



Miele

Miele Chef's Corner



Tips for baking perfect bread at home with Miele's automatic programs

There's nothing quite as satisfying as pulling a loaf of freshly baked bread from your oven, its yeasty smell wafting through your kitchen, permeating your entire home with an aroma that's too good to resist. But what does it take to make truly great bread? How do professional bakers obtain that perfectly glossy crust on the exterior while achieving a tender and even crumb on the interior? And how can you achieve the same results at home?

To begin with, quality ingredients are key. Use the highest quality bread flour you can find (always unbleached!), as well as finely ground sea salt for the best flavor. In addition to using the best ingredients, professional chefs know that it takes high levels of humidity in the oven to bake the best loaf of bread. Thankfully, the Miele MasterChef Plus automatic bread programs in our ovens provide just the right amount of moisture so baking the perfect loaf of bread at home is not only easy, but you get consistent results every time.

Moisture is important during the bread baking process for many reasons. It allows the dough to stay pliable for longer so it can achieve the maximum amount of expansion or "oven spring." The humid environment also helps prevent the water in the dough from evaporating too quickly, keeping the moisture locked inside, which produces a light, fluffy interior. In addition, the steam in the oven dissolves the natural sugars on the dough's surface and allows them to caramelize more readily into a beautiful, glossy brown crust. Since moisture prevents the crust from developing too early, the inside of the dough has sufficient time to cook through without the crust becoming over-baked and too dark.

"If you really want to make a friend, go round someone's house with a freshly baked loaf of sourdough bread!"

— Chris Geiger

Baking without moisture produces some relatively undesirable results. Your loaf won't rise as high, causing the interior to be dense and less tender. And your crust will be dull and not nearly as crispy, with significantly less depth of flavor.

Baking in the Miele oven couldn't be any easier with our MasterChef Plus programs. Our fully automatic bread programs are designed to take the guesswork out of baking everything from French baguettes to San Francisco sourdoughs. Just choose any of Miele's easy-to-follow recipes from our website ([Bread Recipe Link](#)) and then let the oven do the work!

After your dough is made, choose the appropriate bread program from the MasterChef Plus menu and select the desired level of browning for your crust. Then place your dough in a cold oven - no preheating is necessary. The program first takes your dough through a proofing phase, which allows it to finish rising before it starts to bake. The dough is then brought up to the correct baking temperature and the humidity in the oven is increased to provide all the benefits of an artisanal, bakery-style loaf. Finally, the exterior of the loaf is browned to create a perfectly crispy crust. Then all you have to do is wait for it to cool.

Fighting the urge to slice into a hot loaf takes an enormous amount of patience but, trust me, it's worth it! Waiting until the bread has cooled down at least a little bit allows the structure to "set up" and prevents the tender inside from being mushed by your knife.

As James Beard said, "Good bread is the most fundamentally satisfying of all foods, and good bread with fresh butter; the greatest of feasts." Now quick, go get some butter!

Miele automatic programs are designed to take the guesswork out of cooking. Our automatic programs range from simple beef tenderloin to muffins. These programs allow the novice to test out new culinary territory and the expert to relegate kitchen duties to the oven. Please join us on our culinary adventure next month when we explore more possibilities with MoisturePlus!

Written and baked by Elizabeth Smith

Both loaves of bread were baked from the same batch of dough using the Miele San Francisco Sourdough recipe. The loaf on the left was baked using convection bake with no moisture added. The loaf on the right was baked using the San Francisco Sourdough automatic bread program and clearly shows the benefits of using moisture in MasterChef Plus!

