

VALENTINE'S SOURDOUGH

(from *The Bewitching Kitchen*)

450g bread flour

50g whole wheat flour

75g sourdough starter (stiff or 100% hydration)

10g salt

360g water

Thai rice flour (or tapioca flour)

Red Yeast Powder for color (I used *this one*)

Mix all ingredients in the bowl of a KitchenAid type mixer fitted with the dough hook. Knead gently for about 4 minutes (first or second speed maximum).

Transfer dough to a lightly oil bowl and do a bulk fermentation with 4 folds made 45 minutes apart. Before you start the fermentation, remove a very small amount of dough to a small glass container (like those that hold spices), and mark where the level of the dough is with a permanent marker. Keep that at room temperature to monitor fermentation.

After the last folding cycle, keep an eye on the fermentation using the small vial. Ideally you want to let the dough ferment until it is double in size. Depending on the day, temperature of your kitchen, it might take 8 hours or more. Once bulk fermentation is over, shape the dough as a round ball. Place in the fridge overnight.

Next day, freeze the dough for 30 minutes in the banetton, to make it easier to score later. Invert the dough on a paper liner, add the heart shape in the center, and flour the region around it (I used Thai rice flour). Lift the heart shape, place the larger parchment as a mask to cover the rest of the dough. Add your stencil, making sure it is tight on the surface. Rub Red Yeast powder over the design, lift the stencil carefully. Score the perimeter of the heart and the outer area of the dough, and place in a Dutch oven.

Close the pan and bake at 450F for 7 minutes. Remove the lid, go back and re-inforce the cut around the heart, although this step is optional. Close the pan and bake for 30 minutes, open and allow the bread to brown for a further 15 minutes. Cool completely over a rack before slicing.