GLUTEN FREE SOURDOUGH LEVAIN

WHAT IS LEVAIN?

Levain is active sourdough starter. It goes by many names, like mother, chef, pre-ferment, etc. For the purpose of our classes, we call it levain and it is a mixture of equal parts of flour (brown rice plus buckwheat flour) and water with a 25% sourdough seed added to the mix - it is a 1:2:2 ratio (1 part sourdough starter to 2 parts mixed GF flours to 2 parts water). It is responsible for the flavour, the rise and the health benefits of sourdough bread.

BUT ... How do I know if my LEVAIN is ready to use in my sourdough recipe??

#1. It will have bubbles and a dome shape on the top - THE ACTIVITY TEST.

#2. It will have a pleasant yeasty aroma - THE SENSES TEST.

#3. It will have been mixed in the past 4 - 8 hours - THE TIME & TEMP TEST

SOURDOUGH FEEDING & CARE

HOW TO FEED IT

Once established, your pet needs to be fed every 24 hours. Regular feedings are essential if you are baking regularly and keeping at room temperature. This will keep your pet happy and well-nourished.

BASIC RECIPE >
- 40 grams gluten free sourdough starter
- 80 grams gluten free flours (40g brown rice flour + 40g buckwheat)
- 80 grams water

*The leftover sourdough starter is now sourdough discard. Keep this in your refrigerator and use it in sourdough discard recipes like scones and pancakes/waffles (recipes provided in this course).

HOW TO FRIDGE IT

If you are planning on baking less often, the FRIDGE is your friend. Feed your pet, let it get active for 1 - 2 hours, seal the lid and place in the fridge. The feed it once a week or so, following the above method. This helps make sourdough "fit" into your life.

REFRESHING your refrigerated starter. If you want to bake on SATURDAY morning, remove your sourdough pet from the fridge on THURSDAY morning. Give it a feeding (80 grams of water + 80 grams of your mixed flours and 40 grams of the sourdough starter). Leave it on the counter. Do the same thing on FRIDAY morning. Then on FRIDAY night, prepare your levain according to your recipe.

MORE ON LEVAIN

- ✦ Given that it is known as a PRE-FERMENT, think of it as something that must be done in advance.
- ✦ Don't stress about the feedings - JUST TRY IT, it is easier than you think and your PET is stronger than it appears. If it looks funky, FEED it! Just remember, ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS discard your sourdough pet before you feed it. You are ALWAYS feeding a SMALL PET ONLY!
- ✦ Yes, you can freeze your sourdough starter if you are going on an extended vacation, but it is also relatively easy to start a new one, so it is not essential. If you do freeze a starter, you will simply need to refresh it for about 4 days before it will be ready to bake with. That means discarding and feeding regularly.

NOTES: