



SOURDOUGH:

--- Its History and Recipes

Sourdough is a name long synonymous with Alaska. To some it has long been a descriptive term for Alaska's pioneer men of the bush. This nickname came to be associated in the early days of the Territory due to the continual use the miners and trappers made of the Sourdough Pot in cooking. In recent years the Sourdough Pot has nearly passed from the picture as age takes its toll on the hardy old timers but the Pot is still to be found in a few cabins and even in modern Alaska kitchens one may find a modern version of the pot tucked back in the refrigerator.

Sourdough was used extensively in the "Golden" age of the Territory because it was functional. It could be frozen, the sponge could be made into a ball and placed in the flour sack for portage to camp or as with this starter it could be dried and revived.

In the early days the Sourdoughs had a pot usually like a firkin and made from a section of birch log. Those pots were kept through many years and in time became encrusted with age and use. Along the way they acquired histories and pedigrees. To this day it is an Alaska housewife's pride to

say that her Sourdough starter came over from the Forty Mile Stampede in the early 1900s or from the Klondike at Dawson in the late 1890s. Therefore it is with pride that we point out that this Sourdough starter has a pedigree and is not one of the ordinary mongrel varieties. It was started some fifty years ago by an old timer on the famed and beautiful Kenai Peninsula. By the time it came to us it had passed through the hands of half dozen people and ultimately was given to us by another old timer who, as a boy, had worked along the Yukon and Koyukuk Rivers in the early days in the trading posts.

Sourdough --- Its Use

Sourdough is most usually used for pancakes. However, it may be used for waffles, raised bread, rolls or biscuits. It may be used in the convenience of your kitchen or prepared and used by the camper and woodsmen on the trail or in your vacation cabin. The texture of the bread, rolls or biscuits made from Sourdough is somewhat heavier in texture than other types of bread but it will stay fresh longer and has a taste all of its own as do the pancakes that are highly prized.

A Sourdough pot may be kept going for years even with lack of attention. It may be revived, as in this case, with nothing more than a spoonful or two of flour, a bit of water and warmth. However, when not in use it should be kept cool and to keep it from getting too sour it should be used at least once a week. Keep 1 cup of starter in a half pint Mason type jar with the lid screwed on tight in the back of your refrigerator and it will last for years. Bring it out when you wish to use it and start your batch, refill jar immediately and return to the refrigerator after allowing to stand in warm room for two hours.

Sourdough - - - Variations

The dried starter in this package should be put in a pint mason jar with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of

warm water and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup flour. Set it where it will be warm and allow to work for 36 hours. (Preferably over 72° temperature.) At that time it will be sufficiently active to use.

Basic Recipe for Breads, Pancakes and Waffles

Put at least 1 cup of starter in a 2 quart pitcher, bowl or stone crock large enough to allow expansion of dough. Add 2 cups of lukewarm water and about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of all purpose flour. Mix well and then refill your pint jar with a cup or more of starter to keep for the next batch. Cover your bowl and set it in a warm place free from drafts overnight.

Pancakes

Next morning: Put your starter jar in refrigerator until the next time you want to use it. To the remaining batter add:

- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons fat
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Drop in the fat and whole eggs and mix thoroughly. Combine salt, sugar and soda in a cup and press lumps of soda into smooth dry mixture. Then fold into batter. This will cause a foaming rising action. Do not beat. Allow to stand for a few minutes and then fry on a hot greased griddle. If batter seems too thick to drop off spoon smoothly then add a small amount of milk. We recommend that dollar size pancakes be made by dropping tablespoon batches of dough on the griddle. They cook much better throughout and are more attractive. Never add more flour to your raised batter. The above amount should make between 25 and 30 dollar size pancakes and should comfortably serve 4 persons.

Waffles

Use the hotcake recipe but add two more tablespoons of oil to prevent sticking on the griddle. Either cooking oil or shortening may be used. It is not necessary to beat the eggs separately. This batter will make the finest, crisp waffles you have ever eaten.