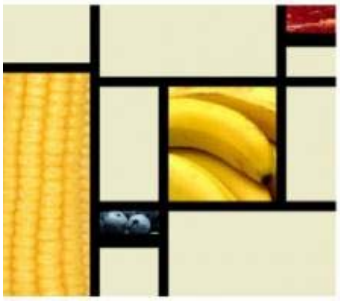

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Whole Wheat Pain Ordinaire (adapted from Eric Treuille and Ursula Ferrigno's *Ultimate Bre*ad and Peter Reinhart's *Whole Grain Breads*)

Pre-dough:
1¾ cups (8 ounces) whole wheat flour
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup water

1. Mix all of the soaker ingredients together in a bowl for about 1 minute, until all of the flour is hydrated and the ingredients form a ball of dough.

2. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and leave at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours. (If it will be more than 24 hours, place the soaker in the refrigerator; it will be good for up to 3 days. Remove it 2 hours before mixing the final dough to take off the chill.)

Dough:
1¾ cups (9½ ounces) all-purpose or bread flour
pre-dough
2 teaspoons instant yeast
⅔ cup water, room temperature
¾ teaspoon salt

1. Add the flour to a mixer bowl fitted with hook attachment (or a large bowl if mixing by hand). Cut the pre-dough into about 12 pieces and add them to the flour, tossing the pieces to coat (to keep them from immediately sticking back together). Add the water, yeast, and salt to the mixer bowl and mix on medium-low until combined (or stir with a rubber spatula), then continue kneading until smooth and elastic, 6-8 minutes (8-10 minutes if by hand). The dough should be soft but not sticky; add flour if necessary.

2. Lightly oil a large bowl and transfer the dough to the bowl, rolling it to coat with the oil. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a damp towel. Let rise until doubled in size, about 1½ to 2 hours.

3. Gently pat the dough into a rough rectangle. Fold the bottom third of dough, letter style, up to the center and press to seal, creasing surface tension on the outer edge. Fold the remaining dough over the top and use the edge of your hand to seal the seam closed and to increase the surface tension all over. Press evenly with the palms of both hands and roll the dough backward and forward until it is 10 inches in length. Line a pizza peel baking parchment. Place the loaf on the peel and lightly dust with flour. Cover loosely with plastic wrap or a damp towel.

4. Proof at room temperature for about 1 hour, or until the loaf has grown to about twice its original size. About half an hour into the second rise, place a baking stone on the bottom rack of the oven and preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

5. Using a very sharp knife or a serrated bread knife, cut 5 diagonal slashes, each about ¼ to ½-inch deep, across the top of the loaf. (Alternatively, cut one long slash that extends for the length of the loaf.)

6. Transfer the dough on the parchment to the baking stone. Close the oven and reduce the temperature to 450 degrees. Bake until golden brown and the temperature is at least 200 degrees at the center. Transfer the loaves to a cooling rack and cool for at least 1 hour before slicing and serving.