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Pan Cocido en el Horno

Baked Bread

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Finding Pan Cocido en el Horno

In doing research for a bread to prepare for the feast of Sacred Stone's Baronial Birthday, I collaborated with Master Robear on a bread that would complement the menu that he had prepared. The menu Master Robear decided to provide focused on "dishes that might have been served in the court of Charles V: fried pork with sauce for any meat, tender chickpeas, and cabbage with leeks".

I decided to search for a bread that would complement Master Robear's dishes. Research led me to *Culinary Abundance: Rich Recipes with Medieval Variations*, an extract of *Fadālat al-Jiwān fī tayyibāt al-ta 'ām wa-l-alwān* translated into English by Susan Lord-Williams from Fernando de la Granja Santamaría's Hispano-Arabic to Castellan translation, published by the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras.

Source

Rich Recipes with Medieval Variations is sourced from *Fadālat* which,

"is one of the two surviving medieval Andalusian-Muslim cookery manuscripts. It was written in Murcia, a providence south of Valencia and Alicante on the Mediterranean coast, after the conquest of the Hispano-Muslims in Valencia by Jamie I of Aragon in 1238 and 1243, when Fernando III of Castile conquered Murcia."

The author of *Fadālat* is ibn Razin al-Tuyîbî and according to *Rich Recipes*, little is known of him. The translation of the relevant parts of *Fadālat* from Hispano-Arabic to Castellan was done by 1959 by Fernando de la Granja Santamaría. Granja's work was then translated by Susan Lord-Williams, and this is the translation that I sourced for the Cocido en el horno recipe.

Recipe

The recipe I chose to prepare was that for Pan cocido en el horno, translated into English as “baked bread”. As a baker, I have a fondness for bread recipes and so I pursued this one. The recipe as translated by Lord-Williams as follows:

“Soak semolina, add salt and let it soften. Dip hands in lard or oil and knead it well. Add yeast and water little by little until the dough reaches the desired consistency. Coat it by sprinkling fine flour over it and divide dough to make the desired shapes for loaves. Fold a piece of linen or woolen cloth and place these in it, cover this with lamb skin or something similar and let the mass rise. When it has risen sufficiently, it will emit a noise when struck. Immediately bake with care in the oven. Once baked, clean the loaves and put them in a breadbasket for consumption.

“If using fine quality flour or other types, there is no need to soak it. Add the yeast and knead it. In either case use hot water.”

Producing Pan cocido en el horno

Ingredients

My preparation of Pan cocido diverged from the original in several ways. However, I would first like to address the things that I kept the same, which were most of the ingredients:

1. Semolina flour.
2. Salt.
3. Oil.
4. Water.

I diverged from the recipe by using Bob’s Red Mill Unbleached Enriched Artisanal Bread Flour. This is a valid addition to the recipe as according to *Diet, Society, and Economy in Late Medieval Spain: Stable Isotope Evidence from Muslims and Christians from Gandía, Valencia*,

“The study of diet in medieval Spain is based on a wide range of available historical evidence. Taken together, these imply a diet based on cereals, with regional differences in the types of grain being consumed, as well as variation according to social status. (264)”

The mention of “variation according to social status” is key as “Bread was made from unrefined wheat while grains such as barley and rye were eaten by those at the lower end of the social hierarchy...” (Alexander et al., 2014). Given the social status of the court of Charles V, the wheat

that would be consumed would have been of higher quality than that available to the lower classes.

I chose to use Bob's Red Mill Unbleached Enriched Artisanal Bread Flour, as it is described on the Bob's Red Mill website, it meets the parameters set by the research of Alexander, Gerrard, Gutiérrez, and Millard,

“Artisan Unbleached Bread Flour is a premium high-protein flour milled from America's highest quality wheat. It's a favorite of artisan bakers due to its high gluten content, and perfect for sourdough bread, baguettes, pizza dough, dinner rolls, sandwich loaves, no-knead bread, salt-rising bread, pretzels, bagels and more. Enriched, unbleached and unbromated.”

According to the data collected by Alexander, Gerrard, Gutiérrez, and Millard, Christians had priority access to grains such as wheat, which had to be imported from Valencia during the 12th-13th centuries. The recipe that I used for Cocido en el horno was sourced from a manuscript that “was written in Murcia, a providence south of Valencia”. This would place the use of wheat both temporally and geographically where it would need to be to potentially have been used in Cocido en el horno.

Much like my extant contemporaries, I made do with what I could acquire. Due to supply chain issues, I had to supplement the semolina flour with that of unbleached enriched bread flour. The result was a blend of fifty percent (50%) semolina and fifty percent (50%) unbleached enriched bread flour.

Tools

1. Baker's lathe
2. Bread baking stone
3. Digital scale
4. Digital thermometer
5. Dough scraper
6. Glass measuring implements
7. Kitchen aid mixer
8. Metal cooling rack
9. Oven
10. Plastic proofing containers

Steps

1. Measured the ingredients.
 - a. 500g King Arthur semolina flour
 - b. 500g Bob's Red Mill unbleached enriched flour
 - c. 20g King Arthur's bread salt
 - d. 10g SAF red instant yeast
 - e. 2tbs La Tourangelle, expeller-pressed grapeseed oil
 - f. 1¼ cups water
2. Combined ingredients in the mixer in this order:
 - a. The flours
 - b. Salt
 - c. Yeast
 - d. Water
3. Slowly added the water.
4. After the dough was formed, I moved it out of the mixer and began to knead it by hand using the grapeseed oil.
5. Worked the dough into a ball.
6. Placed the ball of dough into a greased proofing bucket.
7. Let the dough rise until it doubled in size.
8. Knocked it down, pushing the air out of it.
9. Formed two loaves.
10. Sprinkled unbleached flour on the loaves.
11. Covered them with a cotton towel.
12. Preheated my oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
13. Let them rise on parchment paper on a baking sheet once more for thirty minutes.
14. Slid them into an oven onto a bread baking stone.
15. Baked the loaves for 35 minutes at 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
16. After the loaves reached 190 degrees Fahrenheit when temped with a digital thermometer, they were removed from the oven to cool on a metal cooling rack until they reached room temperature.

Conclusions

As the recipe had been translated into English for me, what would have been the most difficult part of this was already done. I cannot read any language other than English and I do not have access to the original manuscript or Granja's translation. I could only find the translation into English by Lord-Williams.

It was second nature to me to translate the recipe's ingredients into standard baker's percentages. This was my best guess as to the measurements used by period bakers. Adjusting the standard baker's measurements too far in any direction will result in a poorly made baked good so it stands to reason that period bakers must have used similar measurements.

Given my physical issues, I can only really see using modern tools as standing and bending are difficult for me. Also, adhering to food safety guidelines requires the use of modern tools so compromises cannot be made there for historical accuracy.

Things I Would Do Differently

1. I would pursue a more authentic interpretation of the recipe by using the ingredients as they are mentioned creating a more period product:
2. Use only semolina flour.
3. Use lard instead of grapeseed oil.
4. Use a stone/outdoor oven so as to emulate period baking conditions.

Appendix



This is an image of the 500g of semolina flour.



This is an image of the 500g of unbleached flour.



This is the image of measuring the
bead salt.



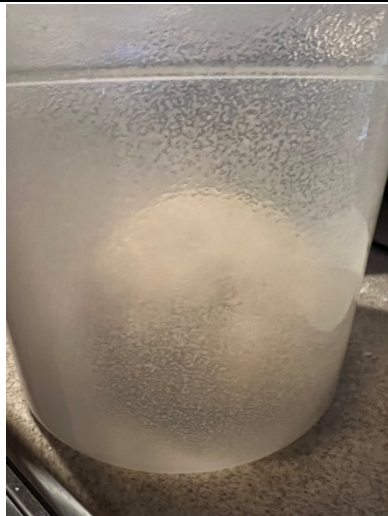
This the image of measuring the yeast.



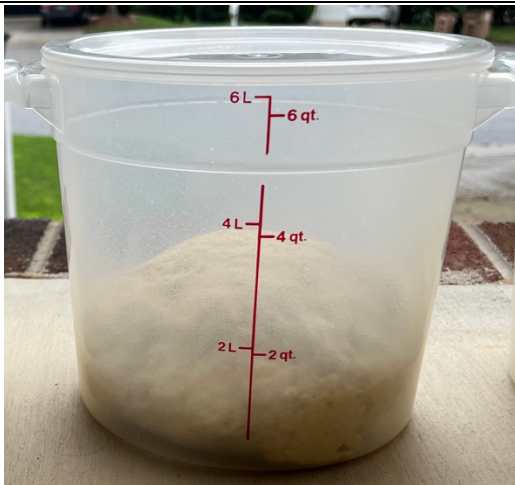
This image shows the oil, but not in
the correct measurement. The oil was
only used as the reipe directed.



This is the resulting dough.



This is the dough resting in the greased proofing bucket.



This is the risen dough.



This is the dough formed into loaves.



This is the finished product.

Works Cited

- Alexander, Michelle M., et al. "Diet, Society, and Economy in Late Medieval Spain: Stable Isotope Evidence from Muslims and Christians from Gandía, Valencia." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, vol. 156, no. 2, 2014, pp. 263–273., <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajpa.22647>.
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