

BIG IDEAS



THE GASTRONAUT FILES

A Lesson in Scandi Bread

A master baker shares his recipe for the ultra-crusty, extra-flavorful, Scandi-style rye bread his family loves.

Master baker Lionel Vatinet is French, but the bread he's most proud of is as far from an airy baguette as you can get. It's a dense, aromatic rye loaf, the kind of bread that's practically a religion in Scandinavia. Vatinet jokes that he created it to curry favor with his Norwegian father-in-law: "If I please him, I please everybody!" But the truth is that Vatinet, who runs North Carolina's La Farm Bakery, is in love with grains, and this bread shows off one of his favorites: heirloom rye. The crusty loaf is both delicious and wholesome thanks to that rye, which a study found can reduce body weight. To this, Vatinet heaves a Gallic shrug. "I am not a doctor; I am a baker," he says. —SARAH DIGREGORIO

AN OAT CRUST
ADDS GREAT CRUNCH.

Scandinavian Rye Bread

Active: 35 min; Total: 5 hr 45 min; Makes 1 loaf

Lionel Vatinet gets his flour from miller Jennifer Lapidus, whose company, Carolina Ground, specializes in stone-ground heirloom grains. For this loaf, he uses Lapidus's whole-rye flour (carolinaground.com).

½ cup rye berries, rinsed and drained	4 cups whole-grain rye flour
5¼ cups warm water	1 cup bread flour
½ cup millet, rinsed and drained	2 Tbsp. fine sea salt
1 envelope (¼ oz.) active dry yeast	¼ cups rolled oats
	Vegetable oil, for greasing

Step 1 Make the Dough

1. In a small saucepan, cover the rye berries with 2 cups of the water and bring to a boil. Simmer gently over moderately low heat until all of the water has been absorbed and the rye berries are al dente, about 40 minutes. Spread the rye berries on parchment paper and let cool completely.
2. Meanwhile, in another small saucepan, cover the millet with 1 cup of the water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to moderately low and simmer until all of the water has been absorbed and the millet is halfway to tender, about 12 minutes. Spread the millet on parchment paper and let cool completely.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle, mix the yeast with the remaining 2¼ cups of water and let stand until foamy, 10 minutes. Add both of the flours and the salt and mix at low speed for 5 minutes. Increase the speed to medium and mix for 2 minutes. Mix in the cooled rye berries and millet along with ¾ cup of the rolled oats. Scrape the dough into a greased large bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Let stand in a warm spot until doubled, about 2 hours.

Step 2 Shape and Bake the Bread

4. Scatter the remaining ½ cup of oats on a work surface and scrape the dough onto them. Roll the dough until coated with the oats, then pat into a large brick shape. Transfer the dough to a greased 9-by-5-inch loaf pan and cover with a damp kitchen towel. Let stand in a warm spot until slightly risen, about 1½ hours.
5. Preheat the oven to 450°. Bake the bread for 55 minutes to 1 hour, until lightly browned on top and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 200°. Transfer to a rack and let cool for 30 minutes. Unmold and let cool completely.

MAKE AHEAD The bread can be kept wrapped in plastic at room temperature for 5 days.

How to Make Scandi Rye



1

COOK THE GRAINS and then spread them out to cool. This prevents them from getting gummy.



2

MIX THE INGREDIENTS for the dough, adding the cooled cooked whole grains at the end.



3

ROLL THE DOUGH in oats. As the bread bakes, the oat crust gets toasty and crisp.