

HOW TO MAKE A

GLUTEN FREE SOURDOUGH STARTER

-FROM SCRATCH-

BY THAT'S GLUTEN FREE?!
& JULIA HUBLER



COVER PHOTO: A LOAF OF GLUTEN FREE SOURDOUGH I MADE FROM MY STARTER. :)

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"YOU SHALL NOT STEAL." —DEUTERONOMY 5:19 NKJV

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MY GLUTEN FREE JOURNEY

There's so much to learn when it comes to gluten free baking.



Back when gluten free was just becoming a "thing" the GF mixes and pre-baked options you had were just badddddddddddddd. Even finding a good recipe was nearly impossible.

Gluten free has come a long way since then!

You can still run into some not-so-great gluten free baked goods but good gluten free treats are now more easy to come by. And the recipes are so much better.

That being said since I've been baking with gluten and other allergy friendly flours and recipes since it was just becoming a thing. I've always loved coming up with my own recipes and making my own flour blends. (I've been baking pretty much all my life.)

There are some great 1-1 gf flour mixes for sale now, but I've been experimenting with all sorts of gf flours and learned so much about how the individual flours preform in baking. I love using the individual flours and creating my own blends in my baked goods. (Plus the good flour blends cost a pretty penny.)

At first gluten wasn't a huge deal for me personally. But as time would have it I got more sensitive to it and now have it cut out altogether. For me, it's just not worth eating gluten anymore.

MY SOURDOUGH JOURNEY



In February 2022 I started my first GF sourdough starter.

This was my first time trying any kind of sourdough. I had just listened to a video by Shaye Elliott talking about a “dry starter” and I knew I had finally found my method.

It was so much less work than what I’ve seen everywhere else.

She uses einkorn (an ancient wheat) flour, and I knew if I was going to invest so much time and effort into sourdough that I had to do it gluten free.

So I took her method and converted it all into gluten free flours. I started out and tweaked it as I went, until it was just right.

But I was nervous to jump into bread or other challenging recipes.

Yeah, a little scared of failure after working the last few weeks on the starter…I wanted something most likely to work on first try. I had heard that pancakes were the easiest so that’s what I decided to make first. 🥞

OOOOOHHHHHHH MYYYYYYY!!!!

They were so good!

I was over the moon with how delicious they were! They were light and fluffy and SO tasty! I could not have been more happy with them.

I was ready to compete with your best gluten-filled pancake recipe—they were that amazing. 🤩

Next up: Gluten Free Sourdough Pizza crust.



It seemed easier than bread and was at least as important to me *(probably more important honestly)*. I worked on that recipe for the next few months until I had perfected my pizza crust recipe. 😌🍕

When I finally jumped into bread I realized there were a few things I DIDN'T want my gluten free sourdough to be:

- Dry
- Crumbly
- Tastless
- Weird textures

Gluten free can so often be characterized by one or more of these traits and I knew it wasn't an option.

After trial and error I developed my first sourdough bread recipe. I chose to go with a no-knead dough that was more like a thick-batter.

This way after baking it wasn't dry. (One of the things I've learned is gluten free can often times need more water that other recipes. This makes the doughs harder to work with but helps the flavor and texture.) It also wasn't crumbly and had a great flavor and texture.

It is heavy, more like a European loaf. But that's what a lot of my customers like about it…

It's REAL bread.

And you can tell.

All in all it is a great recipe especially if you are a beginner wanting to learn how to make your own because you can skip the learning how to knead step. 😉

Currently…

I'm working on my second gluten free sourdough bread recipe and making it a kneadable dough and I'm loving the results so far. Hoping to experiment with add-ins too. ☺

Also working on my sourdough cinnamon roll recipe… along with a few others.

Join Me On My Journey…

Follow me on Instagram
@thats_gluten_free

Or check out my website:
www.thatsgf.com

Can't wait to see you there! 💛



WHY A "DRY" STARTER?

The reason I finally dove into the sourdough journey is because of the pros of the "dry starter" method. Caring for my starter once a week instead of every day was HUGE for me! Here's why I chose the dry starter method and some other FAQ's I thought might be helpful. 💛

What Is Sourdough Starter?
Sourdough starter is a leavening agent that collects wild yeasts and bacteria from the air. These ferment the bread dough and causes it to rise.

What Is Sourdough Starter made from?
Sourdough starter is made of flour and water. These gather yeasts and bacteria from your kitchen and these living organisms are part of a healthy starter.

How Do You Keep a Starter Healthy?
By feeding it! Starter contains a host of living organisms and they need to be fed and cared for. These organisms feed on flour and water. Once they "digest" all you have given them they need to be fed again…or you can slow down the microbial activity by placing it in the fridge.

"Wet Starter" vs. "Dry Starter" . . .
A "wet starter" is what most people are used to. It has a high water to flour ratio. A dry starter is more like a play-dough consistency, with a lower water to flour ratio.

Why a “Dry” Starter?
A dry starter is low maintenance. I feed my dry starter once a week, let it sit out for 4-8 hours (until happy and bubbly) and then place it in the fridge until I feed it again in a week.

Another plus is that you’ll never have any discard with a dry starter!

Pro Tip
Frequently working with your sourdough over the years will make it strong and happy.

Can I Take a Break?
Yes! If you need a break from sourdough all you have to do is make sure you freeze or dehydrate a piece of your starter. Then when you’re ready, just pick up right where you left off.

Facts . . .
A healthy starter is bubbly and smells like a nice yogurt.

Buy Your Starter
If you don’t want to start your own I do sell a piece of my starter at the local farmer’s market. I’m not able to ship at this time but if you are in the Phoenix Arizona Valley be sure to check out my Instagram or website to find out when and where my next market is.

Key: Happy starter = happy bread 💛

GF SOURDOUGH STARTER RECIPE

Day 1 & 2:

- 45 grams filtered water
- 60 grams brown rice flour*

Mix together the water and flour. Flour your hands and work the dough together in your hands. Working with the dough helps to capture the wild yeasts from your kitchen. Form into a ball and place into a glass jar with a lid. Set aside for two days.



Day 3:

- 30 grams filtered water
- 50 grams rice flour
- 1/4 teaspoon xantham gum (optional)

Use a fork to scrape away any light-grey surface and discard. *(Don't let it worry you. It's fine and part of the process.)* Scrape together the rest of the starter and place into a clean bowl. Add the water and combine with the starter. Then add the flour and mix. Flour your hands and work the dough for a few minutes. Form into a smooth ball and place in a glass jar. Let sit for 24 hours.

Day 4:

Repeat Day 3.

Day 5:

Repeat Day 3 again.

*If substituting flours remember you may want to adjust the water-to-flour ratio.

GF SOURDOUGH STARTER RECIPE

Day 6:

- 20 grams starter *(Toss the rest this time. We won't be tossing any again.)*
- 75 grams filtered water
- 100 grams rice flour
- 1/4 teaspoon xantham gum (optional)

Use a wooden spoon to mix together the starter and water in a small bowl. Make sure it's mixed together well. Add in flour and mix. Flour hands and work the dough gently until it's a smooth ball.

Drop into a clean glass jar with a lid. Let it sit for about 12 hours at room temperature, before moving to the refrigerator.



Pro Tip

Now, you can feed once a week or if you are really wanting to get your starter strong faster feed a little more often to get it established more quickly.

Congratulations!

You did it! Your starter is all made and ready to use. It should smell like a delicious yogurt.

MAINTAINING YOUR STARTER

This “dry” sourdough starter method is what made me finally make the jump into the world of sourdough. It looked like I could actually keep up with it. With a “dry” starter you can use it all week and only have to feed it once a week. Here’s how to feed an established starter…

Feeding Your Starter

- 10-20 grams of remaining starter
- 75 grams of water
- 100 grams of flour
- 1/4 teaspoon xanthan gum (optional)

1. Mix together your starter with water. Smash and stir until the starter is dissolved.
2. Add in the flour and xanthan gum and mix until combined.
3. Just like when you activated your starter, lightly flour your hands and you are going to pick it up at this point and work or knead it in your hands capturing the wild yeasts in your kitchen.
4. Place in a glass container with a lid and let it sit at room temperature for a few hours. My goal is 4-6 hours but it really depends on the temperature of your kitchen. You want it happy and bubbly.
5. Transfer to the refrigerator. Make sure you follow these same instructions and feed it again in a week.

Never use up all of your starter! Always make sure you save a little piece to keep it alive for years to come. 💛

MAKING A LEAVEN

To make other people's recipes you'll need to make a leaven first. This "leaven" is basically the same thing as a wet starter.

Yes it is one more step in some recipes, but now you don't have to worry about discard or constantly feeding. You just make what you need, when you need it and the rest of the time your dry starter is sitting in the fridge ready for you to use whenever you want.

Ingredients:

- 30 grams starter
- 370 grams water
- 250 grams brown rice flour

1. Start by dissolving the starter in the water.
2. Then add in your brown rice flour and mix until combined.
3. Let sit 4-6 hours or overnight.
4. Your "leaven" is now ready to use in place of a wet starter in any recipe online.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now that you have your starter up and running you are ready to start making all the yummy recipes!! :)

Stay tuned as I get ready to launch my Gluten Free Sourdough 101 course. This course will take you from knowing nothing to baking your own loaves of bread and ready to take on any gluten free sourdough recipe that comes your way. It will be on my websites homepage as soon as it's published: thatsgf.com

Check for the latest over on Instagram, YouTube, or my website thatsgf.com .

Always reach out to me with any questions you have.

Happy sourdough baking!

-Julia :)





