

Ostreaus

This is “*bread for oysters*”, eaten almost exclusively with oysters and occasionally other shellfish. The key ingredient is fish sauce. The type of fish sauce depends upon the quality of the bread and the Romans made many different fish sauces.

Garum – made from the blood, gut and offcuts of Mullet, Mackerel or Anchovies, fermented in barrels for months to give a fishy liqueur. Only one type of fish would be used and this is the top quality fish sauce of the day.

Muria – made from the gut and blood of Tuna, this is a second quality product.

Liquamen - made from the blood and guts of mixed types of fish. This was a variable and everyday product used by the masses and the military.

Oxygarum was garum and vinegar and **Meligarum** was garum and honey.

A good substitute for Roman fish sauces would be Thai fish sauce *Nam Pla* or *Tra Chang*. The Italian sauce *Colature* is a softer option for a more modern pallet.



- 500g Whole-wheat Emmer flour or Khorasan flour.
- 300ml warm water
- 25ml fish sauce
- 20ml olive oil
- 6g dried yeast or 2 tablespoons sourdough starter.

Put the warm water in a large jug and add the fish sauce and dried yeast. Allow to ferment for an hour or so. *A sourdough starter can be used here for the authentic taste instead of the dried yeast.*

With the flour in a large bowl, add the fermenting liquid and olive oil and mix thoroughly. Knead to form the dough, and allow it to rise for an hour.

Re-knead the dough and separate into small flat round loaves of about 12cm diameter. Paint with water or light olive oil and allow half an hour to prove, and then bake at 180°C for 15 minutes. Cool on a rack before eating.

This bread should be used fresh to accompany oysters or shellfish that are freshly cooked. Use the bread to mop up any juices from the shellfish.