



## Homemade Ciabatta that's Perfect Every Time

**Servings:** 1 loaf

**Prep Time:** 5hrs

**Cook Time:** 20-30min

### Ingredients

#### For the ciabatta

- 2 cups + 2 tbsp water
- 1 tsp active-dry yeast
- Biga
- 4 cups flour
- 2 tsp salt

#### For the biga

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 tsp active-dry yeast
- 1 cup flour

### Directions

1. To make the biga
2. Dissolve the yeast in the water. Add the flour and stir to form a thick paste. Stir quite vigorously in order to build up the gluten. Cover and leave at room temperature overnight, or for at least eight hours. (The biga will look soupy with many big bubbles dotting the surface the next day.)
3. To make the ciabatta
4. Dissolve the yeast in the water in your mixer bowl. Scrape the biga into the water and break it up with your spatula or squeeze it between your hands until it's loosened up.
5. Add the flour and salt. Stir to form a thick, wet dough. Let this rest for 10 to 20 min so that the flour can absorb all the water.
6. Using the dough hook, knead the dough at medium speed for 15 to 18 min. Don't worry if the dough starts off by sticking to the bottom and sides of the bowl, it will start to pull away from about 7 min. If it doesn't, nudge your mixer speed up a notch. By the end of kneading, the dough should look smooth and creamy with a glossy shine.

7. Cover the bowl and let the dough rise at a very low temperature for 2 to 3 hours, until tripled in bulk.
8. Dust your work surface heavily with flour. Set two sheets of baking paper near your work surface. Scrape the dough out of the bowl onto the flour, taking care not to deflate it too much. Dust the top of the dough with more flour. Using a pastry scraper or pizza wheel, cut the dough in two pieces for loaves or into 16 pieces for rolls.
9. Brush your hands with flour. Working gently but swiftly, scoop the loaves, one at a time, from the work surface to the baking paper. Press your fingertips about halfway into the dough to dimple the surface and slightly flatten the loaves. Let them rise, uncovered, for 30 to 40 min. When ready to bake, they should look like little pillows with many big bubbles just beneath the surface.
10. Preheat the oven to 240°C while the loaves are rising. Bake for 20 to 30 min, until puffed and golden brown. Allow to cool completely before eating.

**Notes:** The biga needs to sit for at least 8 hours, but preferably overnight. This is important as the biga gives the ciabatta its flavor, chewy crumb, and extra-crispy crust.