

PUMPERNICKEL



This jarred pumpernickel was as successful as our jarred whole-grain bread. We had to add some cocoa powder to darken the loaf because it did not have the same amount of time to brown in the oven as a classic pumpernickel does.

Bakers traditionally have ground up day-old rye bread and added it to their fresh batch of dough. But would that recycling technique work with other breads? We found the perfect pairing, grinding up day-old white bread and turning it into tortillas.

Baking has always been a price-sensitive business, so bakers have always looked for ways to economize. Pumpernickel reflects this impulse.

Today, heating an oven is as simple as turning a dial, but hundreds of years ago, stoking an oven's fire was hard work. It was also costly. When bakers let the fire die down and went home, they were reluctant to waste the oven's waning heat, so to make use of it, they made pumpernickel bread. This bread, which was developed sometime before the 18th century, was baked overnight in the oven's residual heat. During the long baking time, the water in the dough evaporated, and the dough turned into an aromatic, deeply flavorful, almost black (but not burnt) loaf of bread. Today, tradition still holds that true pumpernickel has a dark crust, even if it's not baked in exactly the same way.

Classic pumpernickel bread is originally from the Westphalia region of Germany, where it is also known as *schwarzbrot* ("black bread"). It's made with dark rye flour and often uses cracked or whole soaked rye grains. Because the rye flour and grains provide little structure, the bread is typically baked in tin pans so it can hold its shape.

Although traditional pumpernickel has a touch of sweetness to it (likely from the grain), it doesn't contain sweeteners. (Mass-produced pumpernickels, by contrast, are likely to be made with molasses or another sweetener.) Traditional pumpernickel doesn't have added coloring, either—its deep, dark color comes from using dark-colored pumpernickel flour and from

the Maillard reaction (see page 2-315) that occurs during its prolonged time in the oven. Today, however, industrial producers aren't going to tie up their ovens with long-baked breads. Instead, many modern pumpernickels contain coffee, cocoa powder, or caramel coloring in an effort to quickly replicate the dark look of classic pumpernickel.

There's another money-saving technique associated with pumpernickel. Traditionally, if there was any bread left in the bakery at the end of the day, it couldn't be sold the next day because, well, who wants to buy day-old bread? Crafty bakers started to grind their old bread, dry it, and then mix it into the next day's pumpernickel dough. This kind of thing isn't done in commercial bakeries in the United States today, but we found it to be common in German recipes for rye breads. We use this technique in our Russian Black Bread (see page 376).

We don't use day-old bread in our Pumpernickel on page 449, but it's otherwise made in the classic style, with soaked rye berries, pumpernickel flour, and a long, slow bake. It's easy to mix since there's no gluten structure to develop. We recommend that you bake this bread in a pan (which is traditional) because shaping this wet, paste-like dough can be difficult. You can bake pumpernickel as a free-form loaf, however, if you prefer.

After baking, it's best to wrap a pumpernickel in plastic wrap or foil and wait 12–24 **hours** before slicing it. This gives the ingredients time to better bind together—what we call curing—so you don't end up with a crumbly bread.

KEYS TO SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTING PUMPERNICKEL

- We have always thought that the hand is a superior mixing tool to a wooden spoon. Your hand can tell you how the dough is doing by how it feels, and your hand has five mobile appendages (fingers) that are more efficient at dispersing and combining ingredients than a single stiff wooden spoon.
- If you do not want to cold-proof your dough, you can proof it at 27 °C / 80 °F (65% RH) for 3–4 h or at 21 °C / 70 °F for 5–6 h.
- We use a Pullman loaf pan that measures 23 cm long by 10 cm wide by 10 cm deep / 9 in long by 4 in wide by 4 in deep (see page 212). If you are using an aluminum or steel pan, you will need to lightly and evenly coat the entire pan with cooking spray and then either coat it with a 1:1 mixture of dark rye flour and bread flour (tap out the excess), or simply line it with parchment paper or a paper cup made to fit your specific pan. If your pan is nonstick, we recommend using a light layer of cooking spray but no flour coating or parchment paper.

Pumpernickel crumb, at right