next level, will be gratified by Reinhart's intense but friendly approach. In the more than 50 recipes, from a variety of breads including multigrain loaves, whole wheat cinnamon buns, brioche and crispy lavash, Reinhart builds on the first chapters with detailed commentary on ingredients and preparation, encouraging bakers to own the process but never leaving them in the lurch. Whether or not a home baker is looking for healthier recipes, Reinhart's peerless way of writing about bread is sure to inspire a new respect for whole grains. Color photos not seen by PW. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

“We've always known how good whole grain breads are for us, but we've also known how they're usually heavy, dense, and sort of boring. Now here comes Peter Reinhart, a passionate bread scientist who has figured out fifty-five different ways to make whole grain breads light and delicious. His work is nothing short of revolutionary.”  
—Sara Moulton, Food Network host and author of *Sara's Secrets for Weeknight Meals*  
“No one is better qualified either as a teacher or as a baker than Peter Reinhart to tackle the complex subject of whole grain breads. His techniques and recipes are easy to follow and yield excellent results every time. Peter and his breads are the real thing.”  
—Nick Malgieri, author of *How to Bake and A Baker's Tour*  
“Whole Grain Breads is a beautiful and important work, which is no big surprise coming, as it does, from Peter Reinhart. Everything here is a gift: the breads themselves (both described and pictured), the poetic voice, the story, the technique, and the generous spirit. Read this from cover to cover, and you will find yourself looking at all food differently, from a new height and a deeper appreciation.”  
—Mollie Katzen, author of *The Moosewood Cookbook*  
“I've spent years following directions from more than a dozen bread baking books. I've babied bowls of

dough in various stages of fermentation, and I've only ended up with bread that tastes like an inner tube. Peter has unraveled the mystery of baking, and I now approach this intimidating subject with confidence. <sup>•</sup> James Peterson, author of *Cooking* "Peter Reinhart is a gifted teacher who explains the science of bread dough in easy-to-understand language. Using Peter's innovative techniques for enhancing both enzyme and yeast activity and following with his gentle, clear-cut guidance, even a beginner can master sourdough starters, pre-ferments, soakers, and mashes to make incredibly flavorful whole grain breads." <sup>•</sup> Shirley Corriher, author of *Cookwise*

The recipes in this book use a totally different method of making bread than what you are used to. They require at least 2 days to make the bread. Having said that, they are completely doable by any inept cooking moron (like me). Some recipes do use odd ingredients, some that I could not even find on .com. I did find them available online though. Also, I would use bread bricks or other means of adding steam to your oven for the best results in a standard oven. In my case, I have a Baker's Choice Woodstove which retains steam during baking. Even then, I put a cast iron pan with 1/2 cup of boiling water in it when I put the loaves in to bake. Your results with making these loaves will be comparable to a Bakery.

I really like this book. It is helpful for me to have the recipes with yeast so that I can focus on the more complicated breadmaking techniques. I cannot keep track of the schedule needed for maintaining a starter yet, so to have a 2 day process is simple. I have baked the sandwich bread and the potato rosemary bread. Both turned out well and they are 100% whole grain flour. The book's pita recipe is at 75% hydration. I made a couple of changes: 80% hydration and add 2 TBSP of "Manuel's Rye Sour" (found in Laurel's Bread Book) to replace the yeast in the Biga. To cook and puff the pita, I use a stove top method: Heat a flat cast iron pan to dry fry the raw pita circles. Then transfer the pita to a hot electric coil for puffing and toasting. I am looking forward to converting the Laurel's Kitchen Bread Recipes to this method. The pita will even puff when reheated in a toaster oven after being made and stored in the refrigerator. The crispness and dough texture are paired so well. For the hearth bread/boule, I used a lidded cast iron pot method instead of the steam method in the book. The rounded dough was put in a Pam sprayed bowl for the last rise. The oven was preheated to 450-500 with a cast iron pot and its lid. Before taking the preheated pot out of the oven, I inverted the dough onto a thin piece of foil that had been lined with a sprinkle of corn meal and flour. It was easy to control the dough and its shape in this flip. Lifting the dough by the foil into

the blazing hot cast iron pot was easy. Then the pot lid was put on and the bake started..

For many years, I would try every so often to make whole grain bread, and always get the same result:"Another two hundred of these, and I can build that outdoor fireplace I've always wanted". With this book, I have finally made 100% whole wheat bread I enjoy eating, and I look forward to trying some of the other variations in the book. The process is pretty straightforward, and the time investment not too burdensome - most of the work is small bursts of activity with long pauses in between. I especially liked making the sourdough starter from scratch, it was easy. The two major insights in this book are that you should do all measuring by weight instead of volume, and whole grain baking requires more hydration (fluids) than baking with white flour. There is a lot of information about baker's ratios that I have not seen elsewhere. A word of advice: spring for the paper version, skip the kindle version. The pagination is messed up, and recipes are hard to follow because they are spread out over multiple pages, instead of on a single page, as it is laid out in the hardcover version. Difficult to flip pages on an iPad when your hands are covered in gooey dough.

I had started baking 2 months ago and while I could get decent rises and oven springs with my white breads, wholemeal bread continued to be a problem. I bought The Laurel's Kitchen Bread Book before i got this one and I managed to get a decent bread out of the practice bread but all the others were dense albeit edible. In addition, even if I kneaded the dough 300 times, my dough did not come near to the point where it passed the windopane test. I baked twice using the multigrain straun bread formula only. i found that it was easier to get to the point where i think i have passed the windopane test (why i say i think i have passed the windowpane test is cos not all parts of my dough could do that but majority could. I guess i just have to knead longer), i have been able to get a little oven spring both times and the bread comes out with a crisp crust and soft crumb. Very tasty! This makes me more confident to try the other recipes in this book. I do agree with another reviewer that i seem to have to knead longer than what the author said is required and the bread was too sweet. I halved the sugar the second time and it turned out good. Initially i was a bit hesitant about getting this book as i heard most recipes require 2 days. However, i realised quickly that the first day was just mixing biga and soaker, which if you are experienced, would take you very little time. For me, it took an hour to measure and mix then wash up. The second day, was more time consuming but i don't think it was any different to other bread making recipes where you had to go through 2 or 3 rises.

The book is great for learning artisan bread making with whole grains. The one downside is that a lot of the recipes are repeated with part white flour. That was just not something I was interested in. For a baker new to whole grains it might be useful, but was a waste of space to me. Having said that, I think this is the best book on the market to learn the method. So happy with the purchase.

Ha!! You should have seen their faces. My congregation... when, right before communion, I presented to them a beautiful, round loaf of 100% whole wheat bread. I could see some of them cringe. They were thinking to themselves "oh no... dry, tough, bread for communion today..." BUT when they came up to receive the sacrament, I could see it in their eyes: "Wow!" Yes. Absolutely. Homemade, 100% whole wheat bread really CAN taste and feel that good in your mouth, when you follow Chef Reinhart's instructions in this book. Well-written, easy to follow... even for an absent-minded pastor like myself! I so enjoyed this book and it is worth every penny. Thank you, Chef Reinhart, for sharing your passion and for teaching it so well. Amen!

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