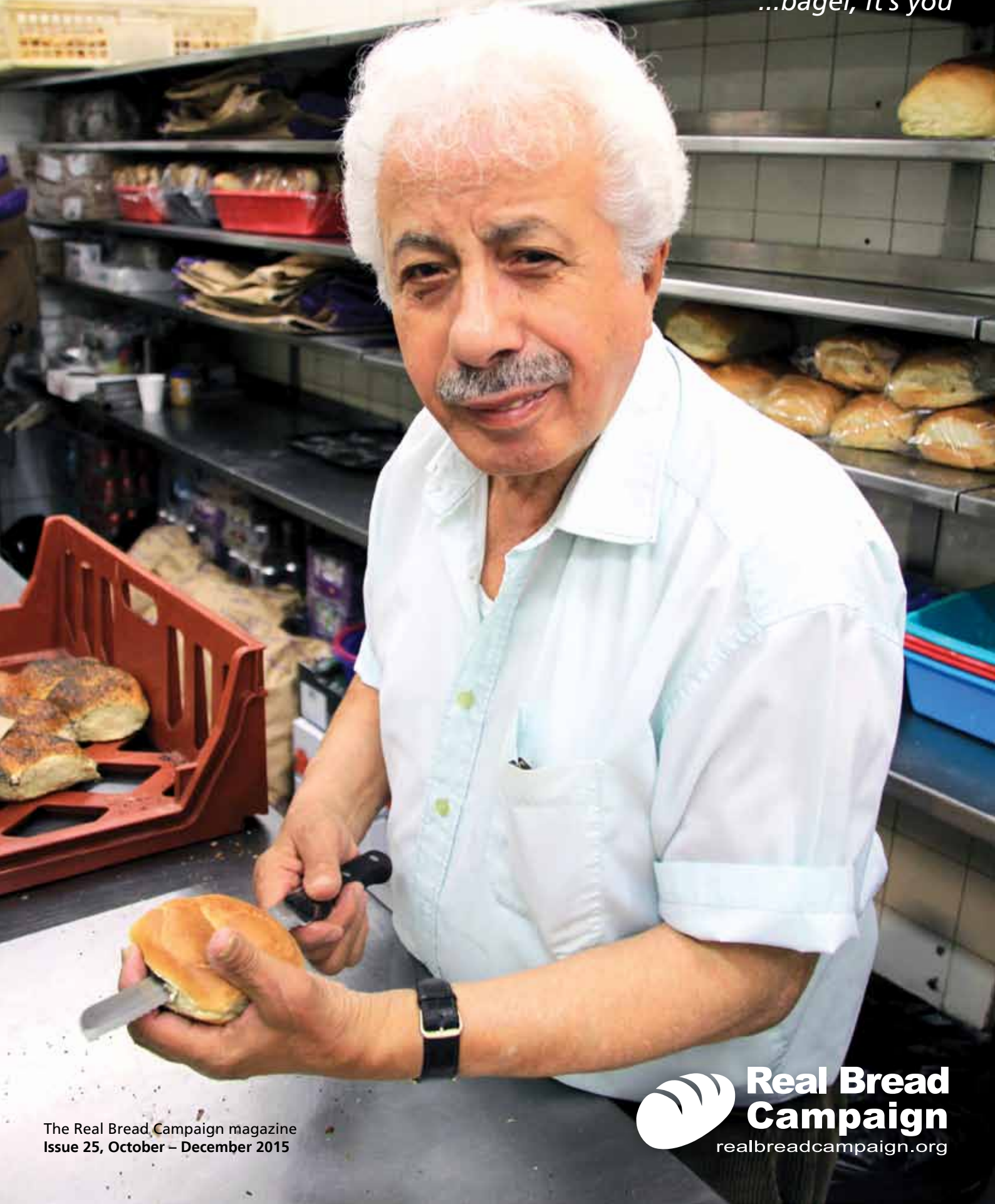




true loaf

...bagel, it's you



We need new supporters!

The quest for funding continues. In the meantime it's YOU, dear supporter, who enables the charity Sustain to keep running the Real Bread Campaign but only on a part-time basis.

So, we need **YOUR HELP** to get the Campaign back up to full time by attracting new supporters.

Do you know any other breadheads? If you run a bakery, is everyone on your team a Campaign supporter as well as you?

Please let people in the UK know that if they join, they'll also be entitled to discounts on classes, equipment and ingredients, including:

- Bakery Bits - 10% off online orders
- Bread Matters - £10 off online orders
- Doves Farm – FREE flour from the organic Artisan range
- Marriage's - 15% off online orders
- Shipton Mill - 10% off online orders
- Tom Chandley – HALF PRICE deck oven*
- First in Service – 15% off maintenance contracts*

Plus they'll be eligible for all of the great competitions we run.

*Only for supporters at Level 2 and above (ie chip in more than twenty five quid a year)

You and they can find full details of all Campaign supporter offers at: sustainweb.org/realbread/membership_discounts



Advertise in True Loaf

Do you offer a product or service that would be of interest to domestic or professional bakers?

Your fellow supporters are some of the most passionate breadheads in the land, and we offer the opportunity to showcase your wares to them here in the magazine. If this might be of interest, please drop us a line and we'll send you details.

Credits

Issue 25, October – December 2015

True Loaf is published *exclusively* for Real Bread Campaign supporters by the charity Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming. Development House, 56 - 64 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4LT

Contributors: Francesca Baker, Lucy Bradley, Hilary Cacchio, Corinne Castle, Natasha Collins-Daniel, Sofia Parente, Mark Webb

Design: Becky Joynt and Gavin Dupee

Editor: Chris Young

Front Cover: Mr. Sammy at Beigel Bake on Brick Lane by Chris Young

Back cover: Cinnamon Square in Rickmansworth by Sue Lacey Photography

Printed by RAP Spiderweb with vegetable based inks on Print Speed paper, which has an FSC Mixed Sources accreditation.

Contents

Starter	3
The Real Bread board	4
Gallery	5
I didn't know work could be such fun!	6
Not in my bread	7
Hole lotta love	8
Pão!	10
Raising dough	12
Afore ye dough	14
Sourdough, pecan, oat and cranberry flowerpot bread	15
FREE Poster (also available to download to print from our website)	16

Stay in touch

You can share ideas and information, join in with general Real Bread chit-chat and keep up with the very latest related goings-on in the following places out in the virtual world:



The Real Baker-e <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/realbreadcampaign/>



Follow @RealBread at twitter.com (please use #realbread so everyone can find your posts easily)

For much more information about Real Bread and the Campaign please visit: realbreadcampaign.org

YOU can help bake the next True Loaf!

We also need YOUR news, and suggestions for features. We are always looking for writers, photographers, and illustrators to help create your magazine.

Please drop Chris a line: realbread@sustainweb.org

News deadline for issue 26 (January - March 2016):
20 November 2015

At the moment, the **ONLY** money our charity Sustain receives to continue running the Real Bread Campaign is from annual supporter contributions, one-off donations, payments for publications and any adverts you see in this magazine.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in True Loaf are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the Real Bread Campaign or Sustain. While we are choosy, inclusion of a product, service or organisation in the magazine does not necessarily imply an endorsement.

Starter

As I write, Sourdough September is days away but for you it has happened already, so I hope you enjoyed sharing the power of sour. If you were able to join us for Real Bread: The Uprising, I also hope you had a good day.

Right now, I've got fermentation on the brain, not only with the aforementioned celebration but also as I'm editing recipes and writing the rest of the text for our forthcoming dough tome. Due out in September 2016 from Nourish books, it will celebrate longer-fermentation Real Bread and some of the hundreds of bakers we've welcomed as supporters. As a taster, I've penned a piece on pre-ferments.

I'm guessing that readers of this magazine will know that there's more to making a bagel than fashioning any old dough into a ring, but Francesca Baker's feature should fill any holes in your knowledge.

Continuing our series on the loaf life in different countries, fellow Sustainer Sofia Parente agreed to tell us about her fatherland of Portugal. I hope you enjoy it as in return I volunteered to walk round London visitor attractions in a giant chicken outfit for the End Cage Cruelty campaign she coordinates...

On a more serious note, Natasha Collins-Daniel has written to call for support for the Soil Association's Not in Our Bread campaign against glyphosate weedkiller being used on wheat.

One for the enterprising types among you is Corinne Castle's feature on how crowdfunding can be used to boost a Real Bread business or project.

Happy baking,

Chris Young



Join the #RealBread chat with me and more than 24,000 other people on Twitter!



@RealBread

Photo: Chris at a Rude Health sprouted flours workshop at Bread Ahead

the Real Bread board

Harvested by
Lucy Bradley



A slice of the winnings

Campaign supporters harvested a sheaf of awards over the summer, including Alex Gooch being named Baker of the Year at The Baking Industry Awards. Real Bread bakers dominated the World Bread Awards yet again, with last issue's cover star Rebecca Bishop of Two Magpies Bakery a double winner, joined on the podium by fellow supporters Stephen Harrison of Farnley Market and Dominic Salter of Sandwich Box. Other Real Bread bakers sharing the glory included Steve Winter of Bread Source and overall winner James Freeman of Victoria Bakery. Meanwhile, The Sussex Kitchen and Leakers Bakery bagged multiple Great British Taste Awards gold stars; Rex Bakery won at The Great British Food Awards; and SNAPS + RYE's Danish-style rye sourdough baked was crowned The Londoners' Loaf in the Urban Food Awards.
alexgoochbaker.com
rexbakery.com thesussexkitchen.com

Small is beautiful

Ma Baker, aka Liz Wilson, has been chosen as one of the 100 small enterprises to be celebrated on 5 December by grassroots campaign, Small Business Saturday. The initiative encourages people to shop locally and offers all small businesses the opportunity of a free listing on their online finder.
smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com
mabaker.london

Bara boy

On October 10 and 11, Campaign supporter Bill King will be doing a hands-on dough demo at the Monmouthshire Food Festival.
billkingartisanbaker.co.uk

Just dough it!

Applications are open for the The Do It Awards, which provide support for individuals to run projects that have a positive social impact. So c'mon all you budding Real Bread social entrepreneurs, the deadline for submitting an expression of interest is 6 November 2015.
unltd.org.uk/doit

Raising a crust

Kent-based Community Supported Bakery Wild Bread has launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise £7000 for a much-needed deck oven. wildbread.org



Just bread

E5 Bakehouse in east London has teamed up with The Refugee Council to run Just Bread. As well as teaching baking skills to a small group of refugee women, the weekly workshop also helps to build their confidence in a new country and culture, and break down social isolation some of them feel. Their bread is being sold on a subscription basis until 13 October.
e5bakehouse.squarespace.com



Harvest home

After seven years of cultivating and breeding, Brockwell Bake has celebrated its first harvest of heritage varieties to be milled and baked. Using sickles and scythes, a small army of volunteer harvesters took part in the manual harvesting of heritage lines including Millers Choice and Orange Devon Blue Rough Chaff at WoWo Farm in East Sussex and Perry Court biodynamic Farm, near Canterbury.

Meanwhile, Michael Hanson, owner of The Hearth sourdough pizza restaurant in Lewes, has teamed up with archaeo-botanist John Letts to plant ten acres of heritage wheat. They hope other bakers will follow suit, or even band together to plant a larger crop to share.
brockwell-bake.org.uk
thehearth.co

Bricks and mortar

A number of Real Bread bakers have gone from stalls and delievery schemes to set up shop in recent months. Richard Hutley's The Lazy Bakery has outgrown his domestic kitchen and moved a freshly kitted out shipping container, near the centre of Rye in East Sussex; Al Kippax's Bluebird Bakery has a new nest on Little Shambles in the heart of old(e) York; and Tami Isaacs Pearce's Karma Bread has opened its doors in Hampstead.

The Sussex Kitchen is expanding into larger premises in North Chailey with ten times the baking capacity. Now located opposite a field of Brockwell Bake's wheat, owner Alex Jacobs hopes to use the flour for a hyper-local heritage loaf.
thesussexkitchen.com
lazybakery.co.uk
the-bluebird-bakery.co.uk
karmabread.co.uk





Gallery



Organised by the Real Bread Campaign and SOAS Food Studies Centre, Real Bread: The Uprising was the largest UK Real Bread gathering since 2009. The day was a fantastic opportunity for around 200 domestic, community, therapeutic and professional bakers and many non-baking dough nuts meet and chat with fellow breadheads; and share ideas, information and lunch.

See more photos at: [flickr.com/photos/realbreadcampaign](https://www.flickr.com/photos/realbreadcampaign)

Photos: Chris Young





I didn't know work could be such fun!

In 2010, the Real Bread Campaign launched its Lessons in Loaf initiative, encouraging bakers to visit local primary schools. Earlier this year, Mark Webb from Orb Bakery in Cambridgeshire went back to the classroom for their Real Bread Day.

Half way through our Real Bread Day at the primary school in our village of Over, this little lad asked: "do you do this for a job?"

Magical day

About three months previously, the head of Years 5 and 6 contacted us to ask if we would teach the children about wheat, bread, flour and baking. Both our children had been to the school so we were keen to help. Then he added "there'll be ninety of them." NINETY?!!

We set to thinking how we could possibly teach that many kids in one day. We decided it couldn't be done. Then that it could. Then it couldn't. Then...

It was a magical day; exhilarating; exhausting. We started by telling all ninety of them about our microbakery, passing around the different types of

Real Bread we make and asking them to think how different it was to loaves we'd bought from the supermarket.

"It was a magical day; exhilarating; exhausting"

Amazing

"Yeaauukkkk!!!" the kids shouted as we showed them our sourdough starter but they so enjoyed getting their hands sticky. They were amazed at the stretchiness of the dough; observed the changed quality of the dough after the salt was added and took great delight in creating gluten windows.

They went off with their teachers to make plans for their own bakeries and create labels for their breads, which

we thought was a great way to teach about labelling and ingredients.

Then, thirty at a time, we showed the children different ways to shape the dough for plaits, cobs and tin loaves. After the second prove we baked their loaves in our trusty Rofco oven that we'd taken with us.

Fantastic

They all went home with fantastic loaves of Real Bread and kids have come up just to tell us how many they've baked since. "Eating the bread was the best part though because it was delicious. It was so good me and my dad made it at home," said one.

Oh, and after we told that first little lad that yes, we did do this for a living, he marched back to his kneading saying "wow! I didn't know work could be such fun!".

.....
orbbakery.weebly.com
@orbbakery

You can find the Lessons In Loaf and Bake Your Lawn guides to wheat growing and baking with kids in the publications section of the Campaign website.

Not in my bread

*Spraying what the World Health Organisation lists as a probable carcinogen on food crops to kill them so they can be harvested faster: it sounds ridiculous but, as Soil Association campaigner **Natasha Collins-Daniel** reports, it's happening to wheat crops across the UK.*

In March 2015, the World Health Organisation's IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) classified glyphosate as 'probably carcinogenic to humans.' You might know it as the active ingredient in Roundup, the weedkiller used in public places like parks, streets and schools and also sold to people to use in their back gardens.

Glyphosate is also widely used in agriculture. Figures drawn from government data show its use in UK farming has increased by 400% in the last 20 years and in 2013 it was sprayed on nearly a third (over a million hectares) of British cereal crops.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, glyphosate is one of the three pesticides regularly found in routine testing of British loaves, appearing in up to around 30% of samples tested by the Defra committee on Pesticide Residues in Food.

What can be done?

The Soil Association is calling for an immediate end to the use of these sprays on wheat destined for use in our loaves. Farmers could easily and responsibly choose not to use glyphosate as a pre-harvest spray on wheat crops.

Millers and bakers concerned about glyphosate can either use only certified organic grain and flour, or ask their suppliers for a full chain of custody guarantee that neither Roundup or any other pre-harvest weedkiller was used.

Take action!

The Soil Association believes that we can't rely on regulators to protect our health; the battle will be won by consumer action. The best way to avoid glyphosate in a loaf is to choose organic Real Bread and flour. The second is to ask for the same full chain of custody guarantee mentioned above from a miller or bakery.

A third is to help put pressure on major loaf manufacturers including Hovis, Warburtons and Allied Bakeries, which are amongst the biggest customers for flour, to insist that glyphosate is not used on wheat. You can read more on this issue and sign the petition on the Soil Association website.

soilassociation.org/notinourbread
@soilassociation #notinourbread

Find IARC Monographs Volume 112: evaluation of five organophosphate insecticides and herbicides at: monographs.iarc.fr

How safe is safe?

The levels of glyphosate found in loaves were well below the Maximum Residue Level (MRL) set by the EU. However this was set well before the IARC named it a probable carcinogen and the MRL for glyphosate has always been a matter of controversy. Some scientists suggest that there may be no safe lower level for human consumption.



Hole lotta love



More than just a roll with a hole, the beigel has a cultural, historical and epicurean history that has been moulded and changed as its popularity has increased, says Francesca Baker.

Head to the baked goods aisle of any supermarket and you will find sliced loaves, rolls, flatbread, farmhouse bloomer, cob, ciabatta, naan, focaccia, brioche, baguette, and more. Amongst these will be wraps, pittas and beignets that, according to a Mintel report, together make up 43% of the UK 'bread' market.

But are they all really just variations on the same thing? Well, they shouldn't be.

Ring ring

The recipe and process is simple. A tight, yeasted wheat dough is shaped into a ring, proved and then boiled for a short time before baking.

Perhaps the first known written record of the word beigel is in the 1610

community regulations of Krakow, which noted that they were baked as gifts for women in childbirth. Various theories as to the formation of the name exist, but the common theme seems to be that its roots lie in an old European word for ring.

Origins

The history of the beigel is intertwined with that of eastern European Jews and one theory for the boiling is that Halakha (Jewish law) dictates that cooking is not permitted on the Sabbath period. Beigel dough was therefore mixed and shaped on a Friday afternoon, left in a cold place over the Saturday and then once the Sabbath was over immersed in boiling water to re-activate the yeast ready for the morning meal.

Whether or not this is true, is debatable. Maybe boiling was in fact done on the Friday evening long enough to stop the yeast working, leaving the beigel ready to bake straight away when needed – a predecessor to the modern bake-off process, perhaps? Whatever the reason, the boiling gelatinises the outside of the dough, preventing it expanding further, resulting in dense chewy texture, and glossy, smooth crust.

Crossing the pond

Taken to Northern America by Polish and other east European Jews in successive waves from the late 19th Century, the beigel found new homes in there in larger cities. But there are differences. Often filled with salt beef or cream cheese and salmon, the New York beigel contains salt and malt and is, after boiling in plain water, is baked in a standard oven. Meanwhile the Montreal beigel has no salt, is boiled in honey-sweetened water and baked in a wood-fired oven.



Ode to a Beigel

In the words of poet
Wally Glickman:

*Blessed bread with chewy soul,
Serene, yet joyous, noble, droll,
Who leads in each Semitic poll,
On porcelain plate, on beggar's bowl.
In luncheonette, on grassy knoll.
No baguette, brioche or roll
Can dare compare with thy sweet hole.*



When is a bagel not a beigel?

Increasing demand and promise of gelt has led some industrial bakers into mass production and the humble beigel has been bastardised. The process of shaping and boiling each one is considered too labour intensive, and so many commercial bakeries use a steam-injected oven. It might look the same, but it's not – as doesn't taste as good.

Today over five million longer-life products marketed as bagels are sold per year in America and millions more around the world. Chain stores sell them, brands package them and amongst the numerous adaptations are cinnamon, gluten free, wholemeal, cheese and more. According to a baker at Roni's of Golders Green in north west London, however, such products can't be considered the real thing as an "authentic beigel can't have a shelf life of more than eighteen hours."

So, when you are next chomping away on your holey treat, remember that it's the process that counts. Making something with love, using natural ingredients and an authentic recipe will always result in better food.

British beigels

Having being opened by the Lieberman family around sixty years ago and run by its current owners since 1976, Beigel Bake on Brick Lane in London has become something of an institution. "There was those ladies who sold the bagels who could curse so nicely people came to hear the curses," Rachel Lichtenstein quotes one former resident's post-war recollections in her book *On Brick Lane*.

Mister Sammy and his team have been using the same recipe for nearly forty years and the question as to how they make their infamous products was met with near derision. "We boil and bake our beigels, how else would we?" It certainly goes down well. They make around 7,000 a day and the 24 hour establishment has queues stretching outside at all times of day throughout the year.



Pão!

Over the summer, London Food Link officer **Sofia Parente** went back to her homeland of Portugal, where she reflected on the position that Real Bread has there.



Photo by Patricia Castro

Pão (bread) occupies a central role in Portuguese cuisine, only equalled by wine, cheese and overly-sweet pastries. Whether at home or in a restaurant, it is often the first item to appear at the breakfast, lunch or dinner table. It is served as a side to soup or the main dish and it features as an ingredient in many main dishes and even deserts.

If you have visited Portugal you have probably smelled freshly-baked bread. It is available at many local bakeries and supermarkets also bake (or rebake) something they call bread as well. Sliced industrial sandwich loaves are almost unheard of and are frowned upon!

Regional variety

Traditionally, the type of bread available would depend on the region. Even though Portugal is a relatively small country, the varied geography and climate favours maize cultivation in the north coastal regions, wheat in the south and rye in the central and

northern mountainous regions. The result is a regional map of dozens of types of bread made using one, or a combination, of these three grains.

After maize was introduced from the Americas it quickly became a staple food and is the main ingredient in the traditional sourdough maize bread or *broa*, which in Portuguese sounds like the word *esboroa* meaning crumbly. *Broa* uses mostly maize, bonded together with small proportions of wheat, rye or both. It is heavy and dense, with a hard crust and high moisture content. It is very popular and is delicious served as a side to grilled sardines or used as an ingredient in many salted cod dishes. The 'broa' found in supermarkets is often a pale imitation of the original recipe because it uses baker's yeast to speed up the process, more wheat and less maize. Fortunately, it is still possible to find a true loaf in many local farmers' markets, food festivals and small independent bakeries.

Cuisine and culture

As in other southern European countries, what is notorious in Portugal is how regional culture is intertwined with regional food. That is the reason why many people still proudly bake bread at home or support small, independent bakeries using the same ingredients and techniques as generations ago.

The region where I was born, Minho in the northern coastal area bordering Spain and the sea, is the perfect example. In the Municipality of Viana do Castelo alone, which has around 88,000 residents, there is a bread museum, several working water mills still milling maize and a set of well-preserved windmills. This example is replicated in many villages and towns across Portugal, each with their own small variations in ingredients and techniques.

Photos right from top: Lisbon bakery window by Punxsutawneyphil, creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/
Bread for sale in Lisbon by Sami Keinänen, creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/
Traditional bakery in Vila Flôr by Rosino, creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/

Big business

For such a staple food, bread galvanises strong passions and everyone seems to have their favourite type. Many people also have a favourite local bakery or fond memories of an uncle, auntie or grandparent who used to bake bread every week, or coming home from school to freshly-baked bread. This nostalgic fondness is now used by many retailers and manufacturers, who use designations such as 'grandma's loaf' or 'traditional' to entice shoppers to their products, which in fact may have been made using bleached flour and loaded with additives and fast-rise agents.

Although still not yet as concentrated as in northern European countries, food retail in Portugal is following the same trend. It is now largely controlled by only a few big players, with five food retailers having a combined market share of more than 60%. Traditional retail still represents over 10% of the market – substantially more than in some northern European countries – but it is predicted this share will continue to lower over time.

My own prediction is that traditionally-made food will continue to play an important role and that if you happen to visit Portugal you will continue to smell the unmistakeable scent of freshly-baked bread. And who knows, some of that bread may well be Real Bread, lovingly-baked by an independent bakery just across the street.

Etymological breadcrumbs

Back in the day, the Portuguese were as inquisitive (and acquisitive) of other territories as the Brits. This is evident from the number of bread words around the world that are rooted in *pão*. Amongst others, their culinary and linguistic legacy lives on as *pau* in India, *bao* in Taiwan, *pan* in Japan (to which missionaries might also have bequeathed tempura), and *paanoo* and *akpaan* in African Gold Coast dialects.



Raising dough

*Asking people to club together to help fund an enterprise or project is as old as time but in the Noughties, it gained a new name. **Corinne Castle** speaks to some of the people who've run crowdfunding campaigns for their Real Bread initiatives.*

The internet has provided a new channel through which people can say 'I've got this great plan and here's how much it'll cost; now who'll lend or give me some of the money to do it?' There's an ever-growing number of online platforms, each offering a large, potentially worldwide, audience, that provide the tools for anyone to run an investment campaign.

How it works

Conditions vary according to the crowdfunding platform used. Some will take money from donors to pass on to the project if the full target amount is pledged. Others will transfer the money, even if the target is not reached. They usually take a small percentage (eg 5%) commission from the funds raised. Other platforms arrange for partner organisations to match the funds a campaign raises.

Some crowdfunding platforms treat the money raised as loans, with investors receiving the funds they put in at a later date. This may be with or without interest and perhaps with equity in the business. By offering the latter, The Thoughtful Bread Company in Bath raised £55,000 through crowdfunder.com to expand their bakehouse.

Some great reward

Different models of are available. One is rewards-based, in which donors receive something in turn for the money they pledge. Such campaigns are most commonly used by start-ups seeking funds between £500 and £30,000.

Typically, the more someone invests, the greater the reward. Veronica Burke ran a campaign for Bread Matters' Scotland The Bread initiative to raise money to pay for equipment to thresh, clean and mill community-grown heritage wheat and run workshops to pass on skills to turn the flour into Real Bread. She suggests offering items or experiences that won't cost you much (certainly only a fraction of the funds being raised), are inexpensive to post out or don't need posting at all and, most importantly, will be valued. She also suggests contacting suppliers or affiliates and asking them to contribute items or experiences such as bread making classes that can be used as rewards.

Examples that could encourage donors to dig deeper include 'money can't buy' (ie available only to donors) limited-edition or customised items, or unusual behind-the-scenes visits. Simpler ideas include a pot of sourdough starter, collection of secret recipes, place in a baking class, or a loaf a week for a set period.

Photos from top: Scotland the Bread harvest by Veronica Burke, Bread Matters; unloading the bread oven at Leeds Bread Co-op; Companio Bakery bread, Manchester.



£55,000

Thoughtful Bread Company

£18,725

Homebaked Anfield

£6,880

Scotland The Bread

plus a loan of £6000

£8,690

Leeds Bread Co-op

£5,410

Bread In Common

£3,095

Hornbeam Bakers Collective

£1,575

Good Loaf

Aims as incentives

When trying to appeal to donors, as well as considering the rewards, Susan Clarke from Bread in Common in Staffordshire emphasised the strong social aims of their bakery. She thinks that for some donors "giving money isn't just about getting a perk but putting money into a social aim, building social capital." This is supported by Debbie Galton from The Good Loaf in Northampton, who works with female ex-offenders. "We also wanted to create buy-in from the local community and for people to feel involved in the café and bakery from the beginning," she says. Francesca Barker of The Barker Baker in Manchester, who also works with ex-offenders, says "our biggest weapon for crowdfunding was the sheer honesty of the situation."

Easy money?

It's tempting to imagine that crowdfunding is as easy as thinking of a reason you need some cash and expecting the readyies to come flooding in. In practice, however, there are many factors to consider, much planning and promotion is needed and even then, the overall success rate is about 50:50.

Setting out clearly exactly what the money will be spent on is also essential. A tangible item such as an oven, "the heart of the

Crowdfunding tips

- Be clear what the money will be used for
- Identify potential allies and supporters – friends, family, customers, local media, the Real Bread Campaign – and use them to help get word around.
- It is in the interest of crowdfunding platforms for campaigns to succeed and most offer advice and support to fundraisers – so take it!

bakery" as Zig from Leeds Bread Co-op describes it, can be a good focus to inspire donors. Successful fundraisers are then responsible to their donors for ensuring the funds raised are used for the stated purpose.

More than money

Cash raised is not the only way to measure the success of a crowdfunding campaign. The process of creating the campaign and publicising it – and therefore the project or business – can also be beneficial in itself. Russell Goodwin of Companio Bakery in Manchester found that the video he made to support his campaign has been a useful marketing tool. The legacy of promoting a project and raising the profile through social media and in a local community can be long

lasting and effective. Some donors to Bread in Common and the Hornbeam Bakers Collective in Walthamstow became volunteers. With buzzbnk.org fundraisers even have the option of asking for pledges of in-kind donations, such as time and skills.

The final word goes to Simon Dexter from The Fermentarium (previously with The Hornbeam Bakers Collective), who says "crowdfunding is a powerful tool and should be treated seriously."

You can find out more about crowdfunding, and lists of platforms, from associations including: ukcfa.org.uk nlcfa.org eurocrowd.org cfinstitute.org

Afore ye dough

You might have heard of a biga, poolish, sponge, madre, chef or levain but unless you have baked with one do you know what any of these is? Chris Young asks even if you have dallied with desem, did you pause to consider why you were doing so?

What is a preferment?

A preferment comprises flour, water and yeast, which is allowed to ferment before adding to the bulk of the flour and other ingredients using in a dough. The yeast can be a commercial, purified strain of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (commonly referred to as baker's yeast) or one or more yeasts that occurred naturally on the surface of cereal grains and so ended up in flour, from where they were lovingly nurtured to create a sourdough starter.

A preferment can range in hydration from a loose batter to a stiff dough. It might also contain salt and, in the case of old dough, perhaps fat and other ingredients.

Why?

There are several reasons a baker might want – or need - to use a preferment.

Yeast vigour

An analogy for getting the fermentation underway might be giving the yeast a good run up. In a straight dough (ie mixing all of the ingredients together at once) it has to go from nought to full throttle straight away. Working up a full head of steam (how many

metaphors can I mix in here?) is particularly useful when making an enriched dough, where the high levels of sugar will hinder the yeast.

Gluten strength

During the fermentation of a stiffer preferment (like a traditional biga) and especially in a sourdough, acid levels will increase. This has a strengthening effect on the gluten strength, and so is useful when working with weaker flours.

Gluten extensibility

Conversely, in a more liquid starter, particularly one fermented at room temperature without salt, protease (an enzyme that breaks down protein) activity will be increased. This will weaken the gluten, making it more extensible or stretchy.

Bread flavour

During fermentation, all sorts of dough alchemy goes on, which helps create flavour and aroma compounds. As time increases, so do the amounts of these, so a preferment is a useful addition to a shorter process dough as a way of improving texture and flavour.

If you want to get serious with preferments, do some research online or in baking manuals to find out about the effects of time, temperature, yeast quantities and so on will have on them

Types of preferment

Batter preferment (eg poolish)

A mixture that has a high water content, perhaps 100% hydration - ie equal weights of flour and water. Typically made with a tiny percentage of baker's yeast.

Dough preferment (eg biga)

A stiffer dough of perhaps 50-60% hydration - ie water weight is 50-60% that of the flour. Typically made with a tiny percentage of baker's yeast.

Old dough (eg pâte fermentée) A piece of normal dough kept back from a previous bake, or made especially, that is fully-proved and then added to a new dough. Some bakers don't consider this to be a true preferment.

Sourdough culture (eg desem, saurteig, lievito madre, mother, chef, starter etc.) Water is added to flour to culture the yeasts it contains until they are capable of raising dough, while potentially beneficial bacteria also thrive.

and on your Real Bread. You'll also get to read endless disagreements over the true definitions of biga, sponge, poolish etc.

Sourdough Pecan, Oat and Cranberry Flowerpot Bread

These lovely fruit and nut flowerpot-shaped loaves are fabulous with cheese, for the perfect turkey sandwich, toasted with brie or simply torn apart while still warm and eaten on their own, says The Itinerant Baker & Chef.

You will need three new, seasoned terracotta flowerpots 10cm high x 6.5cm at base x 10cm diameter at top. Of course, you can always bake the dough in a loaf tin or as freestanding loaves instead.

Mix together the first five ingredients until now dry flour remains. Tip onto the work surface, cover with the bowl and leave to rest for 30 minutes.

Knead the dough until smooth, stretchy and silky. As this dough is a bit sticky I prefer to develop the gluten using eight or nine brief 30 second kneads, interspersed with 10 minute (or longer) rests, before a final 10 minute rest.

Stretch the dough out on the work surface, scatter over the pecans and cranberries, roll it up and knead briefly to distribute them evenly.

Put the dough back in the bowl, slip it into a lightly-oiled plastic bag and leave it at room temperature until it

shows signs of beginning to increase in volume. Then put in your fridge overnight where it will finish doubling in volume and the cranberries will plump up.

Remove the dough from the fridge. Generously oil the inside of each flower pot and place on a baking tray.

Split the dough into three equal pieces (about 330g each), roll each into an egg shape then roll in the oats coating them thoroughly. If the oats don't stick, spray a film of water on to each ball.

Drop each piece of dough pointy end down into a pot and glaze the top with some oil. Drape with a piece of oiled and floured clingfilm and leave at room temperature for a few hours until they have increased in volume by about 80%, or until the edges of the dough has risen to ½ cm below the top of the pot.

Heat the oven to 220°C. Bake for 10 minutes, reduce temperature to 200°C

Ingredients

250g liquid sourdough culture (100% hydration)
200g water, room temperature
200g strong wholemeal spelt flour
175g strong white flour
10g sea salt
100g pecans
100g dried cranberries
50g jumbo rolled oats
vegetable oil

and bake for further 15-20 minutes until the breads are deep brown on top.

Remove the pots from the oven, run a thin-bladed knife around the inside of each, invert and the loaf should slip out. If it doesn't check it isn't held in place by the little bit of dough that will have escaped through the drainage hole. Once cool, you can re-pot for presentation.

Read more on this recipe and seasoning flowerpots at hilarycacchio.com

Seasoning flowerpots for baking

Heat the oven to 220°C. Paint each new terracotta pot generously inside and out with vegetable oil until it is absorbed, then repeat once or twice more. Bake for about 20 minutes, turn the oven off and leave to cool. Repeat this procedure two or three more times, preferably when you are using the oven anyway. To clean after baking, soak the pots while still warm in a sink of water without detergent and wipe clean.

Just like
fine wine...



Cinnamon Square in Rickmansworth by Sue Lacey Photography

realbreadcampaign.org