

Simmering: cooking & life musings by Jennifer Perillo

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Please read the notes below the recipe before starting out

Soft Rye Bread Rolls

Makes 12 rolls

Adapted from King Arthur Flour's [Sandwich Rye Bread](#) Recipe

For the dough

2 ½ teaspoons active dry yeast

A generous ¼ cup - 62 grams, of warm water (it should run very warm on your wrist but not hot)

Scant ½ cup - 100 grams sourdough discard, at room temperature

¼ cup - 50g sunflower oil, or other neutral oil, plus more for greasing parchment

¾ cup - 170g dill pickle juice, at room temperature

2 teaspoons Diamond Crystal kosher salt

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

1 ¼ teaspoons caraway seeds

1 tablespoon mustard seeds

¾ cup - 46g dried potato flakes (see notes)

1 ½ cups - 187g King Arthur All-Purpose Flour (read notes before measuring)

1 ½ cups - 138g rye flour (I use Farmer Ground flour)

Optional egg wash before baking

1 large egg

Splash of water

Sesame, poppy or caraway seeds, if desired, for topping

Combine all of the dough ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer (or a very deep bowl if mixing and kneading by hand). Using the dough hook, on low speed, mix until the ingredients come together into a dry, scraggly looking dough, 2 to 3 minutes. Increase the mixer to medium-low speed, and continue to mix until the dough becomes very smooth, about 7 minutes more.

Transfer the bowl with the dough to a large roasting bag (like [this one](#)), and set the bowl in the fridge overnight (8 hours).

When you wake the next morning, remove the dough from the fridge, leaving it in the bowl still in the bag. Let it sit for 20 to 30 minutes to warm up a bit and lose its chill.

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper, then lightly brush it with sunflower oil.

Divide the dough into 12 even pieces (my dough before dividing weighed 927 grams). Shape the dough into balls and place on the prepared baking sheet. Slip the baking sheet back into the roasting bag and tie closed with a clip, making sure the bag doesn't stick to the dough. You can also use a lightly oiled piece of plastic film if your baking sheet doesn't fit in the bag. Set the shaped rolls aside in a warm spot until doubled in size, about 1 hour but the timing will vary depending on how hot, humid, cold or dry your environment is while they're rising.

About 30 minutes before the shaped rolls are proved, preheat the oven to 375°F with an oven rack in the upper third position.

When ready to bake, beat the egg & water in a small bowl, if using. Remove the rolls from the proofing bag, brush the tops with the egg wash and sprinkle seeds over, if using. With a very sharp paring knife, or bread lame, slash a line on top of the rolls.

Bake the rolls on the upper oven rack until deep golden, and the internal temperature reads 190°F with an instant read thermometer, 25 to 30 minutes. Let the rolls cool on the baking sheet at least 10 minutes before serving. Don't worry, they'll still be nice and warm!

Notes

Where KAF and I diverge on the making of this recipe:

1. KAF instructs you to roughly mix the dough and let it sit for 20 minutes before kneading to allow the flour to absorb the liquid. There is merit in this, and I sometimes do it in my own bread making follies, but never for that long. Sometimes I let the dough rest, covered with a bowl for 5 minutes. I chose to skip this step all together because I tend to make it at night, and am already quite tired. Who wants to add 20 more minutes to the end of an already long day? My bread has turned out great, so do as you see fit. If you want to let it rest fine, but know that my experience has been it does not need this, at least if using the stand mixer.
2. The KAF recipe doesn't recommend making this dough by hand, citing "it's very hard to develop the gluten sufficiently" and that it will take longer to rise and won't rise as high. I find those all odd statements, and hard to believe because I usually make all of the bread by hand, though I've only used my stand mixer to make this (I've made it three times now). I choose to use the stand mixer so I can multitask, and clean up the dinner dishes. One of these days I plan to make it by hand to see if there's any truth in these claims. For now I remain skeptical.
3. KAF has you proof the dough in real time, with the intention of baking it the same day. My work schedule has made it difficult to bake bread the same day as the dough is made and proved, the schedule always being in direct conflict with zoom calls and meetings, often causing me to miss the proofing & shaping windows. So, as you'll see in my version below, the dough is proved overnight in the fridge. It rises beautifully after an 8 hour rest—super puffy and spongy. Overnight proofing also helps flavor develop, and makes the overall time required feel more manageable since the dough is working while you're sleeping.
4. Because I decided to make this into rolls, I decided to bake them at 375°F instead of the 350°F temperature in their recipe for a whole loaf. The egg wash recommended is optional but important if you want to add any seeds to them for a topping.

Are dried potato flakes the same as instant mashed potatoes?

Essentially, yes, but you'll want to read your labels here. Some have other additives or flavorings. I bought the King Arthur brand because it's just dried potatoes, and nothing else.

Why are you using all-purpose flour instead of bread flour?

I used to buy bread flour years ago, and then noticed it didn't make enough of a difference in my breads to make it worth having one more kind of flour to store in the pantry (I usually have spelt, rye, whole pastry and semolina in the house at all times). I found out a fun fact from a colleague recently that King Arthur Flour's all-purpose flour (APF), which is my house APF has a higher protein level than most other APFs, so that explains why it's always worked so well in my breads. This is why I'm calling for it by brand in this adaptation of their recipe.

How to measure flour - a must read note!

Baking by weight is the most accurate way to follow a recipe. I will never understand why the U.S. doesn't embrace the metric system. The original KAF recipe is a perfect example of why cup measurements are ill-advised in baking. If you do the math, you'll notice that KAF's cup of flour equals 120 grams. This means they're likely spooning and sweeping the flour into their measuring cups. Measuring cups vary in size, something that also perplexes me. Shouldn't a measured cup be universal and not vary by style or brand? If your tendency is to scoop out flour from the bag, your cup will also yield more flour than the spoon and sweep method, sometimes resulting in as much as 150 grams of flour per cup.

Bottom line here: *get a scale if you enjoy bread baking, and follow the metric measurements in the recipe.*

How do I store leftover rolls?

Leftover, fully cooled rolls can be stored in a tightly sealed container for up to 3 days. Refresh them in a 350°F oven for 5 minutes. They can also be stored in the freezer. Thaw overnight in the fridge, and warm in a 350°F oven for 5 minutes before serving.