

# Crusty White Bread

Serves 8

I love fresh bread that has a chewy crust. In Ann Arbor, we have Zingerman's and in Charleston there is the Normandy bakery. I took a baking class at Zingerman's and learned that they have special ovens with water spray to help develop a chewy crust. Later, I read in a Cooks Illustrated magazine that



they had a method for achieving similar results at home by cooking the bread in a Dutch oven. The handles on the Dutch oven must be able to take the 500-degree heat in this recipe and most plastic handles do not. Instead of a Dutch oven, I use a 2 1/2 quart Corning ware casserole dish with a glass lid. If you don't have one, use a metal Dutch oven with handles that can take 450 degree heat. I make one or two loaves of this bread each week.

## Ingredients

- Flour 3 cups
- Salt 1 1/2 tsp.
- 1/4 tsp. Rapid or instant yeast
- 3/4 cup + 3 Tbsp. warm water
- Lager beer 6 Tbsp.
- White vinegar 1 Tbsp.
- Non-stick spray
- 1/2 tsp. sesame seeds
- Strong spoon or mixer with dough hook
- 2 1/2 quart Corning ware casserole dish with a glass lid
- Cooling rack

## Equipment

- Large metal bowl
- Whisk

## Crusty White Bread:

☑	Description	Time (min)	
	In a large metal bowl, whisk together 3 cups flour, 1 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. yeast	1	
	In a second bowl, combine 3/4 cup + 3 Tbsp. warm water, 6 Tbsp. lager beer, and 1 Tbsp. vinegar	1	
	Use a mixer with a dough hook to combine the dry and wet ingredients until it makes a coherent ball of dough. (Alternatively, combine first with a large spoon and then kneed by hand.)	1	
	Turn dough out onto a floured counter. Spread a small amount of flour on your hands to prevent sticking.	1	
	Knead dough five or six times with your hands to form a smooth ball	1	
	Spray the 2 1/2-quart dish with vegetable spray	1	
	Place dough in the dish. Cover with its glass lid.	1	
	Allow to rise in a warm (70 degree) room overnight		12 hrs.
	Sprinkle risen dough with 1/2 tsp. sesame seeds	1	
	Lightly flour work surface. Turn out dough onto the surface.	1	
	Knead five times. Spray dish with vegetable spray. Return dough to dish and cover	1	
	Allow dough to rise a second time for 4 hours		4 hrs
	Preheat oven to 500 degrees	30	
	Lower temperature to 425 degrees. Bake with the lid on.	25	
	Remove lid from the bread. Bake until brown.	10	
	Remove from oven and turn off oven. Transfer bread to a cooling rack to cool.	30	
	Total		17 1/4 hrs.