

THE COMPANION FESTIVAL OF BREAD

9th of September 2007, Schumacher College, Dartington

PROGRAM:

Welcome to a whole days celebration of bread!

The timeline of the program will follow the organic process of the bread. Therefore there might be slight changes along the way, but we will try to stick to the times as much as possible. If there is any mean-time to spare everyone is welcome to mingle and hover to see what others are up to!

10.30am	Registration and tea
11am:	Gathering in the lecture room Introduction by Eva Bakkeslett - <i>Why a Festival of bread?</i> Introduction of workshop holders. Poem by Joy Mead
11.10	Satish Kumar: <i>Bread as spiritual practice and environmental activism.</i>
11.45	"Get rolling" - communal baking of rolls for lunch with a wish baked in - Lunch and snack area
12.00 - 13	Individual workshops in groups - lunch and snack area and the yurt outside for children. Introduction to materials, type of bread and mixing - ready for rising. Fermentation during lunch.
13-13.45	Lunch - Soup and bread and a "liberated" forest garden salad picked by Schumacher's gardener Justin West. If the weather is good we'll have the lunch outside. If not in the lunchroom.
13.45-14.10	Digestion: " <i>Alchemy - the poetics of bread</i> " Film by Eva Bakkeslett shown in the lecture room
14.10 - 14.30	Group 2 and 3: Kneading bread and get it ready for proving. Group 1: Bread and Poetry with Joy Mead or Meantime.
14.30-15.15	"Proving together" - in lecture room Andrew Whitley – Talk
15.15	Group 2 and 3: Bread in oven
15.20	Parallel sessions: 1. Chapatti making Minni Jain will run a chapatti making session outside by the fire place. 2. Esther Boukema and Mark van Will - Introduction to their mobile cookery workshops for children and the philosophy behind it. In yurt. 3. Bread and Poetry Joy Mead will lead a workshop on the poetry of bread.

Outside or in lecture room

(15.30 ish)

Group 1: Kneading and proving

(16.00 ish)

Group 1: Bread in oven

Group 2 and 3: Bread out of oven

16.30 - 5-ish

Picnic in the garden: Share bread, poetry, thoughts and recipes.

Blessing of the food by Satish Kumar

5ish

Group 1: Bread out of oven

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Handouts:

Booklet of texts about bread, bread as social sculpture and poetry and recipes.

Book table:

Literature about bread, poetry and art related matter available for viewing and sale.

Groups:

1. Sourdough bread with Andrew Whitley
2. Fancy bread with Julia Ponsonby
3. "Sensible" bread and poetry with Eva Bakkeslett and Joy Mead
4. The journey of Bread with Esther Boukema and Mark van Will

The text and images in this compendium has been compiled and written by
Eva Bakkeslett unless otherwise stated.

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ARTISTS AND ARTISANS CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPANION FESTIVAL OF BREAD

Andrew Whitley

Founder of The Village Bakery in Cumbria and the organisation
Bread Matters, an ingrained bread maker, author and experienced workshop holder.
Talk on passion for bread and bread making in Russia. Also touch upon commercial
bread making and how it works and compares to hand baking. Workshop on sourdough bread

Satish Kumar

Editor of Resurgence Magazine, co-founder of Schumacher College and an avid proponent for bread baking as
spiritual practice and environmental activism. Talk - *Bread as spiritual practice and environmental activism*
Blessing and conclusion

Joy Mead

Author of The one Loaf - An everyday celebration who also expresses her passion for bread by running Bread and
Poetry workshops on Iona. Workshop on bread and poetry.

Julia Ponsonby

Professional cook and bread maker, author of Gaia's Kitchen and an experienced workshop holder.
Workshop: Fancy bread - Squash bread

Esther Boukema and Marc van Will

This amazing team run creative cookery workshops for children in the Netherlands.
Here they will be hosting the workshop for children: "The journey of bread - from sun to loaf."

Eva Bakkeslett

Artist and bread maker from Arctic Norway, making bread with "sensible perspectives"

Eilis Kirby

Artist and bookmaker, making an on-site book capturing her outlook of the day.

Minni Jain

Sharing her Indian skills and traditions she will hold a workshop on making chapattis.

DOCUMENTATION:

Clive Ardagh

Filmmaker

Philippe Velez McIntyre

Photographer

Lucinda Guy

Sound Art Radio

HELPERS AND SUPPORT:

Ann, Minni, Phil, Tamzin, Frank, Voirrey and staff at Schumacher College

"Art no longer wants to respond to the excess of commodities and signs, but to a lack of connections. The loss of the "social bond", and the duty incumbent on artist to work to repair it, are the words on the agenda. It's not only the forms of civility that we have lost, but the very sense of co-presence of beings and things that constitutes a world."

Jacques Ranière¹

Bread as social sculpture

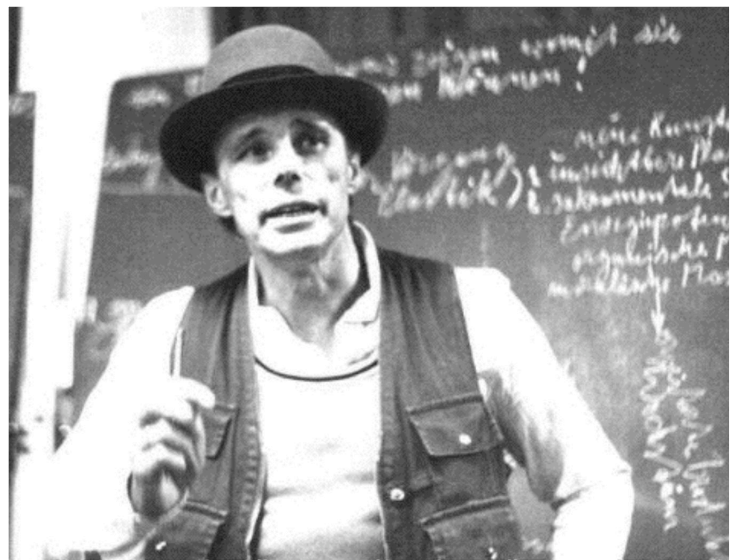
This festival is far more than a festival just about bread.

A few moments reflection makes one realize how significant bread is to our culture. An investigation of bread is an inquiry into life itself. Bread is a cross-cultural and ancient art form that deserves to be celebrated and acknowledged as a universal art-process. For 6000 years humans have sculpted bread in various shapes and sizes, and thus nurtured and cultured the bond between nature and culture to nourish the body as well as the soul. 99% of UK households eat bread and it forms between 9-20% of our average diet.²

Bread can provide the needed glue between life and art and form social bonds, restore our senses and create an awareness of the *meantime* - lacking in our efficient and homogenised world. It is in these gaps where creativity, critical thinking, sensing, breathing and love can flourish. By baking bread we activate our senses and share our cultural activism in the form of good, tasty bread that nourishes the body and soul. Good bread restores the energy cycle between nature and culture. Bread is the art that goes beyond the walls of the gallery and onto our kitchen tables.

What is social sculpture?

Joseph Beuys, the energetic and controversial artist famous for his concept of *Social Sculpture* and proclaiming that *"Everyone in an Artist"*, prepared the ground and sowed the seeds for the current debate and engagement in arts and ecology. Beuys's methods were new and unfamiliar and the depth of his questioning and strong criticism of our materialistic culture was often misunderstood and seen merely as obscure happenings. For him there was a clear distinction between performance and social sculpture, which he saw as *"a means of suggesting and effecting change beyond restricted art concepts."*³ His art was indicative of the breakdown of society and the need for social change that started to emerge in the seventies, but is just as relevant today as it was then. Beuys was ahead of his time and twenty years after his death, our society is even more fragmented and disconnected, and socially engaged art is more vital than ever in connecting nature and culture and in reconnecting people with spiritual values.



Beuys wanted people to wake up their dormant abilities of creating and engaging and thus realizing their full potential as artistic beings. If this ability is not used for pure self-realization, he maintained, people have the potential for

¹ Kristin Ross on Jacques Rancière, Arforum. March 2007, p.255

² Whitley, Andrew: "Bread Matters - The State of Modern Bread and a Definitive Guide to Baking Your Own", p. 34

³ Beuys, Joseph; "Energy plan for the western man" p.9

effecting change beyond restricted art concepts and for the forming of a new social organization. This is what he meant by Social Sculpture and everyone being an artist.

Bread is the artwork of the every day. It holds all the ingredients that were elementary to Joseph Beuys' concept of social sculpture; "*The passage from chaotic energy and unformed mass through a process of harmony and moulding to a determined and crystallized form.*"⁴ The quality of the ingredients, the mixing, the fermentation, the kneading and moulding, proving and baking of the bread is the sensitive and creative process of interaction and amelioration between the baker and the materials. Good bread is art and culture, and culture is alive. It breathes and moves and develops a structure given the right time and conditions. Not the time that is counted in money, but the time that happens in between – in the meantime. Given the right balance between time and conditions the culture matures and develops a taste and consistency that has quality. It becomes like the "battery" that Beuys frequently used as a metaphor for energy in his work.

Wheat

*What an enormous number of swathings!
Isn't the kernel soon coming to light?
I'm blast if it is! To the innermost centre
It's nothing but swathings,
each smaller and smaller,
nature is witty.*

From Peer Gynt by Ibsen

In 1982 the artist Agnes Denes planted a two-acre wheat-field in Manhattan, at the foot of the World Trade Centre, a block away from Wall Street, facing the Statue of Liberty.⁵ By placing it at the economic centre of the world, in a country that globally is the main producer of wheat, she wanted to call our attention to our misplaced priorities and deteriorating human values. Unlike Van Gogh's famous paintings of the same subject, Denes wanted to go beyond the mere representation of a wheat-field and into its roots. By transforming urban wasteland valued at \$84.5 to produce \$158 worth of wheat she created a powerful symbol representing food, energy, commerce, world trade and economics. The field was a beautiful intrusion amongst the high-rises; "*A small paradise, one's childhood, a hot summer afternoon in the country, peace, forgotten values, simple pleasure*" and also a powerful reminder of; "*mismanagement, waste, world-hunger and ecological concerns.*"⁶ Her cultural activism stirred at the very heart of our civilization where nature and culture have been separated - where grain is capital and wheat is gold. It is a striking image that still holds its power 25 years after it was made, because the situation has not changed – it has only got worse.

4 Beuys, Joseph; "Energy plan for the western man" p.249

5 Denes, Agnes: "Agnes Denes", p. 118

6 Denes, Agnes: "Agnes Denes", p.118



Agnes Denes Wheatfield — a confrontation 1982 photo: John McGrail

The nutritional quality of commercially grown wheat, which is the most widely used ingredient in modern bread, is depleted in essential vitamins and minerals due to intensive farming. A research in Mexico showed that the best traditional wheat varieties had about twice the iron and zinc content of popular modern varieties and another recent French study revealed that the mineral content of current wheat is 30-40 per cent below that of older varieties. White wheat flour has an additional loss of nutritional value of around 70 % due to the refining process of removing the bran layers on the outside of the grain.⁷ Furthermore is the economic force of GM crops with multinational corporations like Monsanto, pushing farmers to use patented grains instead of saving and sowing their own. Seeds have become an “intellectual property right” and can be patented like any other object. Agriculture is far removed from producing healthy foods. When quality is replaced with profit it is not much left to nourish the body or the soul, or as Joseph Beuys put it; *“...we have a kind of culture which is only interested and able to develop material conditions – to exploit the resources of the earth, and along with this to exploit also the humankind ability for a kind of profit...for very few, very mighty personalities and institutions”*⁸

Monsanto is one of the most powerful companies attempting to shape the future of agriculture and take control of the global food chain. They are by far the biggest seller of GM crops in the world. Their products account for 80% of the total area of global farmland planted with GM crops in 1999. Monsanto are also the second largest seed company in the world with global sales of \$1,700 million. RoundUp, manufactured by Monsanto, is the world's biggest selling herbicide.

www.corporatewatch.org.uk

Time and bread

*“Old-time bakers knew that if you left the dough to ferment for a long time in the right conditions, acids would ripen your mix and produce a moister crumb and better keeping quality, as well as that indefinable bread flavour.”*⁹

Instead we now spend our time and energy inventing technical solutions to eliminate valuable “meantime”. As early as 1919 the Fleischman Company launched its campaign to put an end to the slavery of American modern housewives by introducing the industrially made “Wonder Loaf”. Now the largest bread-factory in the world is spitting out 210 wondrous loaves a minute. The next big revolution came with the Chorleywood Bread Process developed in

⁷ Whitley, Andrew: “Bread Matters - The State of Modern Bread and a Definitive Guide to Baking Your Own”

⁸ Joseph Beuys: Energy Plan for the Western Man, p.244

⁹ Whitley, Andrew: “Bread Matters - The State of Modern Bread and a Definitive Guide to Baking Your Own”, p. 38

1961. By using low protein wheat combined with chemical “improvers”, large amounts of yeast and reducing the fermentation time drastically by energy-intensive high-speed mixers the time-problem for the bread-industry was solved. This method is now used to make 80% of the UK’s bread.¹⁰

“We need to begin with good bread if we wish to restore the physical as well as the mental health of the nation. When we are mindful of the quality of bread, we will be mindful of the quality of food. When we are mindful of the quality of food, we will be mindful of the quality of life in general.”

Satish Kumar from “Bread of Sorrow”, Resurgence issue 207



The One Loaf

By Joy Mead from “The One Loaf”

Out of fire
with contours satisfying
to all senses:
a warm loaf; seedy and grainy
soft and being-shaped,
its yeasty smell, homely
heavenly and bodily,
memory of fungus
damp woodlands
and late autumn sun.

All life is here:
ordinary, good and beautiful:
growing things and cow dung,
woody roots and seeds,
bodies of creatures
long dead in the soil;
all in this given
bread of our beginnings;
all in our breaking
and sharing
the one loaf.

¹⁰ www.foodmanufacture.co.uk



My children mixing ingredients for their weekly bread.

A sensible recipe for a wholesome and tasty loaf of bread

Choose your ingredients with care. I always select fresh and organic produce, sourced as locally as possible. You thereby know it has been grown without the interference of chemical and other potentially harmful substances both for you and the environment and you know it contains most of its original nutrients. If you additionally grind the grain yourself or get stone ground flour from somewhere you know it has been milled within the last month you have a good starting point. Milled grain loses a great deal of its nutritional value soon after milling. I keep a 25 kilo bag of rye and spelt in my cupboard and have a grain grinder in my kitchen, but that is because I live on an Arctic island far away from the nearest organic mill. A bag of rye, one of spelt or whole meal wheat and one of strong wheat flour will start you off and some sesame-seeds, sun-flower and linseeds will add to the taste and fresh yeast, sea-salt, and extra virgin olive oil is all you need to make your bread.

Start with clearing a surface big enough for the baking. A table or a kitchen worktop is fine. Make sure you get a good working position – too high a table for a small person will make it almost impossible to knead the dough! Select a bowl big enough for the job, depending on how big a batch you want to make. Place your ingredients on the table and wash your hands in warm water with plenty of soap. Enjoy it! Washing hands is always something we do in a hurry. By treasuring the moment you prepare your hands and mind for the task ahead, and I am convinced it is just as important as choosing the right ingredients!

I grind equal amounts of rye and spelt and add 1/3 of white, organic, wheat to the mix. This is not strictly necessary but makes the dough easier to handle and less heavy. To the dry mix I add sesame and sunflower seeds and some linseeds, according to taste and availability. Mix the ingredients together with one hand. Make a well in the flour by scooping it up to the sides of the bowl. When you cannot make it any deeper it is just the right size. In the well you later pour the liquid, which consists of lukewarm water and, if you have it, any old milk or yoghurt going off in the fridge. The liquid is heated up to body temperature determined by stirring the liquid with your index finger. In it you crumble the fresh yeast, as little as possible but enough to do the job of activating the dough. I use fresh yeast because I like its texture and smell and because I think the bread taste better and I enjoy stirring it into the fluid with

a fork. I use no more than 50g for a batch of 8 loafs – which translates to 6.25 g for one loaf – not much as it will over- activate the other ingredients as well as your body!

Fill the well with the yeast liquid and top it up with finger-warm water— as much as it takes before it overflows and with margins to prevent overflowing. In my experience it is better to have too much liquid and then to add more flour than the other way around. Then you pour in a few glugs of extra virgin olive oil. The oil makes the dough easier to handle and the bread moist and tasty. How much you want of it depends on taste and experience. Too little makes the bread dry – too much makes it heavy. Last you add a pinch of salt. A pinch is always ambiguous, but it is as much as you feel it should be. Half a cup of good sea-salt for a batch of 8 loafs is sufficient.

Now comes the interaction, the blending of the materials. I always find mixing with one hand and holding the bowl with the other works well. That means you have one hand free to grab other things like more flour, flies and phones, while the other hand is full of wet dough. I have never been in favour of mixing with spoons. I think hands are the best tools for the job and come with their own, inbuilt sensory system! Mixing is great fun – like playing with mud as a child. It is messy, sticky and wondrous. Keep mixing till all the wet and dry have merged. If the dough still sticks to your hands when everything is thoroughly mixed you have to add some more flour till the dough slips from the surface of the bowl as well as your fingers. Scrape off the sticky dough on your hand with the back of a knife and sprinkle a bit of flour on it to rub off the remaining stickiness. Knead the dough till it forms one, big dollop and cover it with a clean cloth and leave it in a warmish, draft proof place like a bathroom or a heating cupboard. The conditions for rising are totally dependent on favourable conditions. Think comfort, and you know where the bread will rise. Just follow the cats.

Fermentation takes time – without you interfering. It is a pro-biotic process, which encourages the body to produce its own antibiotic, thereby inhibiting the loss of the micro-flora in the digestive tract. Fermentation also eliminates harmful acids from various grains. It is a magical process. What happens is that the microbial enzymes transforms carbohydrates into sugar and produces carbon dioxide and ethanol. How fast this happens depends upon how much yeast you add and under what conditions the dough is rising. Warmer conditions leads to a faster process, and colder conditions to a slower. Time is the important equation. After a given period of time the dough has risen to around double its original size, depending upon your proportions of rye and whole wheat or spelt. The more white wheat the quicker and higher the dough will raise.

You then bring the dough out of the bathroom or the heating-cupboard and tilt it onto a surface sprinkled with flour – whatever type you have at hand. You start kneading with rhythmical movements, always making sure the dough does not stick to the surface by adding more flour when needed. Knead by rolling and pushing at the same time, a bit like playing basket-ball on a horizontal surface or invent new and interactive kneading methods e.g. by throwing the dough like a handball between two players or pretend you are in a boxing rink. Nothing is wrong. It all works as long as you keep focused. When the dough has been kneaded for about 10 minutes it is ready for separation, unless you only have made enough for one loaf. Divide the dough into equal bits according to the size of your tins or any other form you wish to use, and knead each element till it has a good shape that fits its predestined vessel. On an every day basis I use tins that fit a substantial family-size loaf – not the weenie ones that only makes 10 slices but the bigger ones meant for bread that smells good and needs to be consumed in large quantities shortly after it has left the oven! The tins have to be oiled and sprinkled with bran, seeds, flour or any other desired substance that you want as bedding for your loaf.

You are nearly there. It is time to get excited and turn on your oven to 200°C. Leave the bread in the tins or on the baking plate covered with a towel till the loaves have risen a bit more – 30 minutes perhaps or when they start to look like loafs of bread instead of giant Cumberland sausages. The last stage happens in the oven. The heat penetrates the sticky dough and burns off the carbon-dioxide and alcohol, glues the substances together and transforms it into a tasty and nourishing substance that fills you with energy gathered from the sun through the grains, from your own energy input and from whatever energy source you use to bake your bread.

When the bread starts casting an irresistible odour it is time to check your artwork. Sometimes the baking takes 40 minutes, sometimes an hour – depending on the rye content. Just trust your nose and eyes, build up your

experience and you will soon know when your bread is done. I sometimes alleviate the loaves of their tins once they have taken the form, and put them back into the oven for a final toasting. This gives them additional strength and crust – which tastes exceedingly good with cheese and honey!

The testing moment is taking the loaves out of the oven and leaving them on a grid covered with a towel. It requires patience and resistance. My grandmother always warned me of cutting the bread too soon as the ingredients have to settle for the bread not to become sticky and “raw”. How is it possible to wait when you have a steaming hot and delicious loaf waiting to be tasted!!! A short-cut is to quickly cut the loaf with a good bread knife. Not a straight-edged one but a descent bread-saw with substantial teeth. If you cut thick slices with short and sharp movements you have saved valuable waiting time, but the punishment is if you do it too early you may have ruined your loaf!

So be patient and leave the bread to settle.

Meantime is important – the *meantime* is the mean time in between.

Like waiting for Christmas.

Smells.

Sensible pleasures.

Dust dancing in the light

- and you are waiting.

*Waiting for a train to go
or a bus to come, or a plane to go
or the mail to come, or the rain to go
or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow.
Or waiting around for a Yes or a No
or waiting for their hair to grow.
Everyone is just waiting*

*Waiting for the fish to bite
or waiting for wind to fly a kite
or waiting around for Friday night
or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake
or a pot to boil, or a Better Break
or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants
or a wig of curls, or Another Chance.
Everyone is just waiting.¹¹*

And when the waiting is over, you can indulge in your own hand-sculpted loaf of bread with good butter, honey or mild cheese!!!

Bon Appetite!

© Eva Bakkeslett 2007

“Food and land and labour and human dignity are the only real sources of value but we trade those for cash hardly giving a thought for our children, our air, our water. But we can’t eat cash, no matter how much we make! So the value of bread is not in the price, but in the inherent integrity of the cycle, from seed to grain to mill to dough, into my stomach and back out to the soil, via my composting toilet.”

Kiko Denzer¹²

¹¹ Dr Seuss: Oh, the places you go!

¹² From Susan Seligson: “Going with the Grain: A Wandering Bread Lover Takes a Bite Out of Life” p.63

Giant Squash and Sun ripened Tomato Baguette

(with garlic, cheese and rosemary)

I first made this for the one-year celebration of our friend Mac's Yurt Village at Embercombe in Devon. It was one of those happy Sunday inventions that is constrained by what you have in the cupboard and garden and which, although at the time you think "I wish I had feta cheese instead of plain old cheddar..." or "pine nuts instead of pumpkinseeds", when all is cooked and joyfully devoured, you think, "hey, that worked. Maybe it was the best combination after all!".

We have now cooked the giant baguette twice more at Schumacher College, with Maya becoming adept at manoeuvring the dough and its filling, and rolling it up ready for baking. It seems pretty easy to cook successfully and you should allow an hour in the oven, though it may take slightly less. I used butternut squash but any of the flavoursome deep orange-coloured organic or biodynamic squashes should do.

Ingredients

For 1 baguette (10 good slices)

about 1 1/2 - 2 cups squash (225 gr/8 oz) - peeled and cubed into 1 cm/ 1/2 inch pieces

5 - 6 cloves of garlic, finely sliced

2oz (2/3 cup) sun ripened tomatoes (SRT), soaked overnight or for a few hours

8 oz/225gr cubed cheddar cheese

For the dough

4 cups or (20 oz) white unbleached flour. Replace 3/4 cup or 4 oz with rye flour if you have it.

Chopped rosemary taken from 4 - 5 sprigs. Leave tufty tops on sprigs to use at a later date.

1 heaped tsp salt

1 heaped tsp dried yeast or 1/2 oz fresh yeast, in 350 ml warm water

1 tsp muscovado sugar

1 tbsp olive oil

warm water 350ml approx.

Method

To prepare the dough

1. Drain off the liquid you have soaked the SRT's in, and include this in the volume of warm water you will use to make the dough. Use about 1/2 pint of the liquid to dissolve the sugar and yeast in. After a quick stir with a spoon or fork, leave the yeast to froth up. (If you are using fresh yeast you can crumble it straight into the flour, with the sugar).

Add the chopped rosemary and salt to the flour, then add the warm liquid (including the yeasty portion) and olive oil. Mix until a soft dough is obtained adding a little more water if necessary. It should not be too sticky or too stiff, but a little sticky is ok at this stage. Leave the dough in the bowl to rise for 40 - 60 minutes.

Meanwhile peel the squash, remove seeds and slice it into pieces roughly 1 cm or 1/2 inch fat. Spread these 1 layer thick on a metal baking tray and drizzle with olive oil. Toss the squash so it is well coated and sprinkle with salt. You do not need to have the squash swimming in olive oil but a nice shiny coating will help it to start sizzling quickly. Roast in a pre-heated oven over 200°C or 375°F or gas mark 4, for 15-20 mins then stir in the finely sliced garlic and return to the oven for a further 5 - 10 mins cooking. When ready the squash should be still slightly al dente (crunchy) and holding its shape well, as it will cook more in the baguette. It does not have to be brown. If, however you over-cook it, and it begins to go mushy, it will still work. Tip into a flattish ceramic baking dish, gently spread out and leave to cool.

3. Slice the cheddar cheese into 1cm or 1/2 inch cubes

4. Slice the drained sun ripened tomatoes

5. When the squash is cool enough not to melt the cheese, mix all filling ingredients together in the baking dish (squash, garlic, tomatoes, cheese).

6. The dough should by now be well risen, so punch it down and turn onto a lightly floured surface. Knead until smooth, adding only as much flour as you need to stop it being sticky.

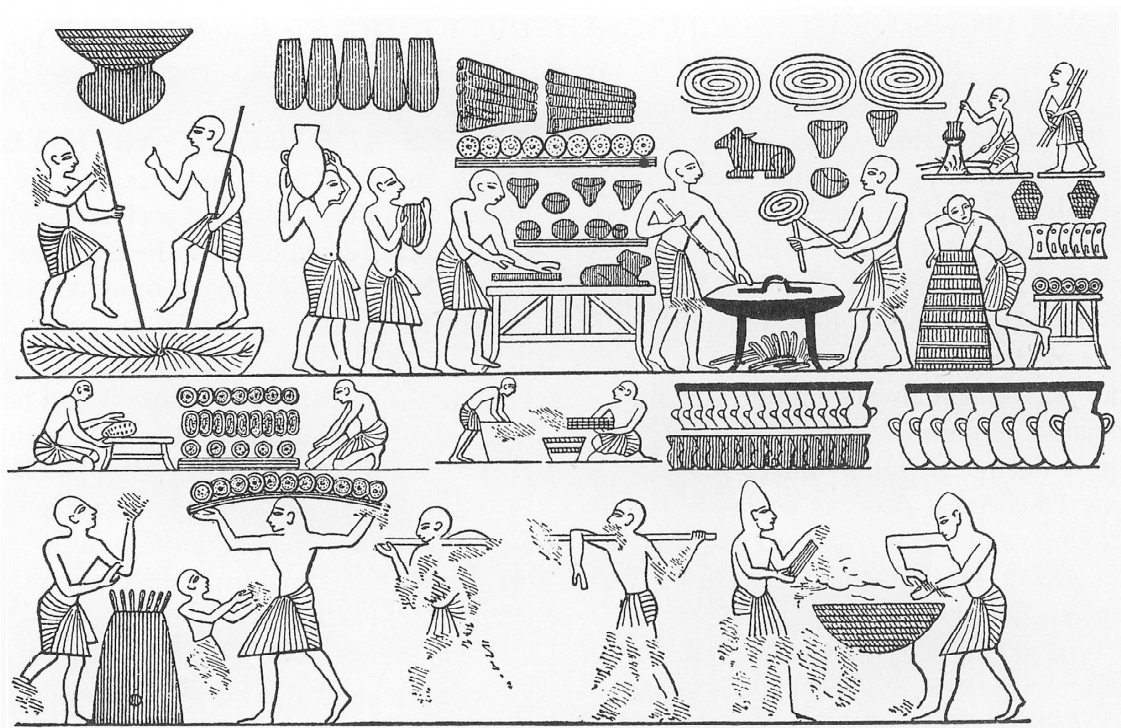
Roll the dough, with a rolling pin until it begins to resist. Leave it to relax (any amount!). (Using a little rye flour in the mix will help to reduce any glutenous resistance and make the rolling out slightly easier). After a while, roll a second time, shaping the dough into a large squarish rectangle about as thick as you would have for a pizza (1cm). Put aside on a tray.

7. Spread the filling evenly over the dough, leaving 3cm/1inch around the edge. Wet the edges with a little water, then bending one of the longer edges over the mix, begin to roll up into a sausage. Once rolled, press the ends together. The rolling process will also have served to pull the baguette into a longer shape. Move it onto a metal baking tray which has been prepared with baking parchment, or oiled and sprinkled with semolina, to avoid sticking. Poke a skewer deeply (so it touches the bottom) into the baguette at 3cm/1.5 inch intervals.

This will allow trapped air to escape without inflating the baguette. Paint with a mixture of milk and olive oil or egg and oil (the milk and egg will help the seeds stick to the surface) and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds. Lastly, in each of the skewered holes, insert a prepared sprig of rosemary (the stalk will have been broken off to 4cm/2 inches long). Alternatively, just sprinkle whole leaves over amongst the pumpkin seeds.

8. Allow to rise for 15-20 minutes then cook in the oven for 45 - 60mins until golden brown at 1800C/ 3750F/gas mark 4. When ready, it will sound hollow when rolled over and tapped lightly. Cool slightly, and serve still warm with butter.

© Julia Ponsonby, Summer 2006



From the tomb of Ramesses III in the Valley of the Kings, twentieth dynasty

Simple brown bread or bread rolls

(p. 195 Gaia's Kitchen)

For 1 loaf or 10-15 rolls

1 1/4 lb (565g) strong flour (mix wholewheat and unbleached white flour)

12-15 fl oz (350-400ml) warm water approx.

1 1/2 tsp salt

1 tbsp brown sugar or honey

1/2 oz (10g) fresh yeast

2 tbsp sunflower oil

2 tbsp sunflower seeds

2 tbsp sesame seeds

1x2 lb (900g) loaf tin

A little beaten egg for glazing (optional)

THE POISONOUS TRUTH ABOUT OUR DAILY BREAD

Andrew Whitley, The Observer September 17, 2006

Take charge of your health, says the government, by choosing the right foods. This is easier said than done with our most basic food - bread. To make sensible choices, we need to know what goes into our daily loaf and how it is made. But the big bakers won't tell us, exploiting a loophole in the law which classes certain substances used in bread as 'processing aids' that need not be declared. While they refuse to be open about the way bread is made, we should assume that they have something to hide.

A recent, much-publicised statement by teachers, writers and psychologists claimed that childhood is being 'poisoned', in part by the 'junk food' that is known to be a factor in some child development disorders. A child's physical and psychological growth, they warned, 'cannot be accelerated. They change in biological time, not at electrical speed'. British industrial baking, too, appears to have abandoned the timescale of biology. Time has been removed from the baking process, replaced by electrical energy and additives. Industrial bakers target children with 'crustless' loaves whose nutritional vacuity is masked by appeals to convenience and indulgence.

Children dislike crusts, they assert, ignoring the fact that childhood constipation, obesity and diabetes, all possibly affected by the bread we eat, are major public-health concerns.

But give or take the crusts, such infantile fodder is no different from the bread that 95 per cent of the British population eats. It is relatively cheap and available in a multitude of brands and varieties, including ever more options purporting to include some 'healthy' additions. Bread is not what it was.

About 15 years ago, people started asking me to make bread without wheat, yeast or gluten. Shop bread made them feel 'bloated' or worse. Irritable bowel syndrome, candidiasis and Crohn's disease all entered common parlance. Coeliac disease now affects one in a 100 people, other wheat intolerances probably more. How did we get here?

We have bred wheat to produce high yields in intensive growing conditions with scant regard for its nutritional quality; modern varieties have 30-50 per cent fewer minerals than traditional ones. Fast roller milling separates grain into its constituent parts so effectively that white flour has up to 88 per cent less of a range of minerals and vitamins than whole wheat. A recent study showed that organic stoneground flour had 50 per cent more magnesium and 46 per cent more zinc than chemically grown roller-milled flour.

The changes to baking have been equally drastic. The Chorleywood Bread Process, invented in 1961, uses intense energy, chemical additives and large amounts of yeast to produce loaves in a very short time. Nearly all the bread

eaten in Britain is made by this method or one that uses similar additives. If dough is not allowed to ferment for several hours, there is little chance for natural bacteria to destroy harmful elements in the dough and to make important nutrients available to the human body.

Worse still, enzymes, often genetically modified, are added to flour and dough to make loaves bigger and keep them squishy for days, if not weeks, after baking. But most troubling of all, recent research suggests that one enzyme, transglutaminase, used in food manufacturing and baking, may actually turn some of the gliadin protein in wheat flour into a form that can be toxic to some people. Even the organic loaves made by the industrial bakers can contain this stuff.

The industry is keen to sell us 'premium' loaves with fashionable additions of omega-3, inulin, folic acid and the like. But if we don't attend to the innate quality of our wheat and flour, our diet will consist of little more than nutrified industrial slop.

The relatively affluent may be able to afford a broad diet, but poorer people depend disproportionately on bread. For them, especially, it matters that every slice is as good as possible.

Bread is life. Literally, in the sense that, properly made, it has what agricultural pioneer George Stapledon called 'the ability to enliven'. Symbolically, in that it stands for all food. We need to reclaim the staff of life from those who profit by selling it to us and refuse to admit what's in it. Increasing numbers of people are already doing this and making bread slowly with their own hands.

Were the baking industry to stop and ask itself what this signifies, I'd be tempted to say: it's about time.

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BREAD OF SORROW

By Satish Kumar, Resurgence issue 207

BREAD IS BIG BUSINESS, but whether it is any good for us, we can no longer be sure. One thing is certain: a loaf of bread contains more pollution than nutrition, more profit than nourishment and more chemicals than taste.

Gone are the days when we had the time to bake our own bread, when the fresh smell of wholesome bread filled the kitchen, when every loaf of bread was different and when making bread was a creative and aesthetic experience.

Also gone are the days when we could walk to our local bakery and enjoy the sensual pleasure of seeing and smelling the freshly baked bread arranged on the wooden shelves, to chat with the baker and others from our neighbourhood. Those were the days when the bakery was the centre of the local community. Now only 4% of bread is baked in small, neighbourhood bakeries. 86% of bread is mass-produced in factory conditions.

Bread diversity was a symbol of cultural diversity. Regional varieties represented grain diversity as well as diversity of style. Now, wherever you are, you buy the same kind of bread under a limited number of brand names like 'Mother's Pride' - but no mother would ever be proud of that ghastly stuff. Where is our mother and where is her pride? We not only have corruption of our food, we also have corruption of our language.

Thirteen big manufacturers control the bread market of over £3 billion a year. They sell nearly ten million loaves every day, involving neither 'mother' nor any 'pride'. Our nation as a whole should be ashamed of such bread - not proud! Perhaps Mother's Pride should be renamed Mother's Shame? We should be ashamed because the quality of bread has dramatically deteriorated over the years. Our bread is stale and sterile. It is so devoid of any life that bread manufacturers have to inject vitamins and minerals artificially into the bread they sell. Yet, with massive advertising, people have been fooled into eating what is a national disgrace.

I am constantly surprised that a Christian society should tolerate such desacralization and degradation of bread, which was considered so sacred that Christians celebrated Holy Communion with it. Now, since there is no real bread around, the ceremony is wafer-thin.

Lorries full of factory bread rush up and down the country on our motorways, polluting the air so that they can provide the nation with cheap bread. But no intelligent mind would see this kind of bread as cheap. The price we pay in terms of environment and health is very high. The loaf on our table has travelled hundreds of 'bread miles'.

If we eat good, wholesome, fresh bread, baked locally or at home, the cancer rate will decrease; the rate of heart disease will fall. The nation will not have to be taxed so highly to pay the huge amounts of money for medicines and hospitals. There will be less depression and more joy in life. Less congestion on our roads and cleaner air to breathe. Good bread is an essential health measure. The NBS (National Bread Service) will make the NHS (National Health Service) more successful.

By paying attention to good bread we can combat companies which produce genetically engineered wheat, multinationals which patent seeds, and we can support small-scale, local and organic methods of wheat production as opposed to the monoculture of the us and Canadian prairies. HOW CAN WE LAUNCH such a bread revolution? Perhaps we could have a Campaign for Real Bread, like the Campaign for Real Ale? We need to organize a boycott of factory bread. How about a car sticker: 'Bring Back the Local Bakery'?

Our schools will be a good place to start. Good education cannot be provided on bad bread. Let every school teach children the art and science of baking. Let the school lunch be based on good bread. Baking bread is not a waste of time; it is the foundation of good education. Let learning be led by bread.

Secondly, every environmentalist needs to make time to bake bread. Mahatma Gandhi in India made spinning an act of defiance against oppressive colonialism. The spinning wheel became the symbol of the independence movement. Similarly, good bread should become the symbol of environmentalism. There should be no white bread sandwiches in the offices of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth.

Bread made with stone-ground, organic flour should be easily available from the village bakery. White flour, which is bleached with chlorine dioxide, is toxic. This fact should be made known to the general public. White bread is the bitter bread of sorrow.

Once, E. F. Schumacher was invited to a prestigious dinner party. The hosts served him ultra-white bread. Any sign of a crust was neatly removed. Next to the bread was a white serviette. There seemed hardly a difference between the bread and the serviette. To make the point, Schumacher started to put butter on the serviette. The embarrassed host pointed out the actual bread to Schumacher. He appeared surprised and said that when we are unable to differentiate between the bread and the serviette, we have lost something precious.

We need to begin with good bread if we wish to restore the physical as well as the mental health of the nation. When we are mindful of the quality of bread, we will be mindful of the quality of food. When we are mindful of the quality of food, we will be mindful of the quality of life in general.

The quality of bread is too important to be left to the bread factories and bread manufacturers - their prime motive is to make profit, rather than provide bread for health. Baking your own bread and bread baked at the local small bakery are the only two options, which can free us from the monopolistic stranglehold of big bread business. The first step towards the autonomy of the individual and of the local community is to take back our basic right of access to good bread. A healthy loaf is everybody's birthright.

SOURCES FOR FURTHER READING, INSPIRATION AND GOOD INGREDIENTS:

SHIPTON MILLS

Tel: 01666 505050

www.shipton-mill.com

A wide range of organic flour. They also do postal orders.

The flour for The Companion Festival of Bread has kindly been donated from Shipton Mills!

BREAD MATTERS

Tel: 01768 881899, www.breadmatters.com

Hands-on bread-making courses by Andrew Whitley in Penrith, Cumbria

SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT

www.slowfood.com

International organisation whose aim is "to protect the pleasures of the table from the homogenisation of modern fast food and life"

THE SOIL ASSOCIATION

www.soilassociation.org

The UK's leading environmental charity promoting sustainable, organic farming and championing human health.

SMAAK TE PAKKEN

www.smaaktepakken.nl

Mobile cooking workshops for children run by the Dutch couple Esther Boukema and Mark van Will.

The art of tuning children back into sensing and caring for the food they eat and how to trigger their curiosity and skills to make their own nourishing food.

BOOKS:

"Bread Matters"

Andrew Whitley, Fourth Estate, 2006

The state of modern bread and a definitive guide to baking your own. Winner of Best Food Book 2006!!

"Gaias Kitchen"

Julia Ponsonby, Green Books, 2000

Thomas Moore, author of *Care of the Soul* and *Original Self*:

"It's a great mistake to think that food is primarily nourishment for the body. All good food, carefully selected, prepared, and presented, nourishes the soul. We are not only what we eat, but the way we eat. These lessons fill this extraordinary book of food, and I'm certain that as you follow the recipes and catch the spirit, your soul will be well fed."

"The One Loaf"

Joy Mead, Wild Goose Publications

Beautifully catches the spirit of bread and transforms it into poetry to nourish the body and soul.

"Six thousand years of bread – its holy and unholy history"

H.E Jacob, The Lyons Press New York, paperback, 1997 (originally published in 1944)

Fantastic book about the history of bread!

"Going with the Grain: A Wandering Bread Lover Takes a Bite Out of Life"

Susan Seligson, Simon & Schuster, 2004

Brilliant stories of bread around the world.

"Foodwise - understanding what we eat and how it affects us."

Wendy Cook, Clairview Books, 2003

"Energy plan for the western man"

Joseph Beuys compiled by Carin Kuoni, Four Walls Eight Windows, New York 1990

"Re-enchantment of Art"

Suzi Gablik, Thames and Hudson 1994

Invigorating reading from an author who is passionate about melting the boundaries between art and life.

ART AND ECOLOGY INSPIRATION

SCHUMACHER COLLEGE - is an international centre educating and inspiring for sustainability, based in the beautiful Devonshire countryside of south-west England. The College welcomes participants of all ages from all over the world. Offers short courses and an MSc in Holistic Science. www.schumachercollege.org.uk/prospect/homepage.html

MA ARTS & ECOLOGY – Provides a new and challenging academic vehicle by which emergent arts practices can develop in the context of contemporary approaches to ECOLOGY, INTERDISCIPLINARY AND PLACE. It is innovative in terms of mode of delivery; its range of subjects horizons; its development in fieldwork methodology in the context of contemporary arts practice. <http://www.dartington.ac.uk/informationforstudents/studying/taughtma/index.asp#MAAE>

DESIRE LINES – Desire Lines is Dartington's annual arts & ecology symposium, which in 2007 will bring together performers, writers, ecologists, sociologists, visual artists, philosophers, psychologists, researchers, journalists, anthropologists and others to explore the Ecologies of Language. www.desirelines.org.uk.

CCANW (Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World) - An integrated programme of exhibitions, artist-led projects and educational activities reaches out, across the art forms and other disciplines, to address the urgent social, environment and scientific issues that concern us all today; In Haldon Forest Park close to Exeter on the A38. www.ccanw.co.uk

GREEN MUSEUM - A new online museum of environmental art, advances creative efforts to improve our relationship with the natural world. Our goal is to inform, inspire and connect people through environmental art and encourage the creation of new work that serves our communities and ecosystems. www.greenmuseum.org

COMMON GROUND - is internationally recognised for playing a unique role in the arts and environmental fields, distinguished by the linking of nature with culture, focussing upon the positive investment people can make in their own localities, championing popular democratic involvement, and by inspiring celebration as a starting point for action to improve the quality of our everyday places. We offer ideas, information and inspiration. www.commonground.org.uk

RANE - The RANE research cluster, based at University College Falmouth, has been established to examine the relationship between the visual arts and ecological thinking. <http://rane.falmouth.ac.uk/home.html>

PLATFORM - works across disciplines for social and ecological justice. It combines the transformatory power of art with the tangible goals of campaigning, the rigour of in-depth research with the vision to promote alternative futures. www.platformlondon.org/aboutplatform.asp

The flour for The Companion Festival of Bread has
kindly been donated by Shipton Mills!

www.shipton-mill.com Tel: 01666 505050