

# The Best, Easiest Focaccia Bread Recipe

author: [Alexandra Stafford](#) total time: 18 hours 30 minutes yield: 2 loaves

Cold, refrigerated dough is the secret to making delicious focaccia! Allowing the dough to rest 18 to 24 hours (or for as long as 3 days) in the fridge will yield extra-pillowy and airy focaccia, though if you are pressed for time, you can make this start-to-finish in 3 hours. This 4-ingredient recipe requires only 5 minutes of hands-on time. Video guidance below!



Adapted from the focaccia recipe in *Bread Toast Crumbs*.

## A few notes:

**Plan ahead:** While you certainly could make this more quickly, it turns out especially well if you mix the dough the day before you plan on baking it. The second rise, too, takes 2 to 4 hours.

**If you are short on time and need to make the focaccia tonight:** Let the mixed dough rise at room temperature until doubled, about 1.5 to 2 hours. Then proceed with the recipe, knowing the second rise will only take about 30 minutes.

You can use various pans to make this focaccia such as: **two 9-inch Pyrex pie plates**. (Use butter + oil to prevent sticking.) One 9×13-inch pan, such as **this USA pan** – do not split the dough in half, if you use this option, which will create a thicker focaccia. A **13×18-inch rimmed sheet pan** – this creates a thinner focaccia, which is great for **slab sandwiches**.

As always, for best results, use a **digital scale** to measure the flour and water.

I love **SAF instant yeast**. I buy it in bulk, transfer it to a **quart storage container**, and store it in my fridge for months. You can store it in the freezer also.

If you are using **active-dry yeast**, simply sprinkle the yeast over the lukewarm water and let it stand for 15 minutes or until it gets foamy; then proceed with the recipe.

**Flour:** You can use all-purpose or bread flour here with great results. If you live in a humid environment, I would suggest using bread flour. If you are in Canada or the UK, also consider using bread flour or consider holding back some of the water. Reference the video for how the texture of the bread should look; then add water back as needed.

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups (512 g) all-purpose flour or bread flour, see notes above
- 2 teaspoons (10 g) kosher salt

- 2 teaspoons (8 g) instant yeast, see notes above if using active dry
- 2 cups (455 g) lukewarm water, made by combining 1/2 cup boiling water with 1 1/2 cups cold water
- butter for greasing
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- flaky sea salt, such as Maldon
- 1 to 2 teaspoons whole rosemary leaves, optional

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Make the dough:** In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and instant yeast. Add the water. Using a rubber spatula, mix until the liquid is absorbed and the ingredients form a sticky dough ball. Rub the surface of the dough lightly with olive oil. Cover the bowl with a damp tea towel, cloth bowl cover, or plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator immediately for at least 12 hours or for as long as three days. (See notes above if you need to skip the overnight rise for time purposes.) **NOTE: It is important the dough really be slicked with olive oil especially if you are using a cloth bowl cover or tea towel as opposed to plastic wrap or a hard lid. If you are using a tea towel, consider securing it with a rubber band to make a more airtight cover. If you do not slick the dough with enough oil, you risk the dough drying out and forming a crust over the top layer.**
2. Line two 8- or 9-inch pie plates or a 9×13-inch pan (see notes above) with parchment paper or grease with butter or coat with nonstick cooking spray.  
*(Note: This greasing step may seem excessive, but with some pans, it is imperative to do so to prevent sticking. With my USA pans, I can get away with olive oil alone; with my glass baking dishes, butter is a must.)*
3. Pour a tablespoon of oil into the center of each pan or 2 tablespoons of oil if using the 9×13-inch pan. Using two forks, deflate the dough by releasing it from the sides of the bowl and pulling it toward the center. Rotate the bowl in quarter turns as you deflate, turning the mass into a rough ball. Use the forks to split the dough into two equal pieces (or do not split if using the 9×13-inch pan). Place one piece into one of the prepared pans. Roll the dough ball in the oil to coat it all over, forming a rough ball. Repeat with the remaining piece. Let the dough balls rest for 3 to 4 hours depending on the temperature of your kitchen (Note: no need to cover for this room temperature rise).
4. Set a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat it to 425°F. If using the rosemary, sprinkle it over the dough. Pour a tablespoon of oil over each round of dough (or two tablespoons if using a 9×13-inch

pan). Rub your hands lightly in the oil to coat, then, using all of your fingers, press straight down to create deep dimples. If necessary, gently stretch the dough as you dimple to allow the dough to fill the pan. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt all over.

5. Transfer the pans or pan to the oven and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the underside is golden and crisp. Remove the pans or pan from the oven and transfer the focaccia to a cooling rack. Let it cool for 10 minutes before cutting and serving; let it cool completely if you are halving it with the intention of making a sandwich.

6. **To store the focaccia:** When it has completely cooled, transfer it to an airtight bag or vessel and store it at room temperature for up to 3 days. Otherwise, freeze it for up to 3 months. Always reheat it on subsequent days to revive its crust: 350°F for 15 minutes.

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