

Sourdough Polenta & Sourdough Polenta Bread

Sourdough polenta is a nutritious, flexible and tasty. And sourdough polenta bread is a wonderful way to use up leftover polenta (it's worth cooking up more, just to have left-overs for the bread!) These instructions accompany the videos Available to view on www.ancestralkitchen.com

Sourdough Polenta (Makes enough to serve 4 *plus* make a sourdough polenta bread)

What you need:

- 450g (c. 2 big cups) any type of whole grains - wheat, farro (spelt), rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, millet and sorghum (*or* 450g of pre-ground whole grain flour)
- A way to grind grains coarsely (grain grinder, vitamix, coffee grinder, food processor)
- Bowl and something to cover it with (plate, tea towel, cling film)
- 15g (1 tbs) any live culture starter (sourdough discard, kefir (water/milk) yogurt, whey, sauerkraut juice, apple cider vinegar)

What to do:

1. Grind your grains coarsely.
2. Cover them with ample water (between 550 and 650ml (550ml is 19 fl oz) is good, depending on which grain you're using and how finely you've ground it).
3. Add the starter and stir well.
4. Cover loosely and leave on the side/counter. If you have a warm spot, the fermentation will be quicker and more vigorous.
5. In warm weather, your grains will be fermented in 24 hours or less. You can then either proceed to the cooking step below, or refrigerate until you are ready to cook (they'll be fine in the fridge for up to 5 days but will get slowly more sour). If you prefer your food more fermented, or if your weather is cool, you can leave them on the side/counter longer. If you chose to do this, stir them well every 24 hours to distribute the surface yeasts/bacteria. Don't be put off by unpleasant smells when stirring (the good bacteria can produce these as a by-product).
6. To cook, pour the contents of the bowl into a pan and heat, stirring almost constantly. Add extra water - you'll likely need just as much (if not more) than you put in for the original soak. If you like your polenta runny, add more, but if you want to make the polenta bread explained below (and in the third video of this series), keep the mixture relatively thick. Depending on your grain, it'll take around 25 minutes to cook.

Serving suggestions:

Once cooked, you can eat warm with savoury toppings (including meat sauces, cheese, butter and sage etc), or as you would a porridge. You can then refrigerate leftovers and either eat cold or reheat with a little liquid. Or you can easily make a sourdough polenta bread - all the details below:

Sourdough Polenta Bread (this makes a loaf that'll fill a 1 litre loaf tin)

What you need:

- Wholegrain sourdough polenta made as explained above (and in the 2nd of my videos)
- Loaf tin (if it's not silicone, it will need either lining or greasing)

What to do:

1. Cook up your sourdough polenta as explained above (and in the second of my videos). Make sure you don't put too much water in it (ie don't have to too runny).
2. While it's still hot spoon it into your loaf tin. Push it down until you've used it all up, or the loaf tin is full!
3. Leave it to cool, then put it in the fridge. Once it's cold, turn it out onto a plate.

Serving suggestions:

It can be sliced and served cold like a bread.

It can be grilled (brushed with a bit of oil) - it'll warm up and crisp up.

It is best fried! To do this, ideally use a cast iron pan. Heat the pan up for 5-10 minutes on medium (get it properly hot), then put your fat in - lard, tallow and ghee work well - let it melt then pop the slices in. Turn them every so often to avoid sticking and burning. They'll take at least 25 minutes to get crispy; the longer you leave them, the better!

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