



Paul Hollywood's focaccia

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7 (ratings)

- Makes: 2 loaves
- Prep time: 3 hrs
- Cooking time: 15 mins
- Total time: 3 hrs 15 mins
- Skill level: Easy peasy
- Costs: Cheap as chips



Paul Hollywood knows bread and we think this recipe is pretty spot on. Try the Great British Bake Off judge's classic recipe for focaccia. The oregano and sea salt topping makes this loaf extra tasty, gives it added crunch and means it is really moreish. It is the perfect loaf for eating with family and friends for a big sharing lunch or dinner. Torn up and dunked in olive oil and balsamic vinegar, this bread will make you feel like you are on your holidays!

Ingredients

- 140ml olive oil, plus extra for kneading and to finish
- 500g strong white bread flour, plus extra for dusting
- 360ml cool water
- 10g salt
- 10g instant yeast
- Fine semolina for dusting (optional)

To finish:

- Dried oregano
- Flaky sea salt

Method

1. Lightly oil a 2–3 litre square plastic container. (Make sure you use a square tub as it helps shape the dough.)
2. Tip the flour into a large mixing bowl and add the yeast to one side of the bowl and the salt to the other.
3. Add three-quarters of the water and 40ml of olive oil, and turn the mixture round with your fingers. Continue to add water, a little at a time, until you've picked up all the flour from the sides of the bowl. You may not need to add all the water, or you may need to add a little more. You want your dough to be very soft – wetter than a standard bread dough. Use the mixture to clean the inside of the bowl and keep going until the mixture forms a rough dough.
4. Coat the work surface with some of the remaining olive oil, then tip the dough onto it and begin to knead. Knead for around 5–10 minutes. Work through the initial wet stage until the dough starts to form a soft, smooth skin. (It's best to avoid adding any more flour as it is supposed to have a wet, sticky consistency.)
5. When your dough feels soft and elastic, put the dough into the oiled tub. Cover with a tea towel and leave to rise until at least doubled in size – about 1 hour.
6. Line 2 baking trays with baking parchment and drizzle with olive oil.
7. Put more olive oil on the work surface and dust with fine semolina if you have some. Carefully tip the dough onto the surface. Handle the dough very gently so you keep as much air in it as possible. Divide the dough in half. Stretch each piece out to a flat, even piece and place on a baking tray.
8. Put each tray into a clean plastic bag and leave to prove for about 1 hour, until the dough is doubled in size and springs

back quickly if you prod it lightly with your finger.

9. Meanwhile, heat your oven to 220°C/425°F/Gas Mark 7.
10. Use your fingers to make deep dimples in the focaccia, pushing them all the way through the dough to the bottom. Drizzle each focaccia with olive oil and sprinkle with a little flaky sea salt and oregano, then bake for 15 minutes, or until cooked through.
11. Tap the bottom of the focaccia and you should hear a hollow sound. Trickle with more olive oil, then cool on a wire rack.

By Taken from Paul Hollywood's How to Bake (Bloomsbury Publishing, £20)

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