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Everything In Its Place

BY LAURIE LAMOUNTAIN

While the French phrase *mise en place* applies to a culinary tradition that depends on “everything in its place,” it has a wide range of applications. When I was speaking with Michael Jubinsky about *No Passport Required: Cooking Around the World in Maine*, the cookbook he just co-authored with his wife, Sandy, he pointed out that it evolved from a *mise en place* approach, not unlike the organizing and arranging of ingredients required to prepare a menu in a Michelin-rated restaurant. Appetizers, soups, entrees and breads were all organized according to their country of origin and laid out like a sumptuous-but-orderly banquet.

The Jubinskys opened Stone Turtle Baking & Cooking School in 2006, after retiring from busy careers that included the unlikely coupling of King Arthur Flour Company with the U.S. Navy and NASA for Michael, and pastry chef at Lulu’s in Niantic, Connecticut, and professional food taster for both Pfizer and Cultor Industries for Sandy. Along the way, the couple somehow managed to write features and a monthly food column for the New London,

Connecticut, daily newspaper. Together, they are a force to be reckoned with and a lot of it has to do with their dedication to a *mise en place* approach to just about everything. Their most recent collaborative effort is their cookbook, which will be available for purchase this spring.

My first experience of their carefully choreographed approach was in a one-day class on European-style bread making using a wood-fired oven. From the moment the workshop began until it ended almost precisely six hours later, it was a lesson in organization and proper order. How else could you possibly end up with twenty French boules, an herb bread, a sweet bread with dried cherries and chocolate chips, a fougasse and ten pizzas in that short time span? It all depends on preparation.

While Michael measured enough of the starter dough (poolish) he’d prepared the day before for ten of us to make two loaves of bread, he kept us entertained with stories of his former life as senior spokesman for the King Arthur Flour Company and director of submarine safety for the U.S. Navy, which, I began to realize, had a symbiotic

relationship after all. Sandy, along with a team of assistants, supplied us with the necessary tools of the trade and ingredients, as well as amusing asides to Michael’s stories. Within no time, we each had a bowl of yeasty, beautiful bread dough to slide onto the rising racks for its first proof.

It’s easy to see why King Arthur Flour Company employed Michael as their senior spokesman for twenty-five years. He’s a natural showman. While we waited for our dough to proof, he deftly demonstrated how to use the same French bread dough to prepare a savory herb bread, a sweet bread and a fougasse. He also showed us how to create beautifully patterned round loaves with a proofing basket, known as a *brotform* or *banneton*. For lunch, we were each given a ball of dough to shape and dress with an array of toppings before sliding it off the wooden peel and into Le Panyol wood-fired oven. (*Warning: this class is not recommended for those on a gluten-free diet.*)

Our appetites sated, we moved on to the second phase of our bread making. It takes about three hours total for bread to proof, but there was never any down time during



the class. We were either creating, listening and watching . . . or eating. Michael, Sandy and their volunteer assistants worked like a well-oiled bread machine. When it came time to shape our dough, add a design that would identify it as ours and slide them off the wooden peel and into the oven, I remember feeling something oddly close to maternal. I knew where in the oven my boules were and I recognized them when they were taken out and placed on the cooling racks. Was it my imagination or were they better looking than the others? Apparently, I wasn't the only one who thought that because cell phones suddenly appeared where there hadn't been a one.

In a final bow to *mise en place*, Michael and Sandy produced dough hooks, stone tiles, yeast and salt for purchase. I sprung for a dough hook, which has radically altered my experience of preparing dough, and two stone tiles. With these and my offspring safely stowed in paper bags, I left Stone Turtle Baking & Cooking Company in a glutenous haze of happiness. ✨

Stone Turtle Baking & Cooking School offers classes in artisan bread making, including French, Italian and sourdough, as well as pizza, focaccia, calzone and pasta. Visit their website at stoneturtlebaking.com for a complete list of offerings. They are located at 173 Howitt Road in Lyman, Maine, and can be reached by phone at 207-459-0567 or at info@stoneturtlebaking.com.

PANE RUSTICO

This Rustic Bread is a great introduction to artisan breads. The dough receives no pre-shaping or final shaping. It has an open and airy cell structure and is a great accompaniment to a wide assortment of foods, including the pea soup that follows. Jeffrey Hamelman's Pain Rustique was the inspiration for this bread and we include durum flour for about twenty-five percent of the total flour. The bread has tremendous flavor and a beautiful golden hue.

STARTER (LIQUID BIGA)

- 1 1/3 c cool water
- 2 1/2 c unbleached all-purpose flour
- Pinch to 1/8 tsp instant dissolving yeast

Mix water, flour, and yeast in a 2-cup bowl until well blended. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 12 to 14 hours

DOUGH

- Biga All
- 1 1/2 c warm water (95° F)
- 1 1/2 tbsp kosher salt
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 c durum flour
- 1 tsp instant dissolving yeast
- 2 1/2 c unbleached all-purpose flour
- to 3

Water to dip hands

Semolina or corn meal

Pour 1 cup of water around the edge of the starter to free it from the sides of the container. Pour starter into a large mixing bowl and mix to break it up. Add salt, olive oil and durum flour, and sprinkle yeast on top of the flour. Mix well.

Add 2 cups all-purpose flour, 1 cup at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add an additional 1/2-cup of flour and mix well. Add enough of the remaining flour so that the dough begins to come away from the sides of the bowl. The dough will be wet and sticky at this point. Leave the dough in the bowl and using wet hands and a plastic dough scraper; pull the dough in an up-and-over motion from the edge of the bowl to the center. Work around the bowl, using a little more water to keep the dough from sticking to your hands and the scraper. Do this for about 2 minutes, wetting hands and scraper as needed, or until you see some gluten strands develop.

Cover and let rise for 1 1/2 hours, doing stretches during the rise as described below:

Stretches: Let dough rise for about 20 minutes. Dip hands and dough scraper in water. Pull one side to stretch slightly and



fold over half the dough, then repeat a total of 30 times, turning the bowl as you work.

Cover with plastic wrap and let rise an additional 20 minutes. Repeat doing 20 folds with wet hands and dough scraper.

Cover with plastic wrap and let rise an additional 20 minutes. Repeat doing 10 folds with wet hands and dough scraper. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise an additional 30 minutes.

Liberal flour the work surface. Sprinkle flour over the surface of the dough, especially around the edges. Using a plastic dough scraper, scrape down the sides of the dough to free it from the bowl. Turn the bowl over onto the floured work surface.

Gently handle the dough—do not deflate! Shape the slack dough into a rough rectangle, about 8 by 12 inches. Lightly dust the top of the dough with flour and cut into three pieces, about 4 by 8 inches—do not stretch the dough. Using the scraper or a well-floured spatula, lift one piece of dough and place onto a well-floured, smooth cloth*. Make a fold in the cloth next to the dough and place the second dough alongside it. Repeat with the third piece. Lightly flour the tops of the dough pieces and loosely cover with plastic wrap and let rise until doubled, about 30 to 45 minutes.

While dough is rising, place a pizza stone or quarry tiles in the center of the oven. Preheat oven to 500° F for at least 30 minutes.

Sprinkle a peel (or the back of a baking sheet) with semolina or corn meal.

When dough has risen, roll the pieces over and transfer to the semolina-coated peel or baking sheet. Slash down the center of the dough. Slide onto the preheated stone/tiles. Quickly do the same with the remaining pieces. Add steam (see note below on steaming). After 10 minutes reduce temperature to 450° F.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the breads are a deep golden brown and the internal temperature is about 210° F. The breads should feel light and sound hollow when tapped on the bottom.

* We use a smooth linen or cotton dish towel. You may need to use two towels to fit all three pieces next to each other with a fold in-between.

Steam can be added a couple of ways:

- Use a pressurized garden sprayer and adjust the nozzle to the finest setting. After loading breads spray the oven for 10 seconds with the oven door partially closed. After 10 minutes reduce temperature to 450° F.
- Place a small (8-inch) cast iron pan on the floor or lowest shelf of the oven when you begin preheating. When you notice that the dough is nearly risen, bring a couple of cups of water to a boil. Immediately upon placing breads into the oven, pour 1-cup of boiling water into the cast iron pan and close the door. After 10 minutes reduce temperature to 450° F. Be careful: Adding the boiling water to the hot pan may cause splatter. Use long sleeves and oven mitts!

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SWEDISH STYLE PEA SOUP

(Ärtsoppa)

- 1 pound whole dried yellow peas, or
 - 1 pound split dried yellow peas
 - 1 tbs vegetable oil
 - 1 large yellow onion, chopped fine
 - 1 large celery rib, chopped fine
 - 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped fine
 - 1 tsp fresh ginger, peeled and minced as fine as possible, or ½ tsp ground ginger
 - ½ tsp dried thyme
 - 1 ham bone, preferably with a little meat, or 1 ham hock (optional)*
 - 4 c chicken broth
 - 4 c water
 - 1 tsp kosher salt
 - ½ tsp ground black pepper
 - 1 bay leaf
- Sour cream for garnish

Sort through the peas and discard any foreign material.

If using whole peas: Place peas in a large stockpot, cover with enough cold water to cover the peas by 2 inches. Soak overnight. If using split peas, this step is unnecessary.

Drain peas and set aside.

Heat oil in a large stockpot over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, and carrot and sauté until the onion is soft but not taking on color, 4 to 5 minutes. Reduce heat, add ginger and thyme, and cook an additional minute.

Add ham bone (if using), chicken broth, water, salt, pepper, bay leaf, and peas and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 2 hours.

Remove bay leaf and discard. Remove ham bone (if using), pick off any meat, and add meat to the soup. Discard the bone. Ladle soup into bowls and top with a dollop of sour cream.

*Ham bone or ham hock is optional but adds a lot of flavor. You can omit them and use vegetable stock in lieu of the chicken stock, and make this as a vegetarian pea soup.

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