

ZA'ATAR CHRISTMAS SOURDOUGH

(from the Bewitching Kitchen)

385g white bread flour
20g whole-wheat flour
65g sourdough starter at 100% hydration
280g water
8g salt
1 tsp za'atar

Make the levain mixture about 6 hours before you plan to mix the dough. It should be very bubbly and active.

When you are ready to make the final dough, place the water in the bowl of a KitchenAid type mixer and dissolve the starter in it, mixing with a spatula briefly, then add the two types of flour, the baharat and the salt. Turn the mixer on with the hook attachment and knead the dough for 4 minutes at low-speed all the time. If the dough is too sticky, add 1/4 cup flour, you want the dough to start clearing the sides of the bowl, but still be sticky at the bottom.

Remove from the machine, and transfer to a container lightly coated with oil, cover lightly with plastic wrap and allow it to ferment for 4 hours, folding every 45 minutes or so. After four hours bulk fermentation, shape the dough as a ball, and place, seam side up, in a lightly floured banetton. Leave at room temperature one hour, and then place in the fridge overnight, from 8 to 12 hours.

Next morning, heat the oven to 450F. Invert the dough over parchment paper, rub gently white flour on the surface. Score with a pine tree pattern (see picture below) and paint them with air-brush in green, then go over the center lines with gold luster powder.

Bake at 450F for 45 minutes, preferably covered for the first 30 minutes to retain steam. Cool completely over a rack before slicing.