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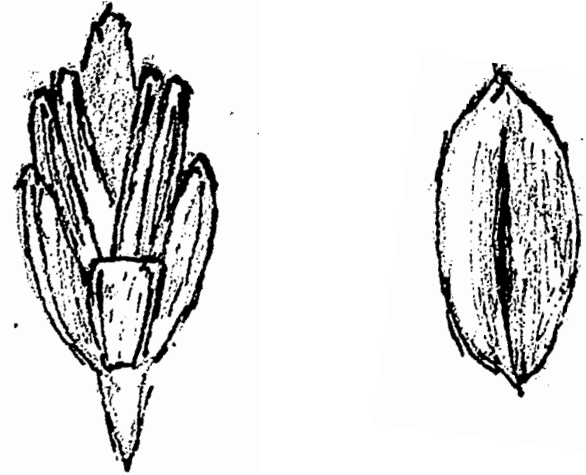
It's Gonna Make It

In the late 1990s, Joel Steigman took a road trip from his farm in Halifax, PA to a spelt farm in Ohio. He'd heard from a miller that he could get a higher price for spelt than wheat, so he brought back a tote bag full of seed and gave it a shot.

"Spelt was making cross-country trips back then," Steigman said. "You raise it here, then it's going across the country to get dehulled and back to get milled." Unlike wheat, spelt is a hulled grain, meaning the grains are enclosed in glumes, or husks, that require an extra step of processing to remove. (The hulls are commonly used in pillows and yoga cushions, especially in Germany.) Seeing a market opportunity, they bought a used

dehuller and started selling whole grains to other organic mills before purchasing a mill of their own.

The Steigman Family Farm became Small Valley Milling -- Steigman, his wife Elaine and son Eric grow spelt, emmer, einkorn, wheat, rye and oats, and sell their grains and flour across the region. And they're the largest organic spelt grower in the Mid-Atlantic, growing mainly the variety Maverick, along with smaller lots of Comet and Sungold spelts. At the bakery, we use mostly Maverick because we love its soft texture and particularly aromatic notes of honey and hay.



In April, the spelt crop at Small Valley is bright green, just an inch or so out of the ground -- they grow winter varieties, which are planted in the fall and harvested mid-Summer. "It's comin up," Steigman says. "It's gonna make it!"

The spelt seeds were sown late last year, the latest they've ever been planted at Small Valley. "We have a rotation, see," Steigman says. "Usually we take the corn off and get the spelt in the ground, but the corn wasn't dry." Field corn needs hot, sunny Indian summer days to dry out before harvest; last season was rainy and humid straight through the fall. The Steigmans couldn't plant the spelt until December 15th, about two

months later than normal. And even then, many acres of field were still water-logged; they only sowed just above half their normal acreage.

But fear not, spelt fans! We'll make sure to get our hands on a good bit of the harvest as soon as it's dehulled late summer -- we're forecasting triple last year's usage here at the bakery.

Speltlunking

The first beer recipe ever recorded is in the form of a hymn to honor Ninkasi, the patron goddess of brewing, written on a clay tablet by the Sumerians in 1800 BCE. The Sumerians had been brewing beer for a couple thousand years already, and back then, the brewers were mainly women. The Hymn to Ninkasi helped these lady homebrewers remember the steps.

Here's an excerpt, translated by Sumer scholar Miguel Civil (bappir is twice-baked barley bread):

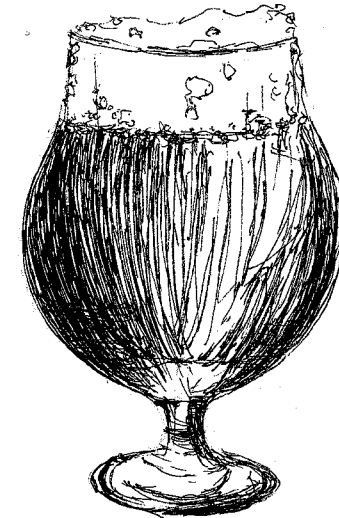
You are the one who handles the dough [and] with a big shovel,

Mixing in a pit, the bappir with sweet aromatics, ...

*You are the one who bakes the bappir in the big oven,
Puts in order the piles of hulled grains,*

*You are the one who waters the malt set on the ground,
The noble dogs keep away even the potentates, ...*

So what about those hulled grains? Almost certainly spelt, as it was widely cultivated in the region. This beer was drunk every day, and homebrewers traded it for other valuables.

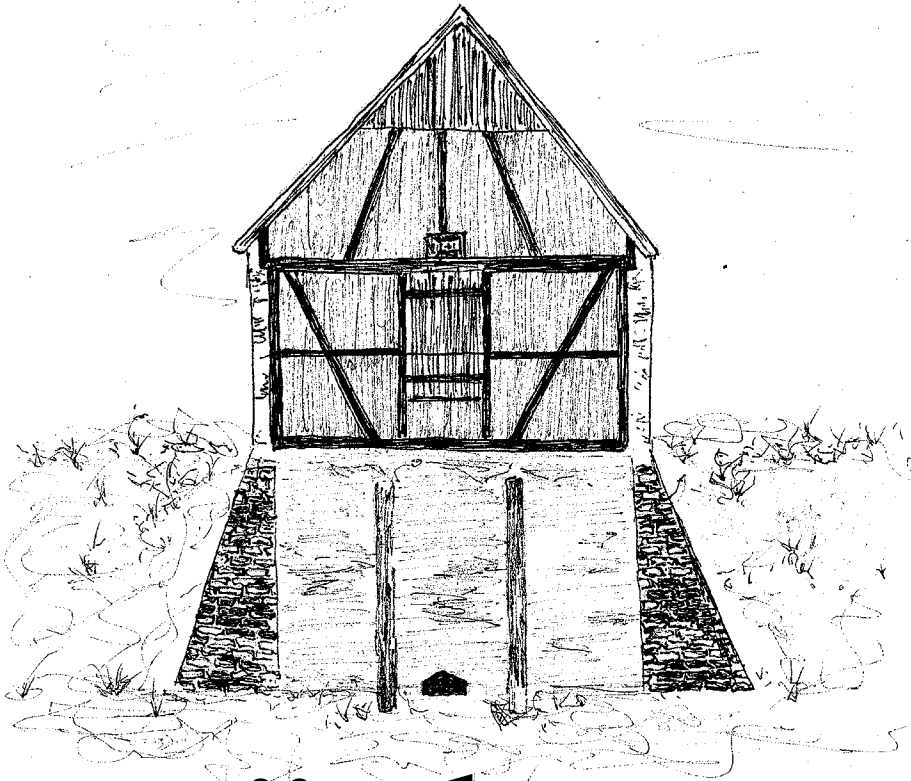


We talked to Cicerone and owner of Home Brewed Events, Meredith Williams to learn how brewers are using spelt these days. She uses it as an adjunct because of its high protein content. “Protein adds thicker body and greater head retention to beer,” says Williams.

Until wheat commandeered basically every grain, spelt was used in French and Belgian brewing regions to make farmhouse ales like saisons. Some brewers still do it the traditional way; Williams developed three saisons and a hazy NEIPA that use spelt to add rich body and luxurious foam. Keep your eye on the events calendar at Liberty

Kitchen - opening down the street from the bakery soon - to sign up for one of her brewing classes.

If you'd rather drink than brew, Tired Hands is your best bet. They've always got one or two speltful beers on tap. We like their Shambolic, a saison brewed with malted spelt, fermented in an oak foudre (large cask) and dry hopped with Simcoe and Nelson hops. The honey, grassy notes of spelt and sweet straw malts balance the sharp, herbaceous hops - it's like four seasons on a hay field in a glass.



Grünkern

Katherine Rapin

When I called up Valentin Bay, head chef at Brauhaus Schmitz, to ask about grünkern, I got deep nostalgia – he hadn't cooked the grain in 16 years.

Grünkern - green kernel - is spelt that's been harvested unripe and then 'parched' or dried over a fire. (The process is similar to making freekeh - durum wheat harvested green and sun-dried, popular in Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and North African cuisines.) It's produced mainly in Germany, commonly eaten in soups or milled and cooked into a thick porridge. "The flavor is kind of grassy," Bay says, "more floral."

The spelt parching technique originated in southern Germany, where Bay's father was raised. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Altheim, a small town in Baden-Württemberg, produced the most grünkern in the country.

If you visit Altheim, the 'Metropolis of Grünkern' today, you can tour the mini barn-like structures built into the hillside on the outskirts of town. The freshly harvested green spelt was dried in these 'darrens' until the 1960s, when the process was industrialized. Workers spread the grain on perforated baffle plates and roasted it for several hours over a fire built into a cavity in the floor of the building. They constantly turned the grain with shovels to prevent burning.

Mary-Howell Martens, who runs Lakeview Organic Grain with her husband, Klass, and their son, Peter, in upstate New York, describes this old-world process as quaint. Every other season at the farm, they harvest the spelt in the milk stage, about three weeks

before it's fully mature, and use their soybean roaster to parch the grain.

"We're making 10-15 tons," Martens says, "Quaint is not something we have time for."

The green spelt gets roasted immediately. "If we don't roast the spelt within an hour of harvest, it will start to rot," Martens says. After they char the hull, they let it steep, hot and smoky so the flavor permeates the green grain. Then it gets dried, dehulled and sent in bags to local distributors -- Regional Access and Green Market Grains. (They label the product as freekeh, a more widely recognized term.)

Lakeview Organic Grain's grünkern will be available late this summer. As soon as Chef Val gets his hands on a bag, he'll make the dish he learned from his grandmother: a comforting casserole of grünkern porridge atop sliced tomatoes, baked with a layer of emmental cheese on top. Growing up, his family enjoyed the casserole as a main course with a salad on the side. The first time Bay found the dish on a restaurant menu, it was served in a ramekin as a side with a steak. It's delicious either way, especially with a crisp Pilsner or an off-dry Riesling.

Chef Val and I made his grandmother's dish with grünkern he imported from Germany. If you can't hold out for Lakeview Organic's, you can use freekeh (available at Middle Eastern markets).

VALENTIN BAY

Preparing grünkern porridge is similar to making risotto or polenta, but since the grain is harvested green and ground fine, it will cook much faster.

Makes 4-6 servings

You'll Need:

370 g Grünkern (or freekeh)
 1 Small shallot, sliced
 2 Cloves garlic, sliced
 1 Bay leaf
 60 g Butter, divided
 1 Liter vegetable stock, warm

Mill (or grind in a vitamix) gruenkern to the coarseness of semolina. If using a vitamix, you may have to sift and then throw the coarsest bits back in the grinder. Bundle the shallot, garlic and bay leaf in cheesecloth to make a sachet.

Preheat oven to 350F.

In a large pot over medium high heat, toast the ground grünkern with half the butter until lightly toasted and fragrant, about 5 minutes. Tie your sachet to the handle of the pot and let it hang just above the grain. While whisking, add a third of the warm stock and whisk



Salt and pepper to taste
 2 Medium tomatoes
 100 g Emmental (or another Alpine cheese like gruyere), grated

constantly until the liquid is absorbed, two to three minutes. Repeat twice with remaining broth. Remove sachet. The porridge should be thick, the grünkern soft with a slight chew. Add remaining butter, plus salt and pepper to taste.

Cut tomatoes into ¼" slices and arrange in a single layer on the bottom of a casserole dish, or place in six ramekins, one slice per. Top with porridge, spreading with a spatula to form an even ½" layer. Sprinkle grated cheese on top and bake for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown.

Spelt Training Wheels

Alex Bois

I feel like I owe Spelt a serious debt. When I was learning to bake, struggling to produce edible results with whatever local flours I could find, spelt was always there to console me and foster my shattered confidence. Where my whole wheat experiments were turning out dense, gummy and unpleasantly granular, spelt always came out soft and fluffy. At the time, I didn't really understand why, I just knew that spelt felt easy and familiar, and with a fresh and grassy flavor, played nicely with all the other weird ingredients I subjected it to.

Since we started stone-milling our flour in 2018, we've been learning how to approach each grain differently to yield flour that best suits our needs. During our Grain Share development, we had a

revelation with emmer, which must be milled slowly and with millstones cranked down as hard as they can be without grinding together, yielding a buttery flour with barely evident flecks of bran. Alter this process and you get a coarse, sandy flour, practically unusable for bread or pastry. Other hard wheats, good for bread, like a slightly less extreme version of this treatment. We came to understand that rye should be milled relatively coarse, with little millstone pressure, to prevent an excess of enzymatic activity that produces poor structure in 100% rye breads.

With spelt, all we have to do is cast an adoring eye in its direction and it bursts into a soft and creamy flour, no matter the mill or the parameters. Perhaps this

ease of milling, a result of its soft grain kernel, can explain my initial success baking with spelt, since there doesn't seem to be any 'bad' spelt flour out there! When hydrated, spelt bran absorbs water quickly, softening enough to not disturb the texture of whatever we use it for, unlike the brans of most other grains, which benefit from or even require an extended soak for good results. Used for pastry, it's soft and tender without developing too much chew, lending itself to crisp cookies, biscuits and scones. Unlike most whole grain flours, which must 'drink' large amounts of water to avoid a dry and crumbly final product, spelt is not much more thirsty than your typical all-purpose white flour, making it a good 1:1 substitute in recipes.

Perhaps most crucially for us at the bakery, doughs made from spelt exhibit a great balance between extensibility, the ability of the dough to stretch without resistance, and elasticity (or "strength"), the tendency to resist deformation or snap back when stretched. Since many wheats grown locally err on the side of high elasticity, the savvy bread baker may use a process called an 'autolyse' on dough to re-introduce extensibility and yield a loaf that will bloom beautifully in the oven. However, in a high volume bakery setting, an autolyse takes up time and space, and can be difficult to fit into the flow of production. At Lost Bread, we often use a good dose of spelt flour instead of relying on an autolyse to

maintain extensibility in our doughs. As an added bonus, its beautifully nuanced flavor is always a welcome addition, especially if you enjoy the aroma of a springtime meadow awash in a flood of wildflower honey!

We use spelt everywhere-- it's 13% of the flour in our table & seedy breads, 20% in our banh mi rolls and the pizza doughs we provide to other restaurants, 30% in our focaccias, and 100% in most of the Grain Share products, many of which will find their way into our regular rotation. Today, I am here to tell you that you should use it too! You can grab spelt flour from us, and it'll also be your safest bet in terms of whole grain flour from the shady mill down the street. I'm still baking with spelt training wheels, and I don't plan on ever taking them off.

CHEESY CRACKERS

Lex Miller

Makes 25 8X2" crackers

You'll Need:

155 g. Spelt flour

20 g. Sugar

7 g. Salt

1 g. Black pepper

25 g. Sharp cheddar,
finely grated

65 g. Butter, cold,

cut into small cubes

73 g. Cream

Cut butter into small cubes and return to the fridge to keep it cold. Combine spelt, sugar, salt, and black pepper, and finely grated cheese in a mixing bowl. Add the cold butter, mixing with the paddle attachment on medium/low speed until the butter is evenly distributed and only tiny pieces remain. Drizzle in the cream and mix until large clumps form.

Turn the dough onto a table and knead once or twice to form one mass. With a lightly floured surface, roll the dough as thin as humanly possible. Dock (prick) the dough with a fork and cut into whatever shapes you'd like.

Bake on a parchment lined sheet pan, keeping the crackers fairly close together (don't worry they won't spread!). Bake at 375* for about 10 minutes, until your kitchen smells like cheesy heaven and the crackers are a deep golden. No shame if you can't let

them cool completely before demolishing the first batch.

SPELT PASTA

Patrick Shafer

Our bakery produces a lot of by-products - bran, whey, starter, breadcrumbs, etc. It's painful to see good ingredients wasted, so we're always looking for ways to put them to use. The results of this practice often create products more interesting than a standard item, and the challenge of inventiveness makes us better bakers. Rejuvelac - the by-product of fermenting sprouted grain - is a personal favorite. It's like grain kombucha - ferment-y, fizzy, yeasty, highly enzymatic, and can taste like cucumbers, peaches, or cherries, depending on the grain it's made with. We use rye rejuvelac in our pumpernickel, and the depth of flavor it adds is astounding.

For spelt month, I'm experimenting with fermented spelt pasta, using spelt rejuvelac as the liquid component and yeast starter. After kneading the dough, the resting period doubles as a fermentation period, so the resulting pasta is sour, flavorful, and should be easier to digest. This accompanying simple recipe should highlight these qualities. Enjoy.

Makes 3-4 servings

You'll Need:

220 g Fermented Pasta	375 g(ish) Whole Milk
1 head Broccoli, cut into florets	30 g Farro Miso
90 g Mushrooms, sliced	Zest of 1 lemon
1 Shallot, finely-chopped	Olive oil
3 Garlic cloves, minced	Salt
30 g Butter	Pepper
15 g Spelt flour	Thyme

Preheat oven to 400F.

Toss broccoli, mushrooms, shallot, and garlic with oil and salt, arrange on baking sheet, and roast for 15-20 minutes, or until browned and crisp.

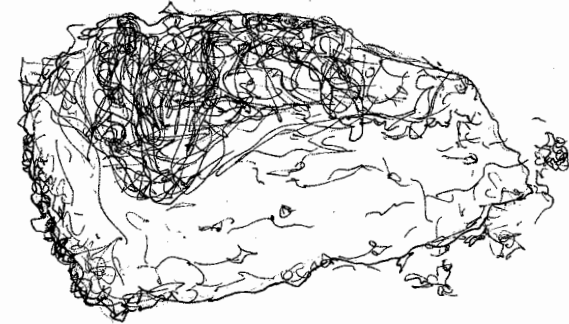
While roasting veggies, cook pasta in large pot of salted water, 6-7 minutes or until al dente. Drain and reserve 1 cup of pasta water.

Melt butter in pan. Add flour and whisk until dissolved, then continue cooking

until the mixture is browned and smells nutty, about 5 minutes. Whisk in milk and miso, stirring continuously, and simmer until sauce thickens, about 3 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, lemon zest, and thyme.

Add cooked pasta to pan and use tongs to coat in sauce. Slowly stream in pasta water in 1/4c increments, stopping when the sauce coats pasta evenly.

Stir in vegetables, garnish with fresh herbs, and serve.



SPELT SCONES

Sam DeGennaro

Makes 8 scones

You'll Need:

500 g Spelt Flour	14 g Baking powder
70 g Sugar	7 g Baking soda
13 g Salt	290 g Cubed butter

+ 400 g Mix-ins of your choice

(My vote is always for hazelnut & cacao nib or candied ginger & blueberry, but you're the master of your own fate and I support your journey.)

Preheat your oven to 375F.

Whisk first five ingredients together in a medium bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk eggs, heavy cream and sour cream together until homogenous. Rub or cut the cubed butter into the dry mix as you would a pie crust. Conventional wisdom says that pea-size pieces of butter are best, but I've found that a bit larger than that yields a more tender texture.

Once the butter is evenly distributed, pour in wet ingredients and incorporate until the dough just barely comes together. Gently fold in mix-ins. In the end, you're looking for more of a shaggy collection of chunks than a pristine dough ball.

Turn out onto a floured surface and gently pat dough into an 11" round. Cut into 8 even scones and place on a parchment-lined sheet pan. Bake for 20-25 minutes.

EVERYTHING PRETZEL VERSION:

- Add 44g sesame seeds, 22 g fennel seeds, 11 g nigella, 22 g poppy seeds, 22 g caraway seeds, 22 g mustard seeds to dry mix
- Reduce heavy cream to 50 g and sour cream to 70 g, replace with 200 g dark, dank, spicy brown mustard of your choosing
- To "pretzelize" the scones, we highly recommend dipping them in a lye solution (300 g cold water, whisked with 12 g sodium hydroxide/food grade lye) for 15 seconds, coating them completely. If reenacting a scene from Fight Club isn't your thing, you can also whisk 40 grams baking soda into 500 grams of boiling water. Let the water cool, then dip for 15 seconds.

***Note:** If you're pretzelizing your scones, do not use parchment paper! You'll wind up with a papery mess that refuses to unstick. Use a silicone pan liner instead.

CHERRY PECAN COOKIES

Deb Bentzel

This cookie dough is a bit sticky thanks to the maple syrup, so fear not if your dough looks wetter than usual.

Makes 9 large cookies

You'll Need:

200 g Spelt flour
175 g Butter, room temp
1 Small egg, room temp
60 g Maple syrup
125 g Sugar

3 g Salt
1 g Baking soda
100 g Pecans, toasted
160 g Dried cherries

Preheat oven to 350F. Melt butter over low-medium heat in a small heavy-bottomed saucepan or skillet -- we recommend using a light-colored pan so you can tell when the butter starts to brown. Once the butter has melted, it will start to bubble. Stir occasionally. As the butter browns, you'll detect a sweet, nutty smell. Stir! Once it's deep caramel-colored and smells toasty, remove from heat. (It only takes a few seconds to go from browned butter to burned butter!) Set aside to cool.

Roughly chop pecans and dried cherries while the butter cools. Cream maple syrup, sugar and cool browned butter together in the bowl of an electric mixer (elbow grease and a whisk works, too) until pale in color and silky smooth.

Add the egg and mix on low speed until combined. Add flour, salt, and baking

soda and mix until thoroughly incorporated, pausing to scraping down the bowl as needed. Add in the pecans and cherries and combine.

Portion out cookies onto parchment-lined sheet pans using an ice cream scoop for large cookies (leave about 3 inches between each scoop), or a spoon for smaller cookies (leave 2 inches). We sprinkle the dough with Maldon sea salt before baking to make that brown butter pop.

Bake at 350F for 12-15 minutes for large cookies, 10-12 minutes for smaller cookies. Allow to rest 5-7 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack. Store cooled cookies in an airtight container.

Canción Asturiana

Allison Carafa

Canción Asturiana is a type of deepsong found in the Principality of Asturias in northern Spain, a land of mountains, grazing land, and sea. Their songs, in which rhythm is not important and references are often hyperlocal, use simple lyrics to summon endurance and promote solidarity in challenging times. The Cantabrian Mountains, along the southern border of the region, is the home of miners and the deepsongs sung here express the harshness and beauty of their way of life. Here's the story of one, recorded by anthropologist and author, James W. Fernandez.

On the night of the opening of the first cask of cider for the season, a young miner and a retired miner found themselves conversing about the changing landscape of the mines at the local bar. The retired miner lamented the new machinery and methods being used and how it had turned mining into soft work. The young miner scoffed and spoke about the better working conditions, wages, and productivity. In light of the confidence of the young miner, the retired miner stepped back and broke into song:

Saint John creates cherries.

Saint Bartholmy the spelt wheat.

Long live Saint Bartholmy!

Cherries are stone and water.

The song brought tears to the eyes of all the retired miners, and respect to the face of the young miner. They all repeated the song as a group.

As Fernandez explains in a chapter of the book, *Folklore in the Modern World* (Mouton, 1978), the retired miner associated the young miner with a cherry, “fat and ‘sweetened’ by high wages...but still just water and stone.” The old miners, on the other hand, were like spelt wheat -- tough, spiny, and able to weather cold and harsh conditions.

Spelt was, until recently, the largest cereal crop of their mountainous region. In the year-round rain, mist and sleet, the grain could hold its own. The miners' tears weren't just of nostalgia for days in the mine, but also for the crop that had fallen out of production, replaced by imported (and less hardy) wheat flour.

If it weren't for farmers like the Steigmans sowing hardy fields of spelts, we'd be left mourning with the miners.

Edited by Katherine Rapin, Cover Art by Kat Freeman

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