

The Continental Bakery



*traditional, crusty, and hearth-baked
breads prepared fresh every day*

PAINS AU LEVAIN

Wild Yeast Starter Breads

Wild Yeast Sourdough (Pain de Campagne)

Our wild yeast sourdough is a true Birmingham original. Leavened with wild spores captured from the Red Mountain neighborhood in which it is produced, this loaf acquires its particular character from the local environment, much like regional wines reflect *terroir*. This wild yeast culture (*levain*) has been lovingly tended for over 25 years.

The baking process happens over a 48 hour period, in which the levain is built into a complex dough featuring a blend of whole wheat and white unbleached unbromated flours of the middle ages. It undergoes a long, cool rise and is finally baked directly on the floor of a stone hearth oven. This gorgeous loaf with the blistered and slashed crust, originally inspired by the breads of the famous Parisian baker, Lionel Poilane, is available in the traditional two kilo loaf of the French countryside, but we happily cut any whole loaf into halves or quarters on request.

White Wild Yeast Sourdough

Also made with a wild yeast starter, given a long slow cool rise and baked on a stone hearth. However, this bread is made without the addition of whole wheat flour.

Italian Ciabatta

This bread is made with an Italian style biga starter, and has an airy, open crumb with a delicate crackly crust.

FRENCH BREAD

This signature bread of the Continental Bakery has been one of our specialties since 1984. A bit more substantial than the modern Parisian baguette, it has a creamy, more flavorful crumb and a chewy crust. We use old world techniques like longer, cooler fermentation and hand shaping to preserve the color, depth of flavor, and aroma of our spring heritage wheat flour. Our French Bread is available in Baguette, Peasant Loaf, Boule, Sandwich Loaf, or Epi.

French Feta & Kalamata Olive Baguette

French feta cheese, fresh oregano, garlic, cracked black pepper and Kalamata olives rolled into our French bread baguette.

Tomato, Basil, and Brie Baguette

Triple cream Brie cheese, fresh tomatoes, garlic, and basil in a baguette.

Kalamata or Green Olive Boules

Kalamata or green olives folded into our French boule.

TRADITIONAL YEASTED BREADS

Butterflake Rolls

A traditional southern favorite, first introduced to us by Robert Pickens, a baker from the old Waite's Bakery. This yeast roll dough is also used to make our Hot Dog Buns, Hamburger Buns, and Hoagie Rolls.

Whole Wheat Sandwich

Our 100% whole wheat sandwich bread is hearty, substantial and makes a great piece of toast.

Old-fashioned White Sandwich

We use unbleached, unbromated flour, whole milk, and unsalted butter, for an updated version of this delicious classic.

SPECIALTY BREADS

Focaccia

Traditional Genoan flatbread, topped with extra virgin olive oil, fresh garlic and herbs. Most often you will see it in a round topped with either rosemary or tomato and pesto.

Irish Soda Bread

A traditional Irish bread that relies on soda for leavening rather than yeast, making it popular for those on a yeast free diet.

Jewish Style Sour Rye

A deli style rye, made with an onion & caraway natural starter.

Challah

Rabbi Scott's mother-in-law's recipe. Sweet, egg-rich, festive bread, originally baked by Jewish families to grace the Sabbath or holiday table.

Olive Sourdough

We pit imported black and green queen colossal olives and fold them into the white wild yeast sourdough. We love it paired with cheese and a bottle of dry red wine.

Pain aux Noix (Walnut Bread)

Walnut breads are traditional complements to cheeses and served to clear the palate for wine tasting. Ours includes both whole and ground roasted walnuts fully infusing the bread with a rich walnut flavor and a gorgeous violet hue. On some days, we add Gorgonzola for a special treat.

Pecan Raisin Bread

A levain based bread full of raisins and pecans. This bread feels Old World, fit for King Louis himself.

Spent Grain Breads

Spent grain is the mash left after the sugars have been removed from the grains during the beer brewing process. The result is a product with a higher fiber and protein content and lower sugar or carbohydrate content. All of our spent grains come from our friends at Good People Brewery. We use this spent grain in several varieties of our sandwich breads, pizza dough, hoagies, hamburger buns, and our spent grain crackers. The lamb sausage sandwich from Chez Lulu showcases our spent grain hoagie. We also sometimes make focaccia with this grain.

Wheatberry Sunflower Bread

Cracked kernels of wheat and sunflower seeds in a sourdough based bread.

Four Seeded Bread

Equal amounts of golden flax seeds, toasted sesame seeds, toasted sunflower seeds and poppy seeds are added to a natural levain to create a delicious sandwich loaf.

BREAD EDUCATION

What is a natural sourdough?

Our sourdough breads do not rely on commercial yeast for leavening. The leavening agent for the sourdough bread at Continental Bakery is a wild yeast "starter", created from the fermentation of grain (wheat) in water, much like the process used in wine and beer-making. Our starter was created and has been nurtured over decades.

This starter is actually used to raise the bread. This means that the starter (or sour) is not simply a flavoring agent, as in San Francisco type sourdoughs. As a result, our sourdoughs don't have the overwhelming sour tang of these breads. We prefer a bread in the French tradition, with a more subtle acidity and deeper range and complexity of flavors, allowing the true character of the grain to shine through.

True French breads.

The government of France dictates by law which breads may be called "French bread." Only 4 ingredients may be used to make French bread: flour, water, salt and yeast. True French bread cannot contain any sugar, fat, or other dough "enhancers" or conditioners. Our Wild Yeast Sourdoughs, Ciabatta, French Baguette, French Boule, French Peasant, Pan Bagna Buns and French Roll all satisfy these requirements and are therefore true French breads. They are therefore naturally fat free and vegan.

Caring for your artisanal sourdough bread.

Our Wheatberry Sunflower, Pecan Raisin, Pain aux Noix (walnut), 4-Seed, Rye and Wild Yeast Sourdoughs will remain fresh tasting for at least four days. This is because they do not suffer from the drying qualities of commercial yeast. They also benefit from the natural preserving qualities of the fermentation process. Our French Baguette, French Boule and French Roll stale more quickly, and so we recommend that you enjoy them the day you purchase them.

WE MAKE THESE BREADS FRESH EVERY DAY:

Wild Yeast Sourdough
White Sourdough
French
Whole Wheat Sandwich
White Sandwich
4-seeded Sandwich

*Other breads on our menu can be ordered with
48 hours notice as a minimum order of two.*

BREAKFAST PASTRIES

Croissants

We start with detrempe—a rich dough of flour, sugar, butter, milk, salt, and yeast—and beurrage—butter folded within the dough. We then roll and fold until there are over 80 layers of dough and butter. After allowing these layers to develop for at least 24, and up to 48 hours, they become the flakiest, most delicious buttery pastry this side of the Atlantic. Each croissant is made by hand. We fill them with the following variety of flavors: Almond, Apricot Pecan, Belgian Chocolate, Butter, Cinnamon Sugar, Ham & Jarlsberg Cheese, Raspberry with Cream Cheese, Strawberry with Cream Cheese, and Nutella.

Raspberry Almond Danish

Our Danish is made with our croissant dough, filled with almond frangipane and raspberry jam, and topped with a real vanilla glaze.

Scones

This Scottish quick bread is said to have taken its name from the Stone of Destiny (or Scone), the place where Scottish kings were once crowned. The original triangular-shaped scone was made with oats and griddle baked. Today's versions are more often flour-based and baked in the oven. All of our scones are oven baked, and most are flour-based, except our oat-based apple cinnamon. Flavors for our scones include: Apple Cinnamon; Cherry Almond; Lemon Poppyseed; Orange Cranberry; Ham, Swiss, and Scallion; and Ham, Bacon, and Jalapeño.

Muffins & Tea Loves

We pack these breads full of nuts, spices and fruits. Flavors are rotated to ensure perfect pairing with the current season. Varieties you can expect to find are Banana Nut, Date Nut (available as a tea loaf only), Cranberry Nut, Lemon Blueberry, Pumpkin Ginger, and Bran (available as a muffin only).

Bagels

Hand rolled bagels taste better. We also use the traditional method of kettle boiling rather than oven-steaming this low fat, chewy bread. Try them with our Cream Cheese and Olive spread, housemade jam, cream cheese, or butter.

Varieties of bagels include Everything, Cinnamon Raisin, Blueberry, Garlic, Plain, Poppyseed, Sea Salt, Sesame Seed, Wheat, and Sweet Potato.

Almond Biscotti

Biscotti is baked twice to make for the crunchiest treat—best for dipping in a delicious beverage. We make ours with our without Belgian chocolate.

Brioche

When Marie Antoinette made her famous cry about letting the peasants eat, she was referring to brioche. Our buttery pastry is rich enough for a queen and is made with or without Belgian chocolate.

Pain au Raisin (Custard Buns)

A traditional French breakfast pastry akin to the croissant. It's rolled with custard and raisins and baked til golden brown. *served on weekends only*

Baked French Breakfast Donut

This is a baked cake donut that, when pulled from the oven, is immediately dipped in butter and cinnamon sugar.

Biscuit au Fromage

Our delightfully fluffy biscuits are available in two sizes and made with either feta or cheddar cheese.

Cinnamon Roll

This pastry is made with our croissant dough and cinnamon sugar.

Morning Bun

The Morning Bun is our croissant dough rolled and baked with demerara sugar, cinnamon, and orange zest.

Old Fashioned

We use our butterflake roll dough to create this sticky, sweet cinnamon treat.

PIES AND TARTES

Baked with a delicious, flaky handmade butter crust and seasonal fillings. Ask us about our current selection.

CAKES AND CUPCAKES

Our Carrot Cake with cream cheese icing is a long-time favorite, as is our Belgian Chocolate Almond Torte. But ask about our current selection of cakes to see what's new.

COOKIES AND SPECIALITY DESSERTS

We offer seasonally decorated shortbread, chocolate dipped, and thumbprints, as well as chocolate chip cookies, truffles, and brownies all made with Belgian chocolate. Other favorites include the Oatmeal Raisin Cookie, Swedish Gingersnap, French Love, and French Macaron, with seasonally unique flavors and fillings.

Ask for our current selection of desserts—we are always baking us something new and delicious!