

What To Do With Your Leftovers

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Your bread never needs to go to waste. Here are a few ideas, along with recipes, you can use to ensure you enjoy every crumb of your bread

Make croutons!

This is an easy go-to method for using bread that is starting to go stale faster than you can eat it. This recipe is designed for “one loaf”, so scale the oil and seasonings accordingly. Just make sure your bread cubes are lightly coated in oil and you’ll be fine. Fresh bread can also be used for making croutons, but could take an extra minute or two in the oven.

Ingredients:

- 1 loaf of bread (about 12 ounce), cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 64g (1/4 C.) olive oil
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 4.3g (3/4 tsp.) sea salt (it’s a ‘healthy 3-finger pinch’ of salt)
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper (just eyeball it)

Equipment:

- Large bowl
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 375F. Place a sheet of parchment paper in a baking sheet and set aside.
2. In a large bowl combine all of your ingredients (bread, olive oil, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, and pepper) and mix/stir until your bread is evenly coated in oil and seasoning*
3. Add the seasoned bread to your baking sheet and spread evenly so you don’t have pieces on top of each other.
4. Bake for 15-20 minutes, turning halfway through, or until golden brown. Allow to cool completely before storing (otherwise they will get soft and soggy) or use immediately once they are cool enough to eat.

***Pro-tip:** Place a smaller bowl on top of the bigger one to create a “dome”. Then, holding the two bowls firmly together, swirl everything around aggressively to quickly and evenly distribute/coat your ingredients

Discard Pancakes!

These are a super easy way to use up your discard and get a savory treat at the same time. Feel free to adjust the seasonings to fit your palate. **Note:** you can keep an extra container in the fridge just for discard. Once your container is getting full you can have a “sourdough discard day” and cook up several Discard Pancakes. Works best with fresh discard or refrigerated discard that was created within the last 2-weeks.

Ingredients:

- ~160g sourdough discard (roughly what your starter makes in discard every day)
- ¼ tsp. Garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. Chili powder
- ¼ tsp. Oregano
- ¼ tsp. Thyme
- Pinch of salt
- Black pepper to taste
- Olive Oil for the pan and to brush on the pancake

Equipment:

- Small bowl
- Spatula
- Small-medium skillet

Directions:

1. In a small bowl combine the discard and all seasonings.
2. Preheat a small skillet over medium-low heat with 1-2 Tbsp of olive oil
3. Add your discard mixture to the skillet and use your spatula to spread it out so you have a thin, even, pancake (¼ in. thick or less is ideal) and cook on medium-low until you just barely start to see bubbles form on top. Flip the discard pancake and continue to cook the other side until golden brown and crispy.
4. *Optional:* Drizzle additional olive oil onto the exposed side of your discard pancake so it can soak in while the second side is cooking. A pastry brush is helpful with this, but not necessary

5. Serve and enjoy immediately.

Bread Pudding!

Probably one of the greatest desserts to ever grace this sweet sweet earth. Bread pudding is a great way to use up extra bread. In essence, bread pudding is just cubes of bread soaked in a custard and then baked. In practice, it's pure heaven. Note: This recipe looks much more complicated than it is. It's a lot of soaking

Ingredients:

Spice Blend

- 1 cinnamon stick
- 15 whole cloves
- 15 black peppercorns
- 1 tsp. dry orange peel
- ½ oz. crystalized ginger
- 1 tsp. freshly ground nutmeg

Custard

- 5 C. half & half
- 3 Egg yolks
- 3 whole eggs
- ½ C. White sugar
- ½ C. Brown sugar
- 2 oz. Spiced rum (Kraken works well)

Bread

- 500-600g dry or stale bread*, cut into long sticks about the width and length of your thumb
- ½ - 1C. occlusions of some kind (I like dried cherries, but raisins, golden raisins, chocolate chunks, etc. will work too)

Sauce

- 113g (8 Tbsp., 1/2 cup, or 1 stick) butter, melted
- 200g (1 C.) sugar
- 1 large egg
- ½ C. Spiced rum

Equipment:

- Microwave safe vessel, medium
- Instant read food thermometer
- High speed blender
- Mesh strainer
- 9"x13" pan
- 2 large mixing bowls
- Plastic wrap
- Something heavy (water, lots of beans, a brick, etc)
- Medium saucepan
- Squeeze bottle, optional

Directions:

1. In a microwave safe vessel, combine the spice blend (see above) to 3 C. of the half and half and microwave until it hits 180 F (start with 3 min, then go in 30-second intervals until you hit 180F, which can take up to 5 min)
2. Cover and steep for 15 minutes.
 - a. If your bread is still not stale at this time, place the bread in an 11"x13" pan and dry it in the oven at the lowest setting for 30-minutes, starting right before you make the custard.
3. To make the custard, In blender, add your eggs (yolks and whole) and blend on the lowest setting until they begin to thicken up and get lighter in color. With the blender still running, *slowly* add your sugar and boost the blender to ¼ power. Once the sugar has fully dissolved slowly add the remaining 2C. of half & half.
4. Using a strainer to remove any solids, slowly add the spiced dairy mixture to your blender, followed by the rum. (congratulations, you've just finished your custard!)
5. Place the stale bread pieces in a large bowl along with your occlusions (½ C. dried cherries). Pour your custard over the dried bread. Cover with plastic wrap and press down to remove as much air as possible. Then place another bowl on top with something to weigh it down (water, lots of beans, a brick, etc.) so the bread is forced to be submerged. Let soak a minimum of 2 hours at room temperature or overnight (even up to 24hrs) in the fridge.
6. The next day, preheat your oven to 325F. Transfer all of the soaked bread mixture to an 11"x13" baking pan and bake, uncovered, for 45-min or until the internal temperature of an instant read thermometer reads 170F. Allow to cool in the pan for 5-10 minutes before serving (it will be HOT). You can also allow the bread pudding to cool entirely before serving. Leftovers can be kept in the fridge for up to 5-days.

Sauce (this can be made in advance or while the pudding is baking)

1. Melt the butter in a medium saucepan on low heat. Add the sugar and egg and whisk to blend well. Stirring constantly, cook over low heat until the mixture thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon. Remove from heat before whisking in the spiced rum (it's flammable so we're keeping it away from the flames), then return to the stove on low heat and whisk vigorously for an additional 1-2 minutes to cook off some of the alcohol.
2. Transfer to another bowl to cool slightly. Can be served warm or cool.
 - a. **Pro-tip:** Transfer this to a squeeze bottle for easier application on the food (squeeze bottles can be purchased at restaurant supply stores or Amazon. Super cheap)

Pro-tips:

- Placing bread in the fridge is one of the quickest ways to make it go stale. You can use this to your advantage and speed up the staling process by placing your bread, pre-cut, into a ziplock bag and storing it in the fridge for 3 days.
- You can quickly dry out fresh bread by baking it in on the lowest setting in your oven for 30-minutes
- Excess bread can be cut and stored in a freezer bag for several months, allowing you to slowly build up enough excess bread to make your bread pudding. Just make sure to cut it up *before* you freeze it or it will be remarkably difficult to cut later.

For *even more* ways you can use your leftovers, specifically the discard, check out the "How To Convert Recipes To Sourdough" bonus. Includes recipes for Sourdough Focaccia, and Light And Fluffy Sourdough Pancakes (two different ways)