



Shaping the knowledge and skills of the artisan
baking community through education since 1993

Try This At Home Series

April 3, 2020



Pain de Monium

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The ad read: November 2 – 6, 1998. Italian Breads & Pastries. The National Baking Center. Minneapolis, MN. Instructors: Didier Rosada and Philippe LeCorre.

The spiral-bound handout was (and still is, by the way) divided into: Pastry formulas, Cream formulas, and Bread & Sweet Leavened Dough formulas. When I unearthed it, I noticed two names and numbers inscribed in the back. Sorry, Mazzi and Steve: I never called. But, it was good meeting you...

Earlier in the year, the NBC hosted Iginio Massari, author, founder of the Italian Pastry Chef's Master Academy, and coach of the Italian Baking Teams (bread and pastry). His monumental tome, *Cresci, The Art of Leavened Dough*, includes,

among other things, ten recipes dedicated to Panettone. He shared his formulae and methodology of Italian bread and pastry with the Center's faculty and staff, who in turn developed a program for American bakers. One of the products in the course was *Colomba*.

There is this quote from the *Cresci*. "Perhaps this, more than any other cake, can boast of rich and ancient history, even mentioned in the Bible and legend, with a shape typical of ancient votive offerings." And another: "The cake is consumed when the almond, orange, and lemon trees blossom so that the candied fruit is a bit like a foretaste of the harvest later on."

The stories that accompany celebration breads are typically as sweet and enriched as the breads themselves. Even the glaze on top mirrors the object or moral of these tales. One story is that *Colomba*, shaped like a dove, long appreciated as a symbol of peace, commemorates the Italian victory at the Battle of Legnano in 1176. Two doves landed on the battle standards of the Italian Army, inspiring the troops to victory and preserving the Holy Roman Empire. Another story is that after King Albion conquered Pavia, south of Milan – home of the *Panettone* – he pillaged the city and demanded twelve young maidens. The first eleven young maidens were distraught and unable to conceal their fears. One by one, as they were presented to the King, they resisted their fate, crying and pleading for mercy. Our brave and smart heroine, the twelfth maiden, presented the King with a large, sweet bread baked in the shape of a dove. She was allowed to go free, and the city was saved from destruction.

The Project Evolves:

Mitch: Colomba, you've made that before, right?

Kristen: Once, at my old job (you know, a professional kitchen with professional guidance and tools).

Mitch: Want to execute it at home for a newsletter?

Kristen: uh, Sure, I think I have some of the ingredients...

Kristen's hyper-anxious brain to herself: What, are you nuts? That's quite possibly the most complex bread he could have asked you to make and at HOME no less. Do you even have enough sugar? Eggs? Butter? Should you try to candy orange peel in a day? And what about the cocoa butter? That is such an important inclusion! Will this even mix correctly in a KitchenAid? Wow, sounds like a road towards wasted time and ingredients. You don't even have ANY paper molds, let alone a dove-shaped one. What the heck is this going to turn into?

Kristen to her hyper-anxious brain: But...we don't say "No" to Mitch. He is our Bread Dad, after all.

So I pressed on and refreshed my starter, which I had admittedly been neglecting a bit since Shelter in Place orders.

At the end of a challenging mental health day, somewhat begrudgingly, I began to mix dough one. Midway through, it was working. It was actually working. I used over half of my egg stash and most of the butter I had on hand, but it was working! And oh my, was that windowpane glorious.

The final dough had to have several substitutions. Some white chocolate couverture I found in my candy stash instead of cocoa butter. Medjool dates and my favorite dried apricots as the inclusions. And the zest of a Meyer lemon because apparently, I needed to be quarantined with a whole bag of Meyer lemons.

*For the sake of this project, I shaped one loaf into a dove on a sheet pan, but boy does this dough need a mold for support. (There's an inappropriate hashtag the bread internet uses that would apply itself pretty perfectly here...
#showusyour(explicit)loaves)*

Fortunately, I also placed a ring of dough into an angel food cake pan, which supported it quite nicely, and into the makeshift proof-box oven they went.

The rest of the process came with feelings of excitement, nervousness to perform, and anticipation. Luckily, I had a few meetings to distract me during the lengthy proof. My Achilles heel of bread-baking at home – proof time.

For the topping, I tried to fashion the hazelnut flour from whole nuts that I ground in the food processor. But it never got very fine, and as a result, the topping was much runnier. Whoops. But, hey, I had some pearl sugar in the cupboard at least.

Once baked and cooled, I gave it an extra dusting of powdered sugar since the expansion of the topping was not the prettiest.

Sliced up, I found myself smiling and realizing this was a challenge, one not necessarily welcomed at the start but one that nudged my brain back into a calmer place. A familiar place.

Like gluten, there is strength and dependability in the family you keep close.

Mitch again: And now, you've heard from our second brave and smart heroine.

COLOMBA PASQUALE A sweet leavened dough traditionally baked to celebrate Easter. Contributed by Mitch Stamm

TOTAL FORMULA			LEVAIN		FIRST DOUGH		FINAL DOUGH	
Kilograms	%	Kilograms	%	Kilograms	%	Kilograms	%	Kilograms
Total dough weight 9.265 kg			Total flour fermented in levain 8.84%		Total flour fermented in first dough 70.76%		Total flour prefermented 79.60%	
Bread flour	100.00	2.835	100.00	0.251	100.00	2.006	100.00	0.502
Water	36.91	1.046	50.00	0.125	40.00	0.802	18.00	0.090
Egg yolk	36.36	1.031			25.00	0.502	100.00	0.502
Salt	0.73	0.021					4.00	0.020
Fresh yeast	0.44	0.012			0.60	0.012		
Butter	54.55	1.546			37.50	0.752	150.00	0.752
Sugar	40.91	1.160			37.50	0.752	75.00	0.376
Candied orange peel	36.36	1.031					200.00	1.003
Almond paste*	9.09	0.258					50.00	0.251
Honey	9.09	0.258					50.00	0.251
Cocoa butter†	1.82	0.052					10.00	0.050
Orange zest	0.44	0.012					2.40	0.012
Vanilla bean	0.11	0.003					0.60	0.003
First Dough							1087.40	5.453
Levain					31.25	0.627		
Stiff Starter (50% hydration)			100.00	0.251				
Totals	326.80	9.265	250.00	0.627	271.85	5.453	1847.40	9.265

*Cubed and frozen

†Chopped

GLAZE

Total weight 2.257 kg		
TOTAL FORMULA		
	%	Kilograms
Sugar	100.00	1.000
Hazelnut flour	50.00	0.500
Vegetable oil	5.00	0.050
Corn starch	10.00	0.100
Bread flour	5.00	0.050
Vanilla bean	0.60	0.006
Egg white	55.00	0.550
Total	225.60	2.257

PROCESS—Colomba Pasquale

Preferment		Levain	First Dough
Mix	Type of mixer	Hand	Stationary
	Hold back		Egg yolk
	1st speed	Until incorporated	Until incorporated
	2nd speed		0:05
	1st speed		Gradually add the egg yolk
	2nd speed		0:10
	Proofing device		Covered, oiled container
	Dough temperature	80-85°F	0:05
Ferment	Time/temperature	4:00 at 72°F	12:00 at 72°F
Final Dough			
Mix	1st speed	Flour, first dough, orange zest and vanilla bean for 0:05	12:00 at 72°F
	2nd speed	0:04	
	1st speed	Add sugar and half egg yolk	
	2nd speed	0:04	
	1st speed	Add honey	
	2nd speed	0:01	
	1st speed	Add butter	
	2nd speed	0:02	
	1st speed	Add cocoa butter	
	2nd speed	30 seconds	
	1st speed	Add remaining egg yolk	
	2nd speed	0:01	
		Add water, over approximately 0:01	
	1st speed	Add candied orange peel and almond paste until incorporated	
Ferment	Time/temperature	0:20 at 72°F, covered with plastic, on a buttered bench	
	Fold	0:10	
Shape	Divide	1000g	
	Preshape	Ball	
	Shape	Two or three balls determined by free form or mold shaping. Two for free form; three for the mold.	
Proof	Time/temperature	7:00 at 85°F with 75% humidity	
	Finishing	Pipe glaze on top once proofed	
	Garnish	Cover the surface with chopped almonds and pearl sugar. Cover the topping with sifted powdered sugar.	
Bake	Time/temperature	0:30 at 360°F	

Process Notes

PROCESS - GLAZE

- Combine and blend all ingredients.
- Place the mixture into a piping bag.