

## **Bread Sticks**

From the LaRousse Book of Bread by Eric Kayser

### **Ingredients**

500 g (scant 4  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups) all purpose flour plus extra for dusting  
225 g (scant 1 cup) water at 68 F (lukewarm)  
50 g liquid sourdough starter (I use a poolish which is similar to sourdough but it's from commercial yeast instead of wild or natural yeast)  
10 g (1TB) fresh baker's yeast  
10 g (1  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoons) salt  
75 g (1/3 cup) extra virgin olive oil

### **Timings**

Mixing & kneading-10 minutes  
First rising- 1 hour  
Proofing: 45 minutes  
Baking: 9 minutes

### **Kneading in a Stand Mixer**

Put the flour, water, starter, fresh yeast, and salt in the bowl. Knead with the dough hook for 4 minutes at low speed, then 4 minutes on high speed. Add oil and knead of another 2 minutes.

### **Kneading by Hand**

Put the flour on a work surface or in a mixing bowl and make a large well in the center. Pour in half the water, then add the starter, fresh yeast, and salt. Mix well, then add the remaining water and the oil. Mix until all the flour has been incorporated. Knead the dough until smooth and elastic.

Shape into a ball and cover with a damp cloth. Leave to rise for 1 hour. Midway through the rise, deflate the dough by folding it in half. The dough will have increased in volume by the end of the rising time.

Dust the work surface. Gently flatten the dough with your hands, then roll it out to a rectangle about 16 long and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. Trim the edges with a knife to neaten them. Cut the dough in half to create two 8-inch pieces.

Use a bread lame (a solid edge scraper works) to split the wider strips in half lengthwise, leaving them attached at the end. Insert a finger in the opening at each end twist. Roll all the twisted strips and all the plain strips gently on the work surface to lengthen them. They should be around 12" long.

Beth's Notes: I found these instructions complicated even with pictures. I tried twisting each strip instead of putting them in pairs with wide and skinny strips. They didn't stay twisted, but they came out fine.

Carefully lift the breadsticks onto a baking sheet lined with parchment. I rolled mine in an Everything Bagel spice mix. Leave to proof for 45 minutes. (I used a silicone liner and let the sticks proof on it.)

Place another baking sheet on the bottom of the shelf of the oven and preheat to 450. Just before putting the bread sticks in the oven, pour  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water onto the preheated baking dish. Bake for 9 minutes or until slightly brown. Cool on a wire rack.

You can add sun-dried tomatoes, herbs, olives, or spices to the dough, too.