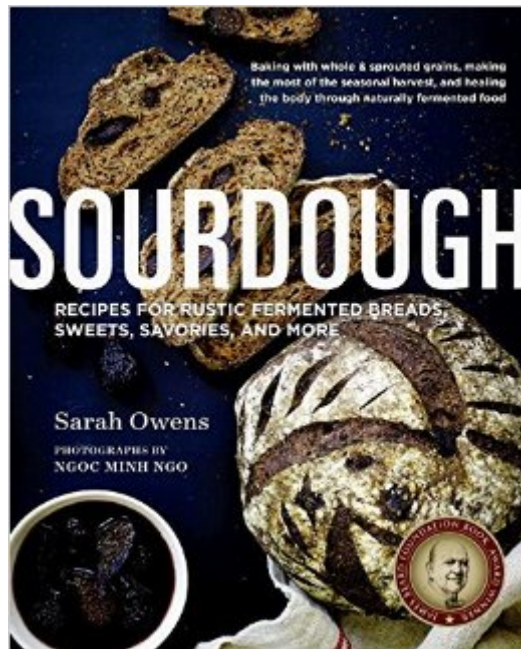


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Sourdough: Recipes For Rustic Fermented Breads, Sweets, Savories, And More



Synopsis

2016 James Beard Award Winner (Baking & Desserts) 101 recipes for baking with whole and sprouted grains, making the most of the seasonal harvest, and healing the body through naturally fermented food Sarah Owens spent years baking conventional baked goods, only to slowly realize she had developed a crippling inability to digest or tolerate their ingredients. Unable to enjoy many of her most favorite foods, she knew she must find a health-sustaining alternative. Thus Sarah started experimenting with sourdough leavening, which almost immediately began to heal her gut and inspire her anew in the kitchen. Soon after, her artisan small-batch bakery, BK17, was launched, and with that, a new way to savor and share nutritious sourdough breads and treats with her Brooklyn community. Sourdough and other fermented foods are making a comeback because of their rich depth of flavor and proven health benefits. In Sourdough, Sarah demystifies keeping a sourdough culture, which is an extended fermentation process that allows for maximum flavor and easy digestion, showing us just how simple it can be to create a healthy starter from scratch. Moreover, Sarah uses home-grown sourdough starter in dozens of baked goods, including cookies, cakes, scones, flatbreads, tarts, and more--well beyond bread. Sarah is a botanist and gardener as well as a baker--her original recipes are accented with brief natural history notes of the highlighted plants and ingredients used therein. Anecdotes from the garden will delight naturalists and baked-goods lovers among us. Laced with botanical and cultural notes on grains, fruits and vegetables, herbs, and even weeds, Sourdough celebrates seasonal abundance alongside the timeless craft of artisan baking.

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Customer Reviews

I'm an intermediate sourdough baker. By no means would I consider myself an expert, but I have been maintaining and using my sourdough starter regularly for about 5 years now. I have most of the equipment required to bake traditional sourdough loaves, such as bannetons, a lame, oven stones, dough whisks and scrapers, Dutch ovens, and a multitude of flours, from buckwheat to rye to pastry and most in-between. I ordered this book, mostly for the recipes that aren't loaves of bread, to add a variety to my baking with things like cookies and cakes using my starter. So far, I have tried 6 of the recipes from the book. One was a complete and total disaster, 2 were bland and just "meh", and 2 were excellent. Here's the breakdown:

1. Beet bread: I love beets, so was excited to try this recipe. The photo is so beautiful that I had intended to make these loaves to put in Mother's Day gift baskets I was making. Thank goodness I decided to test the recipe first. I followed the recipe to a tee. When it called for puréeing the beets with a LOT of water, I was worried, but went ahead with the instructions because I have made dough before that was wet but came together after several stretch and folds over the course of a course of hours. This dough, unfortunately, did NOT come together. It was the consistency of a thick batter and no manner of stretching and folding could change that. I still persevered and ended up retarding the dough in bannetons in my fridge as per the instructions. When it was time to bake them, the dough had formed up enough for me to at least plop it out of the banneton without it sticking too much. I had used lined and heavily floured bannetons, so I am sure that's the only reason they came out at all. I didn't want to risk the dough/batter sticking to my banneton and being impossible to clean. At this point, I had invested so much time and effort into these loaves that I held out hope as I put them into the oven. Of course, I was fooling myself. These came out dense with no trace of even the beet color in the bread. The taste was like cardboard -- no flavor at all. It was bad. I was embarrassed by these loaves. I hadn't made bread this bad since I first started, and even then I don't think it was THIS bad. I really believe there is some error in this recipe with the liquid. I will not be wasting my time on this one again.
2. Cherry tomato mini muffins: this one was fairly easy to put together and it made a LOT. I used fresh herbs out of my garden, fresh cherry tomatoes and followed the recipe exactly. These came out looking absolutely gorgeous, and baked up perfectly, so I was excited to serve them with soup and salad. Everything was great until we bit into them. These were SO bland. The taste of the cornmeal overpowered everything else in these. I might as well have just made corn muffins and saved all the herbs, tomatoes and cheese for the salads. SIGH. The worst part was that the vast majority got thrown out to my chickens because no one would eat them.
3. Bleu cheese and walnut crackers: These were another item going into gift baskets, so when they turned out wonderfully, I was ecstatic. FINALLY a good recipe from this book! They were easy to whip up in

the food processor and looked beautiful, as well as tasted savory and delicious. I got compliments on these and will be making them again!4. Sun dried tomato shortbreads: again, these went into gift baskets and again, they were a huge hit. I used heart shaped cookie cutters to cut these out and they were adorable! I was even asked to make these again by my mom, who showed up at my house with sun dried tomatoes to "encourage" me to make them again.5. Buttermilk biscuits: I'm a southerner. I know biscuits. These were not good. They were bland and didn't bake up into light and pillowy layers like a good biscuit should. Definitely won't use this recipe again.6. Nut butter cookies: I loved the look of this recipe because it doesn't use any refined sugar, and it makes a lot of cookies. But the cookies are fairly bland, and I won't waste my time on these again. I used almond butter. Maybe a stronger but butter would make them better. The ingredients for these are too expensive to not make something that people want to eat. The book calls these cakey, but they really aren't. They're very soft, most mushy, but nothing like cake. I don't even know what's the point of adding the spices to these, because it's not enough to taste them other than faintly. Again, my chickens got these for treats because no one would eat more than a couple of them.As for the book itself, the chapters are arranged interesting into seasons and the photographs are breathtaking! I just wish the recipes were as good as they look in the photos. I'll continue to try some more recipes before totally giving up on this book, so here's to hoping I just picked a few duds amongst some more stellar recipes (like the bleu cheese and walnut crackers and the sun dried tomato shortbreads). I'll update my review as I progress.

Sarah Owens has crafted a beautiful book that is just as happy in the kitchen as it is on my nightstand so I can dream of sourdough bread while I sleep. I made the Sweet Potato Levain last night and my hard-to-please-everyone family declared it a winner and proceeded to eat 3/4 of the loaf. The kids and my husband said over and over again through our soup night dinner that the bread was SO GOOD! They asked that it be added into our recipe rotation.It's a pretty powerful book - so don't say you weren't warned. I found myself up at 3:30am last night with the urge to make the Lemon Madeleines. That must have been the last recipe I looked at before tucking in for the night. I tried to go back to sleep to no avail. My family was surprised (and delighted) to wake up and find French madeleines for breakfast, though now I'm a little sleepy and may need a nap later.I love that the book is arranged seasonally and that there are some other whole grain flours to play with... buckwheat, oat, rye. I'm always looking to add whole grain flours to my breads for added flavor, variety, and nutrition. There is also more than just bread. She uses her sourdough starter in a whole range of baking giving the keeper of a starter many paths on which to adventure.The

photographs are soulful and crisp and there were several times while baking that I brushed away the surface of the pages only to realize they were crumbs in the photograph and not in my real life. Stunning. Others recipes on my MUST MAKE THIS list: Apple Hand-Pies with Cheddar Crust Friendship Loaf The pizza dough recipe (because we have a Pizza Friday ritual) Chocolate Buckwheat Cookies Brooklyn Sourdough Peach & Lavender Crumb Muffins Buttermilk Biscuits Jalapeño Cheese Bread Chocolate Cherry Pop Tarts Plum and Amaranth Muffins Buckwheat Crepes with Chocolate Ganache

This book made me swoon! All the pictures are so tantalizing and I want to try every recipe! The recipes I have tried have turned out delicious and been worth the extra effort. The recipes are listed by season and use locally sourced ingredients. My favorite is the honeyed spelt loaf. This is NOT a book for beginners. The recipes are all measured by grams (so buy a kitchen scale too) and require some familiarity with sourdough bread baking. I have been making bread for years and sourdough for a few months. There are plenty of easy recipes and tutorials online for free to start you off in the world of sourdough but once you get a feel for it, pick up this book to expand your baking to a whole new level. I only have two complaints (which were worth the loss of a star in my opinion). Number one, the recipes require so many different kinds of flours it can be overwhelming. I pick a new flour to buy every couple of weeks to try something new. Unfortunately I haven't even been able to find some of the flours and it can be a little annoying when one recipe uses several kinds. Number 2, the biggest flaw of this book is the timing. There is no clear guide that states from the start of the recipe to the finish it will take "x" amount of time to complete. It is hard to read through an entire recipe to figure out when to start the dough in order to finish at a certain hour (or time frame). I have had to bake a loaf at 10 PM because I missed a step in my calculation. I have also had to let the dough sit too long because I timed it wrong. I assume over time it will get easier but a simple timing guide would save a lot of trouble for these already involved recipes.

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