

Egyptian Emmer Bread

In the early Egyptian Dynastic culture, the main wheat crop was Emmer. This wheat was used to make the traditional triangular loaves of flat bread that is characteristic of the early ancient Egyptian baking style.

This type of loaf would have been made originally using just flour and water and baked on a hot stone over an open fire. As clay ovens were introduced into the culture, baking the bread would have been done on a more industrious scale. With yeast being available at this time, the bread would have been leavened, but the traditional triangular shape remained.



Use 300 grams of whole-wheat Emmer flour and add a small amount of salt, 3 grams of dried yeast and enough water to mix into a stiff dough. Dust the dough with flour and remove a piece to shape into an arrowhead triangular shape. Place all of the breads on a dry baking tray to rise. After about an hour, bake in a hot oven (230°C) for 17 minutes and cool on a baking rack.

A typical Egyptian oven would be a stone slab laid across two earthen brick blocks. The outside of the oven would be constructed of clay to form the sides, back and the hood over the top, leaving the front open. A fire would be started on the slab and left until the clay surround was baked dry. After being cleaned out, the oven was then in a state to be used.

For each baking, a wooden fire would be started on the slab and maintained for two hours or more in order to heat up the oven. The fire would be scraped out and the hot slab rubbed clean with a wooden scraper. The risen bread dough would be placed into the oven on the slab and a wooden cover would be used to fill the hole in the front. When the bread was baked, the wooden cover would be removed and the loaves taken out with a wooden scoop.