



Mastering Gluten-Free French Breads

Welcome to the art of gluten-free French baking! This comprehensive guide will transform your kitchen into a French boulangerie, teaching you to create authentic French breads without gluten. Whether you're new to gluten-free baking or looking to expand your repertoire, each recipe includes detailed instructions, professional tips, and the science behind every step. From the iconic baguette to rustic pain de campagne, you'll discover that gluten-free doesn't mean compromising on flavor, texture, or tradition. Let's embark on this delicious journey together!

Baguette Traditionnelle Sans Gluten

The baguette is France's most iconic bread—crispy outside, tender inside, perfect for any meal. This gluten-free version captures that authentic texture and flavor that makes French bread legendary.

1	2
<h3>Difficulty & Timing</h3> <p>Level: Medium</p> <p>Prep time: 25 minutes</p> <p>Proofing: 60 minutes</p> <p>Baking: 25 minutes</p> <p>Yield: 2 baguettes</p>	<h3>Essential Equipment</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Large mixing bowlBaguette pan or parchment paperKitchen scaleSpray bottle for steamSharp knife for scoring

Ingredients

Dry Ingredients

- 300g gluten-free bread flour blend
- 100g tapioca starch
- 8g xanthan gum
- 10g salt
- 15g sugar
- 7g instant yeast

Wet Ingredients

- 375ml warm water (38°C)
- 30ml olive oil
- 2 egg whites (60g)
- 5ml apple cider vinegar

Step-by-Step Process

01

Prepare Dry Mix

Combine all dry ingredients in a large bowl and whisk thoroughly. **Why this matters:** Even distribution prevents pockets of unmixed ingredients that create texture problems.

02

Mix Wet Ingredients

In a separate bowl, whisk together warm water, oil, egg whites, and vinegar. **Why this matters:** Warm water activates yeast, while vinegar helps create structure in gluten-free dough.

03

Combine & Mix

Pour wet into dry ingredients and beat vigorously for 3 minutes. **Why this matters:** Extended mixing develops the xanthan gum structure that replaces gluten's elasticity.

04

Shape Baguettes

Divide dough in half, shape into logs with wet hands, and place on prepared pan. **Why this matters:** Wet hands prevent sticking—gluten-free dough is naturally stickier than wheat dough.

05

Proof the Dough

Cover and let rise in a warm place for 60 minutes until doubled. **Why this matters:** Adequate proofing creates the airy texture characteristic of French bread.

06

Score & Bake

Make diagonal slashes, spray with water, bake at 220°C for 25 minutes until golden. **Why this matters:** Scoring controls expansion, steam creates the crispy crust.



Professional Tips

Prevent collapsed texture: Don't over-proof! When dough doubles, bake immediately. **Achieve crispier crust:** Place a pan of water on the oven's bottom rack during preheating. **Check doneness:** Internal temperature should reach 95°C and sound hollow when tapped.

Substitutions & Variations

Ingredient Swaps

- No xanthan gum?** Use 12g psyllium husk powder (hydrate with extra 50ml water first)
- Egg-free version:** Replace egg whites with 60g aquafaba
- Dairy-free:** Already dairy-free!

Creative Variations

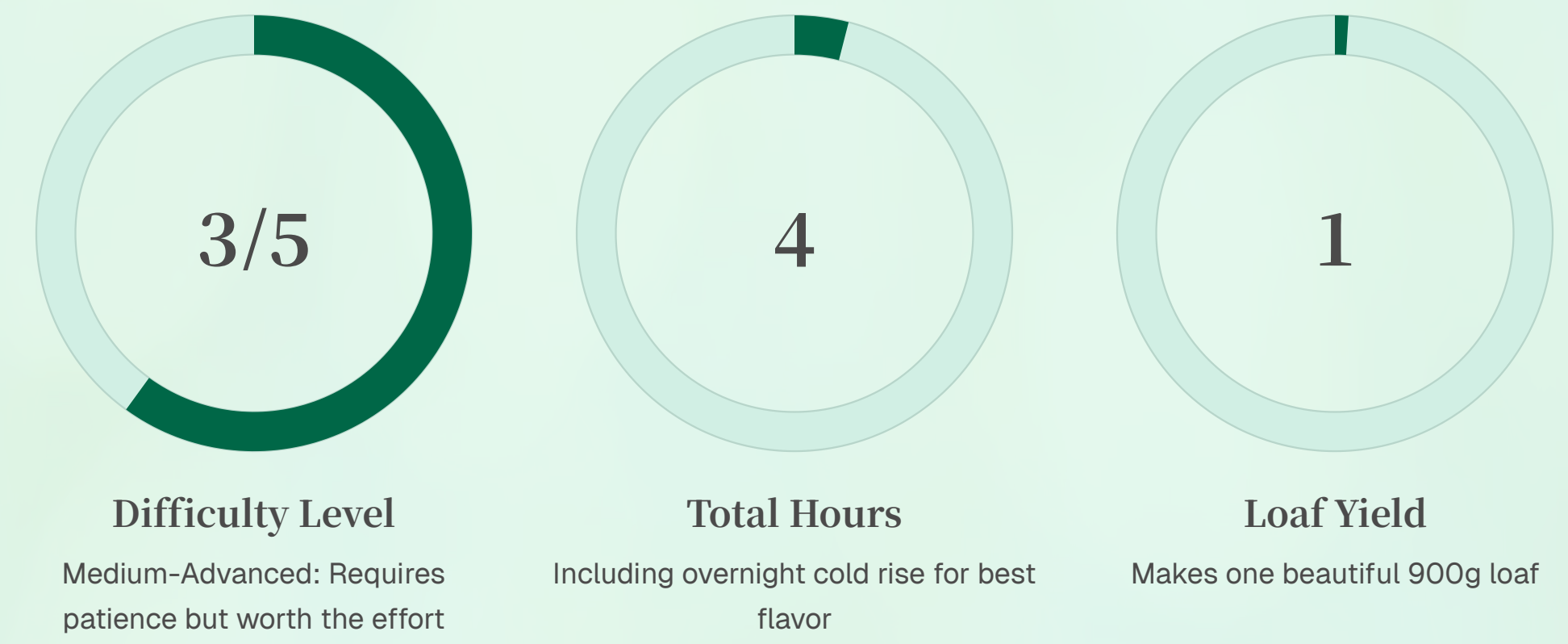
- Add 20g mixed seeds on top before baking
- Mix in 30g fresh herbs (rosemary or thyme)
- Create garlic baguettes with roasted garlic butter

Storage & Nutrition

Storage: Best eaten fresh within 24 hours. Freeze sliced for up to 3 months. Reheat frozen slices at 180°C for 8 minutes. **Nutrition per 100g:** Approximately 245 calories, 3.5g protein, 48g carbohydrates, 4g fat, 2g fiber.

Brioche Moelleuse Sans Gluten

Brioche is the crown jewel of French viennoiserie—rich, buttery, and impossibly soft. This gluten-free version maintains that luxurious texture and subtle sweetness, perfect for breakfast or as a base for French toast.



Complete Ingredient List

Ingredient	Amount	Purpose
Gluten-free flour blend	350g	Structure
Potato starch	50g	Tenderness
Xanthan gum	10g	Binding
Sugar	60g	Sweetness & browning
Salt	8g	Flavor
Instant yeast	10g	Leavening
Whole eggs	3 large (150g)	Richness
Warm milk	125ml	Moisture
Butter, softened	150g	Flavor & texture
Vanilla extract	5ml	Aroma

Equipment Needed

- Stand mixer with paddle attachment (strongly recommended)
 - Digital thermometer for checking doneness
- 900g loaf pan, greased and lined
 - Plastic wrap and clean kitchen towels

Detailed Preparation Method

- ### Initial Dough (15 min)

Mix dry ingredients in mixer bowl. Add eggs, milk, and vanilla. Beat on medium speed for 5 minutes until smooth and elastic-looking. **The science:** This extended mixing activates xanthan gum, creating the gluten-like structure essential for brioche's tender crumb.
- ### Incorporate Butter (10 min)

Add softened butter one tablespoon at a time while mixing on low speed. Increase to medium and beat 5 more minutes. **The science:** Gradual butter incorporation creates an emulsion that produces brioche's signature soft, rich texture.
- ### Cold Fermentation (8-12 hours)

Cover bowl tightly and refrigerate overnight. Dough will rise slowly. **The science:** Cold fermentation develops complex flavors while preventing over-proofing in this enriched dough.
- ### Shape & Final Proof (90 min)

Remove from fridge, shape into loaf pan with wet hands, cover, and let rise at room temperature until nearly doubled—about 90 minutes. **The science:** Bringing to room temperature slowly ensures even rising without shocking the yeast.
- ### Bake to Perfection (35 min)

Brush with egg wash, bake at 180°C for 35-40 minutes until golden and internal temp reaches 95°C. Tent with foil if browning too quickly. **The science:** Lower temperature prevents over-browning while ensuring the enriched interior cooks through completely.

Chef's Secret: The overnight refrigeration isn't optional—it's what transforms good brioche into extraordinary brioche. The cold rest allows flavors to develop and makes the sticky dough easier to shape. Plan ahead and your patience will be rewarded!

Troubleshooting Common Issues

- ### Problem: Dense, Heavy Texture

Solution: Ensure butter is fully softened before adding. Beat dough longer during initial mixing. Check yeast freshness.
- ### Problem: Collapsed Center

Solution: Don't over-proof! When nearly doubled, bake immediately. Use oven thermometer to verify accurate temperature.
- ### Problem: Too Sweet/Not Sweet Enough

Solution: Adjust sugar from 40g (less sweet) to 75g (dessert-sweet) based on preference.

Delicious Variations

- Chocolate Chip Brioche:** Fold in 100g dark chocolate chips after cold fermentation
- Brioche aux Pralines:** Add 80g crushed praline pieces for a Lyon specialty
- Lemon Brioche:** Add zest of 2 lemons with vanilla
- Savory Version:** Reduce sugar to 15g, add 50g grated cheese and herbs

Storage tips: Keep at room temperature for 2 days, refrigerate up to 5 days, or freeze sliced for 3 months. **Nutrition per slice (12 slices per loaf):** 220 calories, 4g protein, 28g carbs, 10g fat.

Pain de Campagne Sans Gluten

Rustic Country Bread

Pain de Campagne is the hearty, rustic bread found in every French countryside bakery. With its thick, flour-dusted crust and chewy crumb, this naturally slightly sour bread pairs beautifully with cheese, pâté, or simply good butter. This gluten-free version captures that authentic rustic character.

Difficulty: Easy to Medium • **Total time:** 3.5 hours • **Yield:** 1 large round loaf (750g)



Ingredients & Equipment

Flour Blend

- 250g rice flour
- 100g buckwheat flour
- 50g sorghum flour
- 8g xanthan gum

Wet Ingredients

- 350ml warm water
- 20ml olive oil
- 10ml apple cider vinegar
- 10g honey

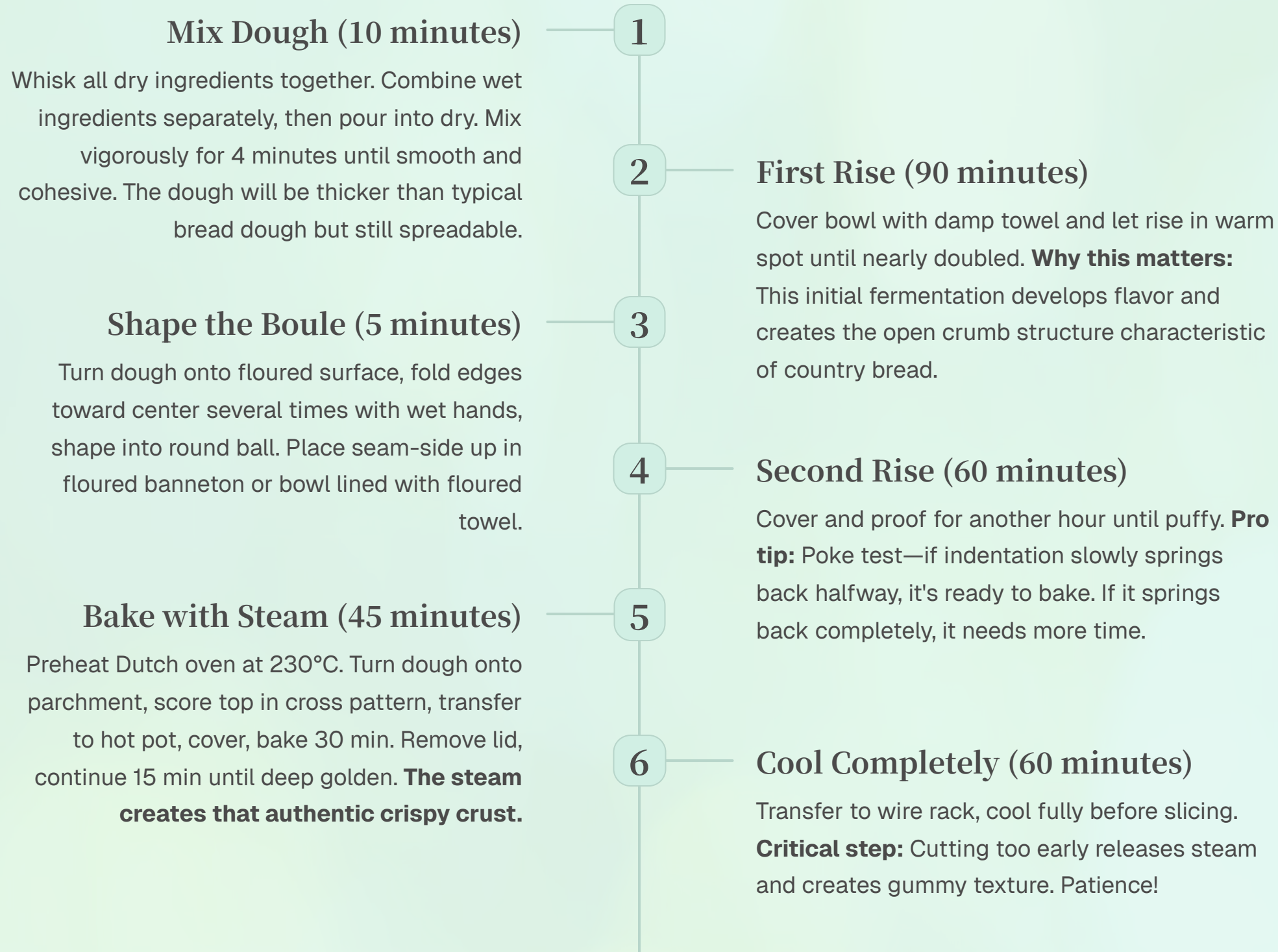
Leavening & Salt

- 8g instant yeast
- 10g sea salt
- Extra flour for dusting

Equipment Required

Large mixing bowl • Dutch oven or banneton basket • Sharp knife or lame for scoring • Kitchen scale • Parchment paper

Step-by-Step Instructions



Professional Baking Tips



Temperature Control

Use an oven thermometer—many ovens run 10-15°C off. Accurate temperature is crucial for proper rise and crust development.



Timing Flexibility

If you need to slow down the rise, refrigerate after shaping for up to 12 hours. Bring to room temp 30 min before baking.



Scoring Technique

Use a very sharp blade at 45° angle, swift confident cuts about 1cm deep. This controls how the bread expands.

Substitutions & Creative Variations

Ingredient Alternatives

- No buckwheat?** Substitute with millet or quinoa flour
- Replace xanthan gum:** Use 10g ground psyllium husk (add extra 30ml water)
- Egg-free binding:** Add 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed mixed with 3 tablespoons water

Flavor Variations

- Seeded version:** Add 50g mixed seeds (sunflower, pumpkin, sesame)
- Herbes de Provence:** Mix in 2 tablespoons dried herbs
- Olive & Rosemary:** Fold in 80g chopped olives and 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary

"The secret to great Pain de Campagne is the slow fermentation and high baking temperature. Don't rush the rises, and make sure your oven is fully preheated. The reward is that incredible crust you'll hear crackling as it cools!"

Storage: Best within 3 days at room temperature in paper bag. Freeze sliced up to 3 months. **Nutrition per 100g:** 235 calories, 4g protein, 45g carbs, 3g fat, 3g fiber.

Fougasse Provençale Sans Gluten

Fougasse is Provence's answer to Italian focaccia—a beautifully scored, olive oil-enriched flatbread with a crispy exterior and tender interior. The iconic leaf-like cuts aren't just decorative; they create extra crispy edges and make it perfect for tearing and sharing. This gluten-free version maintains that characteristic texture and herb-infused flavor.

2	90	★★
Servings	Total Minutes	Difficulty
Makes two medium fougasses	From start to table	Easy—perfect for beginners!

Complete Ingredients

Dry Ingredients <ul style="list-style-type: none">300g gluten-free bread flour blend100g cornstarch or potato starch8g xanthan gum10g salt8g instant yeast5g sugar	Wet Ingredients <ul style="list-style-type: none">300ml warm water (38°C)50ml extra virgin olive oil (plus extra for drizzling)10ml white wine vinegar	Toppings (Traditional) <ul style="list-style-type: none">50g black olives, pitted and halved2 tablespoons fresh rosemaryFlaky sea saltOptional: cherry tomatoes, caramelized onions, anchovies
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Method

- **Prepare the Dough**

Combine dry ingredients in bowl. Mix wet ingredients separately, then add to dry. Beat for 3 minutes until smooth and sticky. **Key point:** Fougasse dough should be slightly wetter than bread dough for that tender, open texture.
- **First Rise**

Cover and let rise 45 minutes in warm place until puffy but not necessarily doubled. **Why shorter rise:** We want a tender crumb, not a tall rise—fougasse is meant to be flat and crispy.
- **Shape & Cut**

Divide dough in half. On oiled parchment, pat each piece into oval about 1.5cm thick. With scissors or knife, cut leaf pattern: one central cut down middle, then 3-4 diagonal cuts on each side. Gently stretch cuts open. **The cuts create more crispy edges and that signature look.**
- **Add Toppings**

Drizzle generously with olive oil, press in olives and rosemary, sprinkle with flaky salt. Let rest 15 minutes. **Don't skip this rest:** It allows dough to relax after handling and absorb the olive oil.
- **Bake Hot & Fast**

Bake at 220°C for 18-22 minutes until golden brown with crispy edges. **High heat is essential** for achieving that crispy exterior while keeping the interior tender.
- **Serve Warm**

Best enjoyed warm from the oven, drizzled with additional olive oil if desired. Tear and share!

Equipment Checklist

Large mixing bowl • Kitchen scissors or sharp knife • Two baking sheets lined with parchment • Pastry brush for oil • Spray bottle for oven steam (optional but recommended)

Expert Tips for Perfect Fougasse

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Cutting too shallow:** Make bold cuts at least 2cm apart—they'll close slightly during baking
- Overproofing:** Unlike bread, fougasse doesn't need huge rise. Bake when puffy but firm
- Skimping on olive oil:** Be generous! It's what creates the flavor and texture
- Underbaking:** Edges should be deep golden brown and crispy

Substitutions That Work

- No xanthan gum?** Use 10g psyllium husk with 50ml extra water
- Vegan version:** Already vegan!
- Different herbs:** Try thyme, oregano, or za'atar
- Add cheese:** Sprinkle 50g grated Gruyère before baking

Creative Variations

Fougasse Lyonnaise

Top with caramelized onions, Gruyère cheese, and crispy bacon pieces. A rich, savory variation perfect for autumn meals.

Fougasse d'Été

Summer version: halved cherry tomatoes, fresh basil leaves, and burrata pieces added after baking. Light and refreshing.

Fougasse Sucrée

Reduce salt to 5g, add 30g sugar to dough, top with orange zest and pearl sugar. Serve for breakfast or dessert!

Serving Suggestion: Fougasse is the ultimate sharing bread. Serve it warm in the center of the table for guests to tear pieces. It's incredible with aperitifs, alongside soups and salads, or as a vehicle for cheese and charcuterie. The crispy olive oil-soaked edges are the most prized pieces!

Storage: Best eaten same day. Refresh leftovers in 180°C oven for 5 minutes. **Nutrition per serving (1/4 of one fougasse):** 210 calories, 3g protein, 35g carbs, 7g fat, 2g fiber.

Pain aux Noix Sans Gluten

Rustic Walnut Bread

Pain aux Noix is a dense, flavorful bread studded with toasted walnuts—a specialty of regions like Périgord where walnut trees flourish. The nuts add richness, texture, and healthy fats, while the slightly nutty flour blend creates deep, complex flavor. This hearty bread is extraordinary with cheese, especially blue cheese or aged Comté, and transforms simple meals into something special.



Difficulty Level

Medium — Straightforward process with one special technique

Time Investment

Prep: 20 min **Rising:** 2.5 hours

Baking: 50 min

Yield

One large loaf (approximately 16 generous slices)

Ingredients List

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Brown rice flour	200g	Base flour
Buckwheat flour	100g	Nutty flavor
Tapioca starch	80g	Lightness
Ground flaxseed	20g	Binding, nutrition
Xanthan gum	10g	Structure
Salt	10g	Enhances flavor
Instant yeast	8g	Leavening
Honey	20g	Slight sweetness
Warm water	350ml	38°C ideal
Walnut oil	30ml	Amplifies nut flavor
Apple cider vinegar	10ml	Better rise
Walnuts, toasted & chopped	150g	Star ingredient

Toast Your Walnuts!

This crucial step dramatically improves flavor. Spread walnuts on baking sheet, toast at 160°C for 8-10 minutes until fragrant and lightly golden. Cool completely before adding to dough. **Why:** Toasting intensifies the nutty flavor and creates better texture contrast.

Equipment You'll Need

- 900g loaf pan (9x5 inches), well-greased
- Large mixing bowl
- Small pan for toasting walnuts
- Kitchen scale for accuracy
- Clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap

Preparation Process

Step 1: Prepare Flours & Walnuts

Toast walnuts as described, cool, and chop coarsely. Whisk together all dry ingredients (flours, flaxseed, xanthan gum, salt, yeast) in large bowl. **Pro tip:** Sift buckwheat flour if it's coarse—you want even texture.

Step 2: Mix Wet Ingredients

Combine warm water, honey, walnut oil, and vinegar. Stir until honey dissolves. **Temperature check:** Liquid should feel warm but not hot—too hot kills yeast!

Step 3: Combine & Fold in Nuts

Pour wet into dry ingredients, beat vigorously for 3 minutes until smooth and elastic. Fold in toasted walnuts until evenly distributed. Dough will be thick but pourable.

Step 4: First Rise in Pan

Transfer to greased loaf pan, smooth top with wet spatula, cover with damp towel. Let rise 90-120 minutes until dough nearly reaches pan rim.

Environment matters: Place in warm, draft-free spot around 24-27°C.

Step 5: Second Proof

Once risen, let rest uncovered for 15 minutes. This allows surface to dry slightly for better crust.

Optional: Brush top with water and sprinkle additional chopped walnuts.

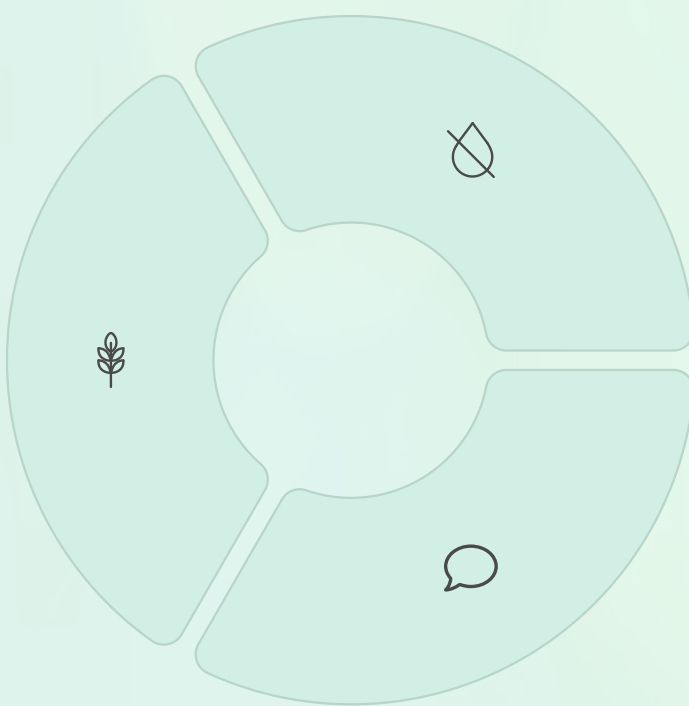
Step 6: Bake Low & Slow

Bake at 180°C for 50-55 minutes. Tent with foil after 35 minutes if browning too quickly. Done when internal temperature reaches 95°C and sounds hollow when tapped. Cool in pan 10 minutes, then transfer to wire rack.

Why This Recipe Works

Flour Blend Strategy

Brown rice provides structure, buckwheat adds nutty flavor complementing walnuts, tapioca creates tenderness. Together they mimic whole wheat bread texture.



Flaxseed Secret

Ground flaxseed adds healthy omega-3s, helps with moisture retention, and provides additional binding beyond xanthan gum for a less crumbly loaf.

Walnut Oil Magic

Using walnut oil instead of neutral oil creates flavor synergy with the nuts, making the whole loaf taste more complex and authentically nutty.

Troubleshooting & Variations

Solutions to Common Issues

Bread too dense: Ensure water is warm enough to activate yeast (38°C). Let dough rise fully—it should dome above the pan rim.

Walnuts sink to bottom: Toss nuts lightly in flour before folding in. This helps them stay suspended in dough.

Crumbly texture: Don't skip the flaxseed—it's crucial for binding. Also ensure xanthan gum is evenly distributed.

Delicious Variations

Mixed Nut Version: Replace 50g walnuts with toasted pecans or hazelnuts

Fig & Walnut: Add 100g chopped dried figs

Cranberry Walnut: Fold in 80g dried cranberries

Savory Herb: Add 2 tablespoons fresh thyme or rosemary

Perfect Pairings

Pain aux Noix is spectacular toasted with salted butter for breakfast. For lunch or dinner, try it with: **Roquefort or Stilton cheese** (classic pairing), **aged Comté with honey**, **goat cheese and fig jam**, **duck rillettes**, or **mushroom pâté**. The nutty, slightly sweet bread stands up beautifully to bold flavors.

Ingredient Substitutions

- No walnut oil?** Use extra virgin olive oil—still delicious, slightly different flavor profile
- Replace xanthan gum:** 12g psyllium husk powder plus 40ml extra water
- Nut-free version:** Replace walnuts with 150g toasted seeds (pumpkin and sunflower mix)
- Honey substitute:** Use maple syrup or agave for vegan version

Storage: Room temperature 4 days wrapped in paper bag inside plastic bag. Freezes beautifully up to 3 months sliced.

Nutrition per slice: 195 calories, 5g protein, 26g carbs, 9g fat, 3g fiber, good source of omega-3s.

Pain de Mie Sans Gluten

Pain de Mie is France's elegant sandwich bread—ultra-soft, fine-crumbed, and perfectly square when baked in a traditional Pullman pan. Unlike crusty artisan breads, Pain de Mie has a tender, almost pillowy texture with a delicate crust. It's the bread of choice for refined sandwiches, French toast, and toast with jam. This gluten-free version achieves that coveted softness and stays fresh for days.

95%

80%

40%

Softness Rating

Incredibly tender crumb, ideal for sandwiches

Keep-Fresh Factor

Stays soft up to 5 days properly stored

Versatility Score

Perfect for both sweet and savory applications

Complete Ingredient List

<div>Flour Blend (400g total)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">250g white rice flour100g potato starch50g tapioca starch <div>Why this blend: Creates the lightest, whitest crumb closest to traditional Pain de Mie</div>	<div>Binding & Structure</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">12g xanthan gum2 large eggs (100g)30g milk powder (or dairy-free alternative) <div>Critical for: Softness and proper rise without collapsing</div>
<div>Leavening & Flavor</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">10g instant yeast30g sugar8g salt <div>Sugar balance: Just enough for softness without tasting sweet</div>	<div>Moisture & Fat</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">300ml warm milk (38°C)60g butter, melted10ml apple cider vinegar <div>Fat content: Essential for tender texture and longer shelf life</div>

Essential Equipment

- Pullman loaf pan (900g)** with lid, or standard loaf pan for rounded top
- Stand mixer** with paddle attachment (recommended for best texture)
- Kitchen thermometer** for checking milk temperature and bread doneness
- Plastic wrap or damp towel** for covering during rises

Step-by-Step Method



Why Each Ingredient Matters

The Science of Softness

Milk powder: Creates finer crumb and helps bread stay soft longer by retaining moisture.

Eggs: Provide structure, richness, and contribute to the yellow color and soft texture.

Butter: Tenderizes crumb and extends freshness—fat coats flour particles preventing them from absorbing too much water and becoming tough.

Sugar: Feeds yeast, but also attracts and holds moisture, keeping bread soft.

The Rise Strategy

Single rise in pan: Unlike crusty breads, Pain de Mie benefits from one controlled rise to create fine, even crumb.

Warm environment: Aim for 27°C proofing temp—use oven with just the light on.

Lower baking temp: Ensures inside cooks through while outside stays tender, not crusty.

Instant yeast: No pre-activation needed, can mix directly into flour for foolproof results.

Troubleshooting Guide

1

Dense, Heavy Texture

Causes: Under-mixed dough, old yeast, insufficient rise time. **Solutions:** Beat full 5 minutes, use fresh yeast, let rise until nearly touching lid/rim.

2

Collapsed or Sunken Top

Causes: Over-proofed, oven too cool, pan too small. **Solutions:** Watch rise carefully, verify oven temp with thermometer, use correct pan size.

3

Gummy Interior

Causes: Underbaked, sliced too soon. **Solutions:** Check internal temp reaches 95°C, wait minimum 2 hours before slicing.

4

Dry, Crumbly Bread

Causes: Too much flour, overbaked. **Solutions:** Weigh ingredients precisely, tent with foil if browning too fast, don't exceed 40 min baking.

Variations & Uses

Pain de Mie Brioché

Increase butter to 100g and sugar to 50g. Add 5ml vanilla extract. Creates sweeter, richer bread perfect for French toast.

Whole Grain Version

Replace 100g white rice flour with sorghum or millet flour. Add 2 tablespoons ground flaxseed. Slightly denser but more nutritious.

Herb & Garlic

Reduce sugar to 15g. Add 3 tablespoons dried herbs and 2 cloves minced garlic. Perfect for savory sandwiches.

Classic Uses for Pain de Mie: Croque Monsieur or Croque Madame • Club sandwiches • French toast (pain perdu) • Tea sandwiches with cucumber and cream cheese • Buttered tartines with jam • Bread and butter pudding • Simply toasted with salted butter

Substitutions

- Dairy-free:** Use plant milk + 1 tbsp oil, replace milk powder with coconut milk powder or omit, use vegan butter
- Egg-free:** Replace eggs with 100g additional milk + 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (texture will be slightly different)
- No xanthan gum:** Use 15g psyllium husk powder + 50ml extra milk

Storage: Room temperature in plastic bag 5 days. Refrigerate 7 days. Freeze sliced up to 3 months (toast from frozen).

Nutrition per slice (16 slices): 165 calories, 3g protein, 28g carbs, 5g fat, 1g fiber.

Made with GAMMA

Pain au Levain Sans Gluten



Gluten-Free Sourdough-Style Bread

Pain au Levain is France's traditional sourdough—tangy, complex, with a chewy crust and open crumb. While true sourdough requires gluten-free starter cultivation, this recipe cleverly mimics that characteristic tang and texture using long fermentation and natural acids. The result is a deeply flavorful bread that's remarkably close to the original.

3/5

Difficulty

Medium-Advanced: Planning required

18

Total Hours

Most of it is hands-off fermentation

1

Large Loaf

About 800g finished weight

Why This Recipe Takes Time

True sourdough flavor develops through long, slow fermentation. This recipe uses a pre-ferment (similar to poolish) that sits overnight, developing complex flavors and improving texture. **The wait is absolutely worth it**—this produces the most authentic sourdough-style gluten-free bread possible without maintaining a starter.

Ingredients: Two-Stage Process



Pre-Ferment (Night Before)

- 150g white rice flour
- 200ml warm water
- 3g instant yeast
- 5ml apple cider vinegar

Mix until smooth, cover loosely, leave at room temp 8-12 hours



Final Dough (Next Day)

- All of pre-ferment
- 200g brown rice flour
- 80g buckwheat flour
- 70g tapioca starch
- 10g xanthan gum
- 10g salt
- 5g instant yeast
- 150ml water
- 30ml olive oil

Equipment Requirements

Essential: Two large bowls • Dutch oven or cast iron pot with lid • Banneton basket or bowl lined with floured towel • Sharp knife or bread lame • Kitchen scale • **Optional but helpful:** Dough scraper • Spray bottle • Thermometer

Complete Instructions

Day 1, Evening: Make Pre-Ferment

Whisk together pre-ferment ingredients until smooth (no lumps). It will be quite liquid. Cover bowl loosely with towel—you want air circulation. Leave on counter overnight, 8-12 hours. By morning, it should be bubbly and smell slightly tangy. **This is where the magic happens**—wild yeasts and bacteria create complex flavors.

First Rise: 90 Minutes

Cover bowl with damp towel, place in warm spot (24-27°C). Let rise until roughly doubled and looking very puffy. **Don't rush this**—good rise is crucial for open crumb structure.

Score & Bake: 45 Minutes

Carefully turn dough onto parchment paper. With sharp blade, score top in cross or square pattern—cuts should be 1cm deep. Transfer (with parchment) into hot Dutch oven, cover with lid, bake 30 minutes. Remove lid, continue 15 minutes until deep golden brown. **Steam trapped by lid creates authentic crusty exterior.**

Day 2, Morning: Mix Final Dough

In large bowl, whisk together final dough ingredients (flours, starches, xanthan gum, salt, yeast). Add water and oil to pre-ferment bowl, stir to loosen, then pour everything into dry ingredients. Mix vigorously 4 minutes until thick, sticky dough forms. **It should be too sticky to knead**—this is correct for gluten-free sourdough style.

Shape & Second Rise: 60-90 Minutes

With wet hands, fold dough edges toward center several times to strengthen structure. Shape into round ball, place seam-up in well-floured banneton or bowl. Cover, let rise until very puffy and passing poke test (indentation springs back slowly). **Meanwhile, preheat Dutch oven at 230°C for 30 minutes.**

Cool Completely: 2+ Hours

Transfer to wire rack. Resist temptation to slice! Let cool minimum 2 hours, ideally 4 hours. **The crumb continues to set as it cools.** Cutting too early results in gummy texture.

Understanding the Process

Fermentation

Long fermentation breaks down starches, making bread more digestible and developing tangy sourdough flavor without a maintained starter.

Scoring

Deep cuts control how bread expands. They also release steam strategically, creating the "ears" prized in artisan loaves.

Hydration

High liquid content creates more open crumb structure. Gluten-free dough needs more water than wheat dough for proper texture.

Temperature

Warm environment speeds fermentation, cool slows it. If kitchen is cold, pre-ferment may need 14-16 hours. Watch the dough, not just the clock.

Steam Baking

Dutch oven traps steam from dough, creating that thick, crispy crust characteristic of artisan bread. Essential for authentic levain.

Professional Tips



Timing Flexibility

Can't bake Day 2 morning? After first rise, refrigerate shaped dough up to 24 hours. Bring to room temp 1 hour before baking. Cold fermentation actually improves flavor!



Consistency Check

Final dough should be thick enough to hold shape loosely but too sticky to handle without wet hands. Too liquid? Add 2 tablespoons flour. Too stiff? Add 1-2 tablespoons water.



The Sound Test

Properly baked loaf sounds hollow when tapped on bottom. Internal temp should be 96-98°C. If sounds dense or reads under 95°C, return to oven 5 minutes.

Variations & Substitutions

Flavor Variations

Seeded Levain: Add 80g mixed seeds (sesame, sunflower, pumpkin) to final dough

Olive & Herb: Fold in 100g chopped olives and 2 tablespoons rosemary

Darker Levain: Replace 50g rice flour with teff flour for deeper color and flavor

Raisin & Nut: Traditional combination—add 100g raisins, 80g walnuts

Ingredient Substitutions

No buckwheat? Use millet or sorghum flour instead

Xanthan gum alternative: 12g psyllium husk + 40ml extra water

More tang: Increase apple cider vinegar to 10ml or add 5ml lemon juice

Nut-free: Recipe is already nut-free!

Serving Suggestions

Pain au Levain is incredibly versatile. Serve thick slices with: **Butter and flaky salt • Soft cheese (Brie, Camembert) and fig jam • Smoked salmon, cream cheese, and capers • Olive tapenade • Soup, stews, or cassoulet • Simply toasted with fruity olive oil.** The complex flavor stands up to bold ingredients while remaining delicious on its own.

Troubleshooting Common Issues

Problem	Solution
Pre-ferment didn't bubble	Yeast may be dead or water too hot. Start over with fresh yeast and 38°C water
Dough won't rise	Room too cold or yeast inactive. Place bowl in oven with just light on. Wait longer if needed
Crust too thick/hard	Overbaked or too much steam. Reduce baking time by 5 minutes next time
Gummy center	Underbaked or sliced too soon. Always check internal temp and wait full cooling time
Not tangy enough	Extend pre-ferment to 14-16 hours. Add more vinegar. Try cold final proof in fridge

Storage: Room temperature 4-5 days wrapped in paper inside plastic bag (crust stays better). Slice and freeze up to 3 months. **Nutrition per 100g:** 240 calories, 5g protein, 46g carbs, 3g fat, 4g fiber. High in resistant starch from long fermentation.

Pain Viennois Sans Gluten

Pain Viennois bridges the gap between bread and pastry—sweet, soft, and milk-enriched rolls with a delicate golden crust. Traditionally from Vienna but adopted by French bakers, these slightly sweet rolls are perfect for breakfast with jam and butter, or split for sandwiches. Their tender crumb and subtle sweetness make them universally appealing, especially to children.

Perfect For

Breakfast rolls, afternoon tea, children's sandwiches, French toast, bread pudding

Difficulty

Easy — One of the simplest enriched breads to make

Timing

2.5 hours total: 20 min prep, 90 min rising, 15 min baking

Yield

8 rolls (approximately 80g each)

Complete Ingredient List

Dry Base

- 300g gluten-free bread flour
- 80g potato starch
- 20g milk powder
- 10g xanthan gum
- 8g instant yeast
- 8g salt

Sweetness & Fat

- 40g sugar
- 60g butter, softened
- 1 large egg (for dough)
- 1 egg (for wash)

Liquids

- 220ml warm milk (38°C)
- 5ml vanilla extract
- Optional: 10g pearl sugar or sesame seeds for topping

Equipment



Baking sheet lined with parchment paper



Stand mixer with paddle (or large bowl and strong arm)



Small bowl for egg wash and pastry brush



Plastic wrap or clean kitchen towel

Step-by-Step Method

01

Mix Dry Ingredients

Combine flour, potato starch, milk powder, xanthan gum, yeast, sugar, and salt in mixer bowl. Whisk together thoroughly. **Why whisk:** Ensures even distribution of xanthan gum and yeast for consistent texture.

02

Add Wet Ingredients

Add egg, softened butter (cut in pieces), warm milk, and vanilla to dry ingredients. Beat on low to combine, then medium-high for 4 minutes until smooth, glossy, and elastic-looking. **Dough should be thick but spreadable, like thick cake batter.**

03

Shape Rolls

With wet hands or spoon, divide dough into 8 equal portions (about 80g each) on prepared baking sheet, spacing 5cm apart. Shape each into oval or round, smoothing tops with wet hands. **Wet hands prevent sticking**—gluten-free dough is naturally stickier than wheat dough.

04

First Rise

Cover loosely with plastic wrap or damp towel. Let rise in warm place 60-75 minutes until nearly doubled in size. **Don't over-proof**—rolls should be puffy but still hold their shape. They'll rise more in the oven.

05

Prepare for Baking

Preheat oven to 190°C. Beat second egg with 1 teaspoon water, gently brush tops of rolls. Sprinkle with pearl sugar or seeds if using. **Egg wash creates beautiful golden color and slight shine.**

06

Bake to Golden

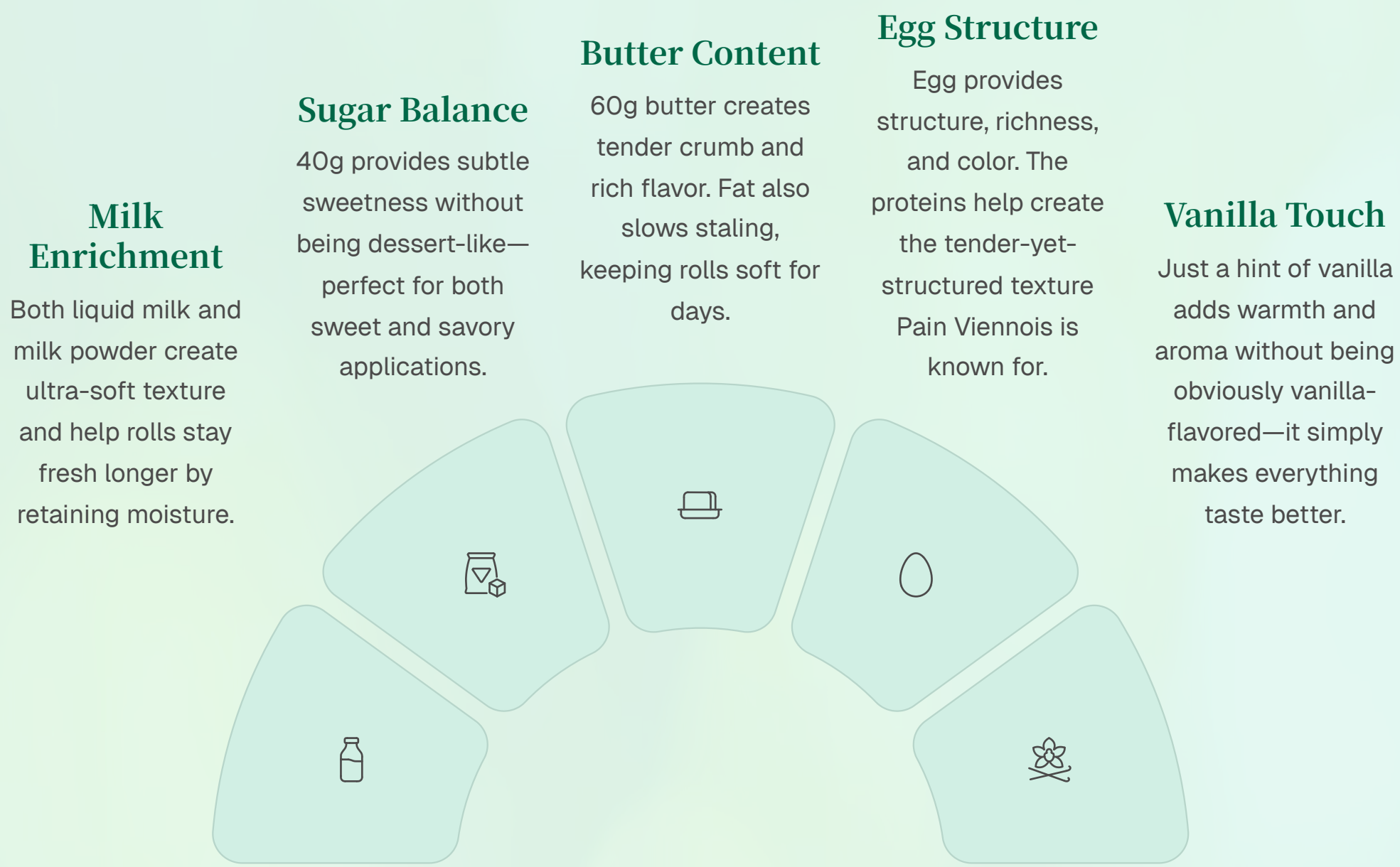
Bake 15-18 minutes until tops are golden brown and rolls sound hollow when tapped. Internal temperature should reach 94°C. **Don't overbake**—these should stay soft, not crusty.

07

Cool & Serve

Transfer to wire rack, cool at least 20 minutes before eating. Best enjoyed warm or at room temperature within 2 days.

Why This Recipe Works



Variations to Try

Pain Viennois au Chocolat

Fold 100g chocolate chips into dough after mixing. Brush tops with egg wash, bake as directed. Perfect for special breakfast treats.

Raisin & Cinnamon Version

Add 80g raisins and 1 teaspoon cinnamon to dry ingredients. Increase sugar to 50g. Classic combination that never disappoints.

Savory Herb Rolls

Reduce sugar to 15g, omit vanilla. Add 2 tablespoons mixed dried herbs (thyme, oregano, rosemary). Brush with butter instead of egg, sprinkle with flaky salt.

Troubleshooting & Tips

Common Issues & Solutions

Rolls spread instead of rising up: Dough may be too liquid. Add 2 tablespoons flour next time, or use slightly less milk.

Dense, heavy texture: Under-mixed dough or insufficient rise time. Beat full 4 minutes and let rise until nearly doubled.

Dry, crumbly rolls: Overbaked. Check at 15 minutes—they continue cooking briefly after removing from oven.

Gummy interior: Underbaked or sliced too soon. Verify internal temp and cool at least 20 minutes.

Pro Tips for Success

Even sizing: Use kitchen scale to divide dough equally—consistent size ensures even baking.

Higher rise: For taller rolls, shape in muffin pan. This provides support for upward rise.

Extra soft: Brush warm rolls with melted butter immediately after baking.

Freshness: Store in airtight container at room temp up to 3 days. Refresh in 160°C oven for 5 minutes.

Serving Ideas: Split warm rolls, spread with salted butter and jam • Use for ham and cheese sandwiches • Make petit déjeuner (French breakfast) with hot chocolate • Create mini burgers for parties • Toast and serve with soft cheese • Make bread pudding with day-old rolls

Substitutions

- Dairy-free:** Use plant milk + 1 tablespoon oil instead of dairy milk. Replace milk powder with coconut milk powder. Use vegan butter.
- Egg-free:** Replace egg in dough with 50g applesauce + 1 tablespoon oil. For wash, use plant milk instead.
- Less sweet:** Reduce sugar to 25g for more bread-like, less pastry-like flavor
- No xanthan gum:** Use 12g psyllium husk powder + 30ml extra milk

Storage: Room temperature 3 days in sealed container. Freeze individually wrapped up to 2 months (thaw at room temp or warm in oven). **Nutrition per roll:** 235 calories, 4g protein, 38g carbs, 8g fat, 2g fiber.

Pain d'Épi & Pain aux Céréales Sans Gluten



Pain d'Épi (Wheat Stalk Bread)

The elegant "wheat stalk" shape—achieved through strategic cuts—creates individual tear-off pieces with extra crispy edges.



Pain aux Céréales (Multigrain Bread)

A hearty, nutritious bread loaded with seeds and whole grain flours—perfect for health-conscious bakers.

These final two recipes showcase the versatility of gluten-free French bread baking. Pain d'Épi demonstrates an advanced shaping technique that impresses guests, while Pain aux Céréales focuses on nutrition and hearty flavor. Both share a common base dough, adapted for their specific purposes.

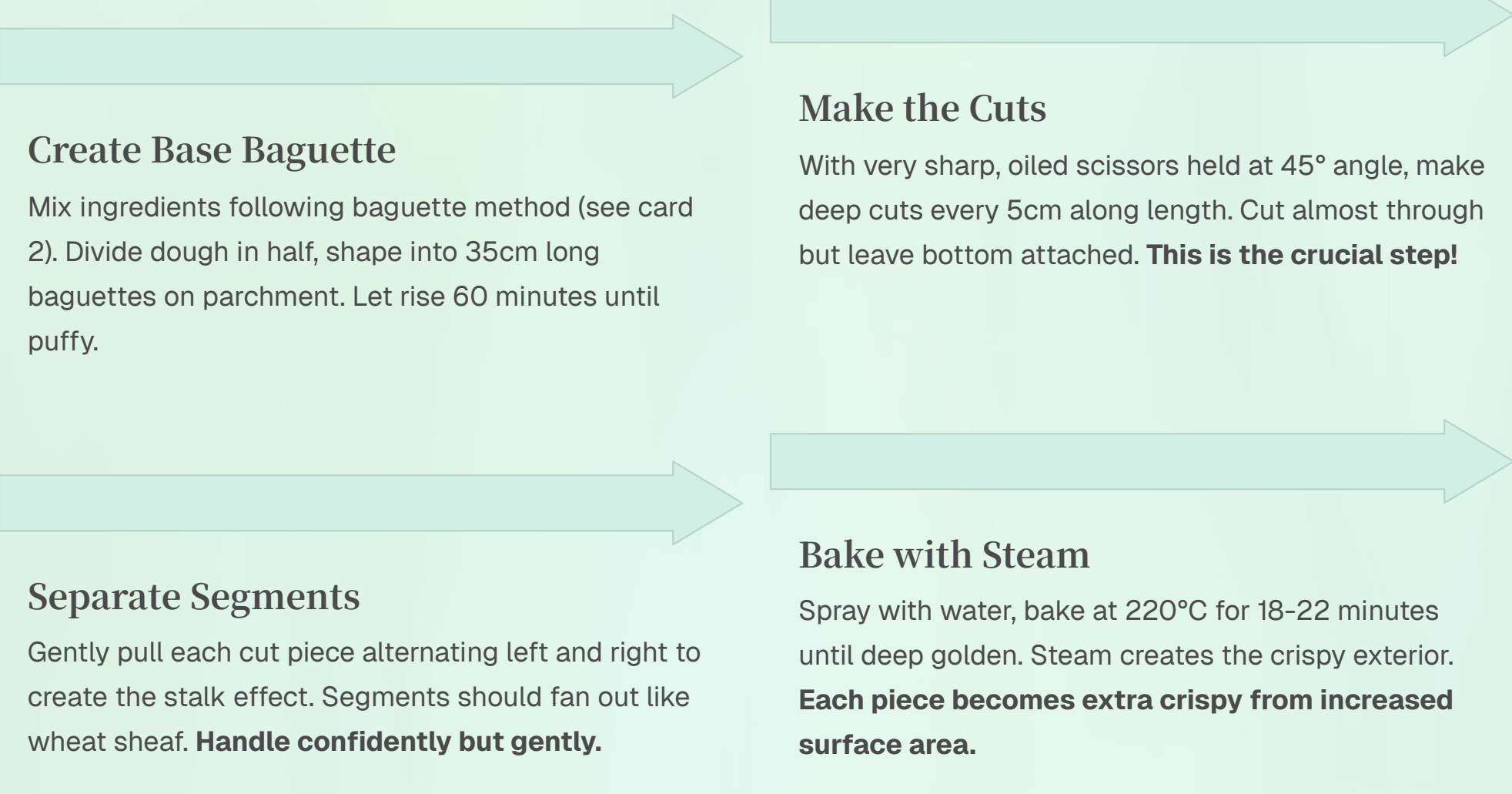
Pain d'Épi: Wheat Stalk Bread

Difficulty: Medium Simple dough, advanced shaping technique requiring sharp scissors and confidence	Time: 2.5 hours 25 min prep, 90 min rising, 20 min baking	Yield: 2 stalks Each serves 4-6 people (tear-apart portions)
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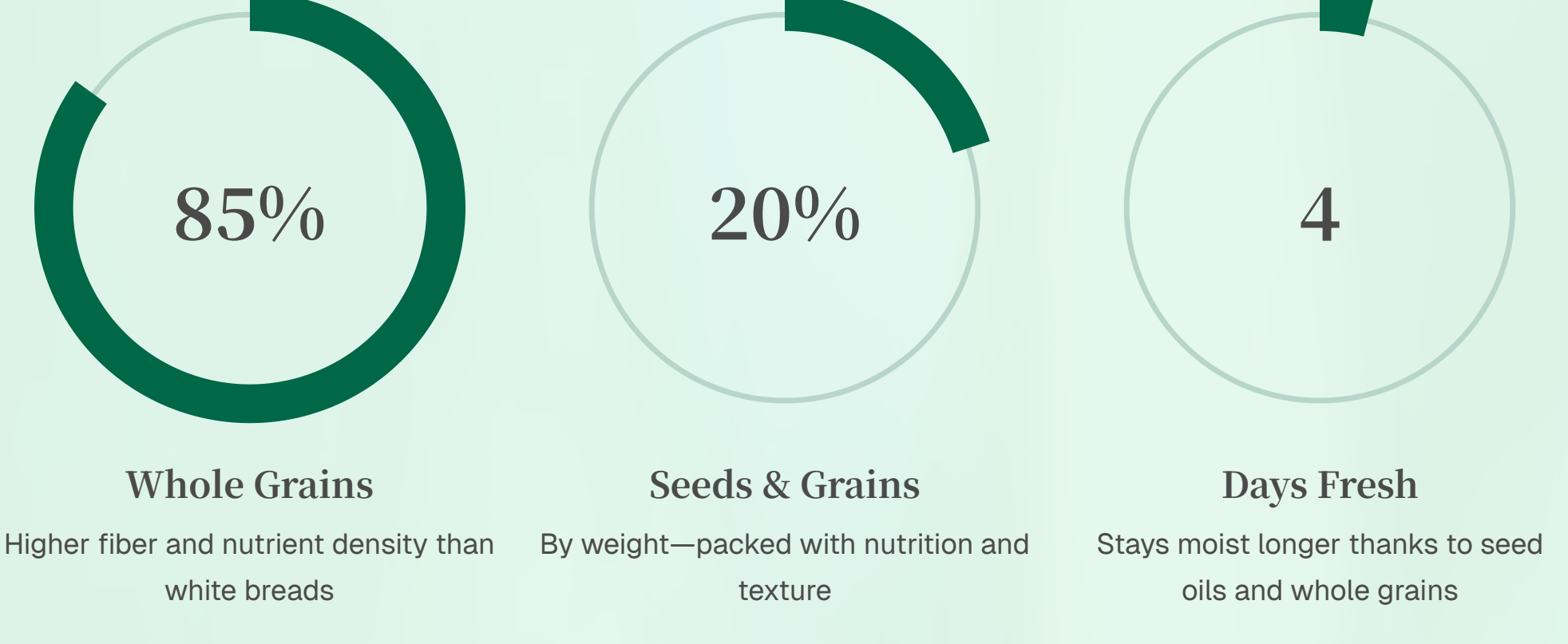
Ingredients for Pain d'Épi

- 300g gluten-free bread flour blend
- 100g tapioca starch
- 8g xanthan gum
- 10g salt
- 8g instant yeast
- 5g sugar
- 350ml warm water (38°C)
- 30ml olive oil
- 2 egg whites (60g)
- 10ml apple cider vinegar

Shaping the Épi



Pain aux Céréales: Multigrain Bread



Ingredients for Pain aux Céréales

Flour Base (380g total)

- 150g brown rice flour
- 100g buckwheat flour
- 80g sorghum flour
- 50g quinoa flakes
- 10g xanthan gum
- 10g salt
- 8g instant yeast
- 15g honey

Seeds & Grains Mix (120g)

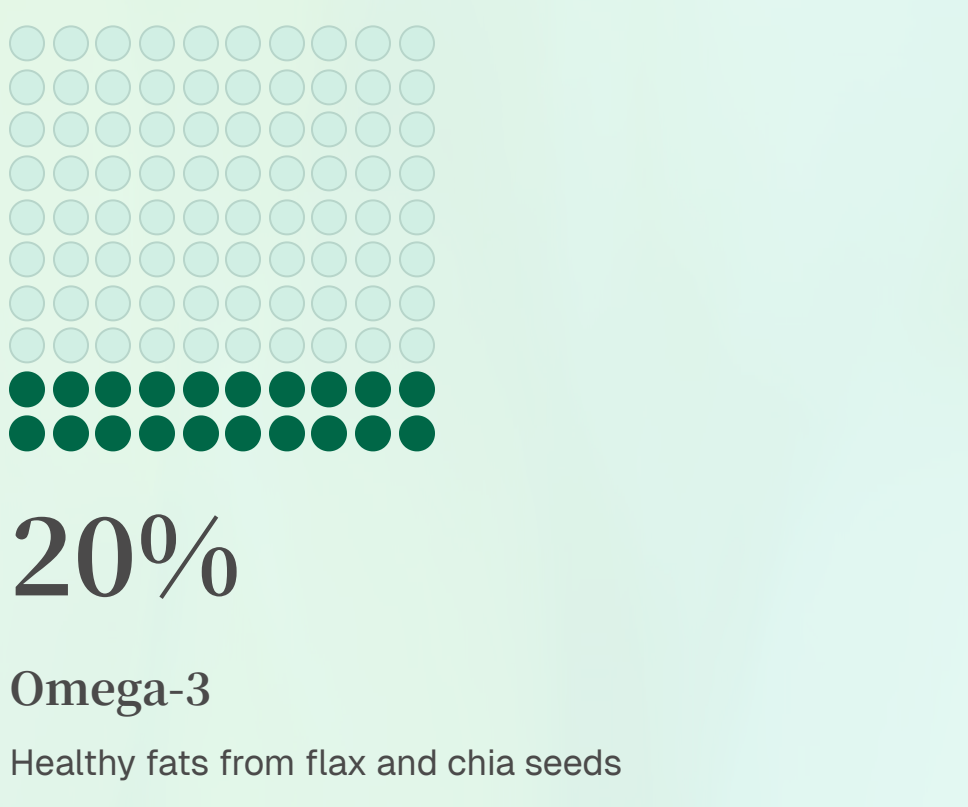
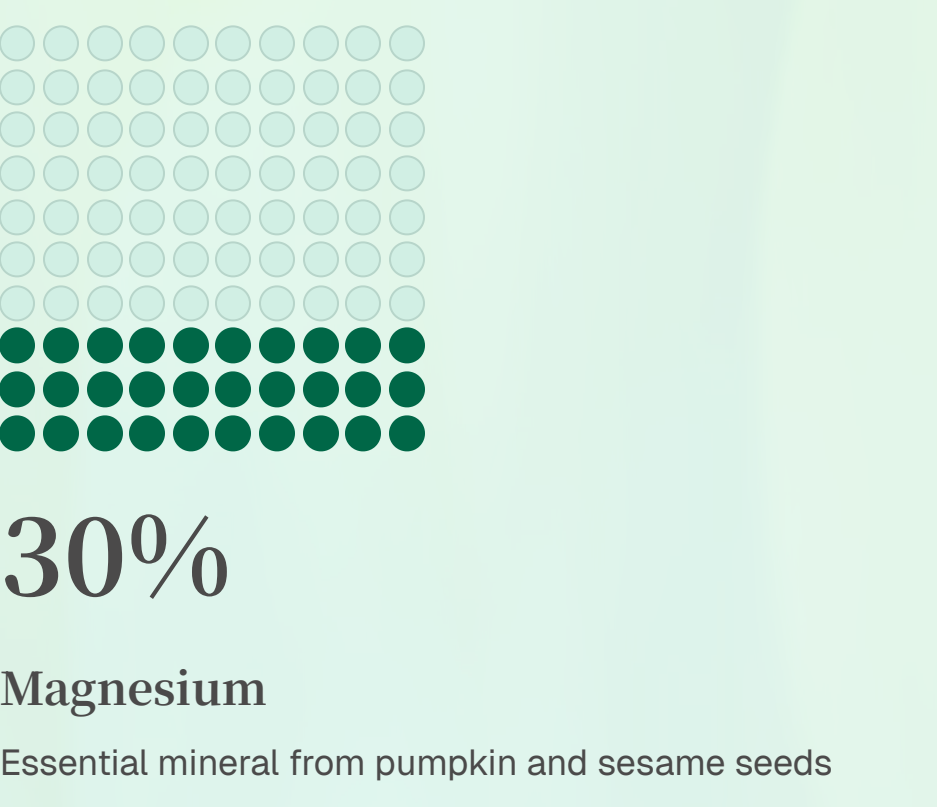
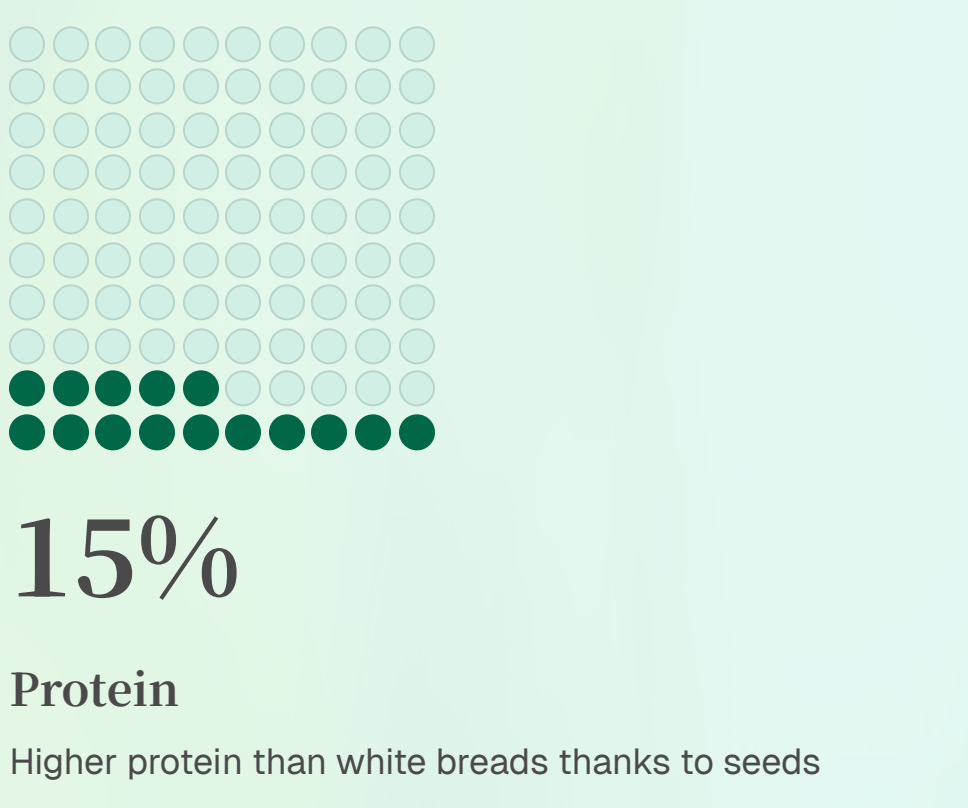
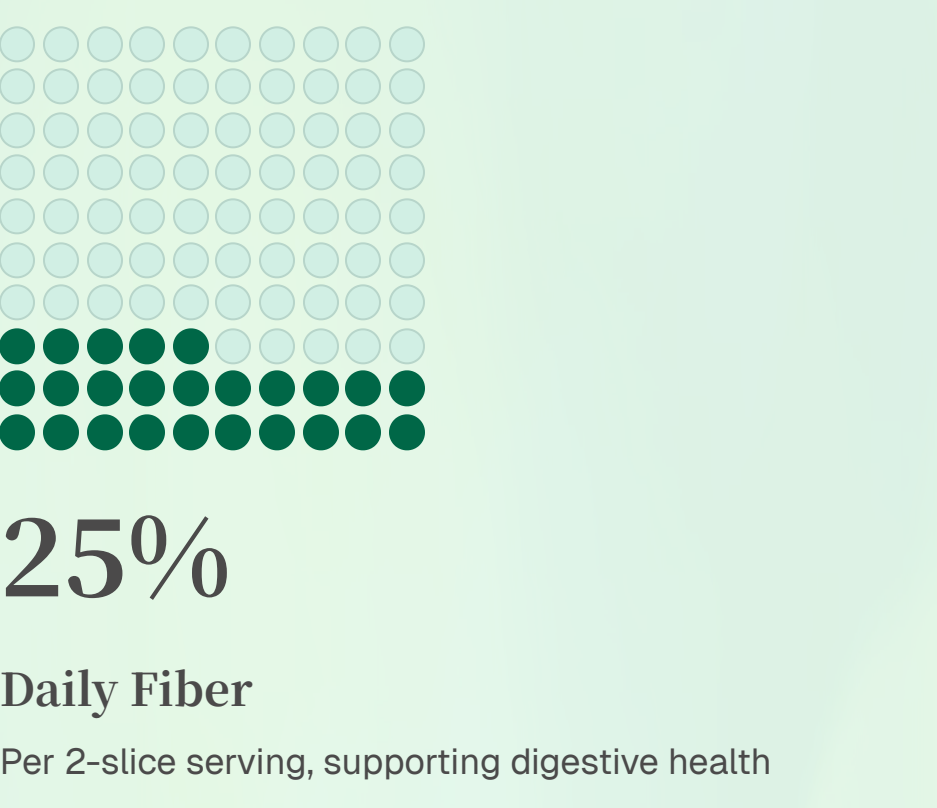
- 40g sunflower seeds
- 30g pumpkin seeds
- 20g sesame seeds
- 20g flax seeds
- 10g chia seeds

Plus wet ingredients: 380ml water, 30ml oil, 10ml vinegar

Method for Multigrain Bread



Nutritional Benefits of Multigrain



Tips for Both Breads

Pain d'Épi Tips

- **Sharp scissors essential:** Dull blades tear instead of cut cleanly
- **Confidence is key:** Hesitant cuts create uneven stalks
- **Oil the scissors:** Prevents sticking to gluten-free dough
- **Practice:** Try technique on risen dough scraps first
- **Serve warm:** Épi is meant for immediate tear-and-share eating

Pain aux Céréales Tips

- **Soak seeds option:** For softer texture, soak seeds 30 min in 50ml water before adding
- **Customize seed blend:** Use your favorites—amaranth, millet, hemp work great
- **Don't skip toasting:** Raw seeds taste flat in comparison
- **Check doneness:** Dense bread needs full baking—interior should reach 96°C
- **Slice thin:** Dense texture is best enjoyed in thinner slices

Final Thoughts on French Gluten-Free Baking

You've now mastered ten classic French breads—each with its own character, technique, and purpose. From the crispy baguette to the hearty multigrain, these recipes prove that gluten-free baking can achieve authentic French quality. **Key takeaways:** precision with measurements, patience with rising times, proper baking temperatures, and most importantly, practice. Each time you bake, you'll improve. Don't be discouraged by initial imperfections—even professional bakers spent years mastering these techniques. Bon appétit et bonne chance dans votre voyage boulangère!

Comparison Chart

Bread Type	Best For	Difficulty	Keeps
Baguette	Daily meals, sandwiches	Medium	1 day fresh
Brioche	Breakfast, French toast	Advanced	5 days
Pain de Campagne	Cheese, rustic meals	Easy-Medium	3 days
Fougasse	Sharing, appetizers	Easy	Same day
Pain aux Noix	Cheese boards	Medium	4 days
Pain de Mie	Sandwiches, toast	Medium	5 days
Pain au Levain	Artisan applications	Advanced	5 days
Pain Viennois	Breakfast rolls	Easy	3 days
Pain d'Épi	Impressive presentation	Medium	1 day
Pain aux Céréales	Healthy daily bread	Easy-Medium	4 days

Thank you for joining this journey through French gluten-free baking! With these ten recipes, you have the foundation to create an entire boulangerie's worth of breads. May your kitchen be filled with the aroma of fresh-baked bread and the joy of sharing delicious food with loved