



## WHITE LOAF WITH A BIGA

### Biga ingredients for **one** or **two** cobs

**400g (800g)** strong white flour

**275g (544g)** warm water

**0.4g (0.6g)** dried yeast

### Remaining ingredients

**105g (210g)** warm water (40°C)

**1g (2g)** dried yeast

**100g (200g)** strong white flour

**11g (22g)** salt

### Method

Mix the biga ingredients in a large bowl the evening before so that the mixture will have 12 to 14 hours fermentation by the time you are ready to continue next day. Start by dissolving the yeast in a little of the warm water. After a few minutes wash it into the flour with the remaining water. Cover and leave at room temperature hopefully 20-22°C.

Next day add the remaining ingredients ie strong white flour, salt, yeast and warm water and mix by squishing between your fingers, wet your hands first so the dough doesn't stick.

The dough is going to prove now for 2 to 3 hours. At the start of this time give the dough 3 folds at 30 minute intervals. Make the folds by going round the dough (in the bowl) pulling the dough up and out as far as it will go without tearing then folding it back into the middle.

At the end of the proving, ease the dough out onto a floured surface. For two cobs divide the dough into two equal pieces. Follow the instructions below for each dough. With the help of a light dusting of flour go round the dough pulling an edge gently away from the centre then folding it lightly back into the centre. Do this till you have a neat high mound of dough then turn it over and tuck the bottom edge in using the edge of your hands - again best if you see this done. Flour a proving basket or bowl lined with well a floured tea towel. Lay the dough, pretty side down in your basket or bowl. Let it prove for about 1 hour in a warm and moist place (inside a plastic bag misted with water).

Well in advance heat the oven with the casserole plus lid. Gently tip the dough onto floured baking parchment. Optionally use a piece of doweling to make a groove across each dough, going right through to the bottom of it. A little flour across where you are going to press makes it easier. Take the (VERY HOT) casserole out of the oven, pick up the dough using the edge of the baking paper on either side of the groove which will allow the dough to fold a bit in the middle as you ease it into the pot. Replace the casserole lid

Bake at 240°C for 30 minutes. Remove the casserole lid and bake for a few minutes.

