

Panettone Rinato

If indeed panettone was originated by a baker in Milan in the 1400s¹, the ingredients would have been considerably different from those seen now in commercial panettone. Refined sugar and refined flour were unknown at that time and methods for producing such sophisticated emulsifiers as mono- and di-glycerides of fatty acids in quantity, had not been invented.

What would panettone be like if reborn, *rinato*, and made from *whole wheat flour, enzyme active malt, butter, egg yolk, and honey* together with *raisins and candied citron peel*, all of which would have been available to the Fifteenth Century baker in Milan? Candied fruits and citrus peels would have been very exotic at that time. Italian whole wheat flour was probably from a soft white wheat such as the landrace *Tuscan* wheat. Vanilla would have been unknown; it was brought to Europe from Central America only after the opening up of the American continent in the 1500s².

Here in California I chose *Sonora* wheat, which is a soft white wheat, because in the whole grain form it gives a nice golden color to breads, the gluten is mellow, and it is locally available with high protein, 12%³. Butter, eggs, and honey are all locally available here in California, as well as the raisins and citrus fruit for zest or as home-made candied peel. My salt was from Spain, and eventually I included Madagascar vanilla extract in the formula.

For the experiment that gave me a good result, I used just 100 grams of Sonora whole wheat flour (freshly milled), 1 gram of enzyme active malt with the exotic addition of a small amount of vitamin C, one large egg yolk, 25 grams of butter, 10 grams honey, 30 grams of raisins and some zest from an orange and a lemon. The sourdough starter was a simple sourdough, fermented to completion, and therefore fully mature. If you also try this and succeed, then you will realize that this basic recipe can be modified to include candied peel, or to make a chocolate panettone, and scaled up to the amount you would like to make for your family, or as Christmas gifts. These amounts gave me two small loaves formed in typical paper cases (*diameter 7cm x height 5cm*), and filling them three quarters full by the time they entered the oven. Certainly, this was enough to discover that I could produce a light, golden, sweet and buttery panettone without using either refined flour or refined sugar.



¹ Carol Field, *The Italian Baker*, Harper & Row, New York, 1985.

² Rebecca Rupp, *The History of Vanilla*, The Plate-National Geographic, October 23, 2014.

³ *Modern soft white wheat is usually grown to be low in protein. However, so that soft white wheat can be used for bread, panettone and other sourdough raised cakes a protein level above 12% is preferred.*

Recipe notes:

The sourdough starter is a simple whole wheat sourdough that is matured by allowing it to ferment to completion before using it in a recipe. For success using the method described, it will be important to use this type of sourdough. It will also be important to include enzyme active malt, because the enzyme activity on the flour starch is the source of sugars for the sourdough microorganisms. See *Simple Sourdough Starter* and *Bread Improver* recipes at www.wholegrainconnection.org

A portion of the butter is softened at 90°F, and worked into the flour at the beginning, and the rest is softened and beaten into the dough after the first rise.

Egg is not added until after the first rise, by which time any spoilage microorganisms in the dough will have been eliminated by the sourdough acidification.

Honey is added late in the process so that it is not completely fermented away by the sourdough.

<i>Ingredient</i>	<i>Bakers percent</i>	<i>Grams for test</i>
Raisins	30	30
Orange juice – freshly squeezed	10	10
Whole wheat flour	100	100
Enzyme active malt with Vitamin C	1	1
Butter	10	10
Salt	1.5	1.5
Water (<i>enough for a medium stiff dough</i>)	65	65
Sourdough	10	10
Egg Yolk	19	19 (<i>from one egg</i>)
Vanilla extract	5	5
Lemon zest	To taste	To taste
Orange zest	To taste	To taste
Butter	15	15
Honey	10	10

[] Add raisins and orange juice to a small bowl. Toss well, cover and leave in a warm place (90°F) so that they hydrate and plump by the time they are added to the dough.

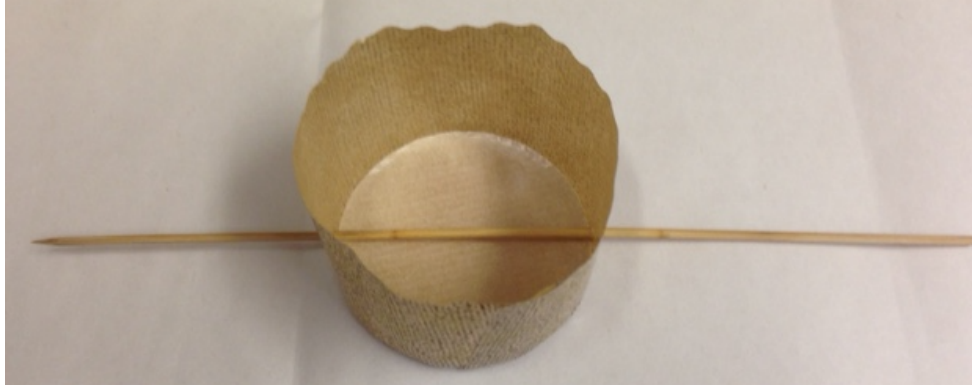
[] To a mixing bowl: add whole wheat flour and enzyme active malt with vitamin C. Mix well

[] Soften the butter (at 90°F) and use a knife or fork to cut the butter finely into the flour mixture.

[] Separately, add the salt to a jug followed by water and sourdough. Mix well and add to the butter-flour mixture. Use a spurtle to beat ingredients together. Press the dough down into mixing bowl and cover the bowl.

[] Allow the dough to rise to double in volume. *This takes approximately 4 hours at 90°F, provided all ingredients and containers are at 90°F initially. Allow up to 6 hours if starting from cold. Initial dough volume at this stage, will be approximately 150 mL, which expands to at least 300mL.*

[] Prepare two pre-made panettone paper cases (*diameter 7cms; height 5cms; volume 192mL*) by inserting a long thin wooden skewer, *10-12 inches long*, from side to side close to the base into each paper case. This will allow each panettone to be cooled upside down, by suspending it on the skewer between two boxes or tables. *Note that hanging the panettone upside down to cool may not be necessary if the panettone contains only the above amount of butter and is well enough baked; it is a precaution generally used to prevent a very rich and delicate dough from collapsing as it cools.*



[] Pre-heat the oven for 1-2 hours before baking, with a pizza stone in place, at 450°F.

[] Add egg yolk, vanilla extract, and orange and lemon zests to the risen dough. Beat all together until well mixed, using a spurtle.

[] Soften the butter and beat into the dough, very well. *The dough by now should be golden and very stretchy.*

[] Add the honey and beat it evenly into the dough.

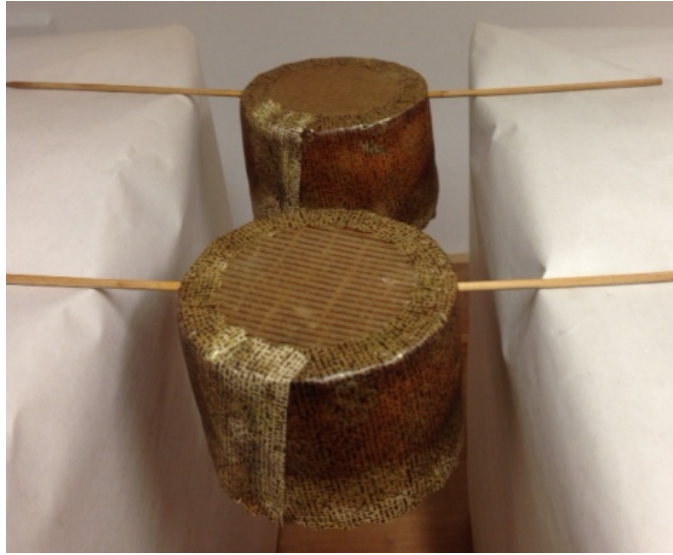
[] Add the raisins with orange juice and fold them into the dough until evenly incorporated.

[] On a wooden bench or pastry board, divide the dough into two equal pieces and round each using water-moistened hands and plastic dough scraper. Allow the dough to rest, covered, for 15 minutes.

[] Add a dough piece to each of the two panettone molds resting on a cookie sheet. Cover and allow to rise at 90°F for 2 hours. *Further expansion of the dough is minimal during this final rise.*



[] Bake at 325°F, 40 - 45 minutes, on the cookie sheet and on the pizza stone. Immediately after baking, gently invert each panettone and hang upside down to cool between the prepared boxes or tables. Remove the skewers when fully cooled. Wait at least 24 hours before serving so that the flavors can meld and the texture can mellow.



[] Store panettone in a closed container at cool room temperatures. To serve, peel away and completely remove the paper case. Cut from top to bottom and serve as a cake, in segments. Enjoy!

