

BREAD MAKING

**KING ARTHUR FLOUR
ARTISAN BAKING AT HOME**
\$495 for a four-day class;
kingarthurfLOUR.com



NORWICH, VT



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If you ever start your day thinking about bread, you'll feel right at home at King Arthur Flour's artisan baking class. When I join 13 other students at the company's famous Vermont-based school, our instructor kicks things off with a pop quiz: Describe the perfect baguette. We all have similar answers. The crust should be crisp and nicely browned (but not so crunchy that it roughs up the roof of your mouth); the inside should be soft and airy with plenty of holes. I'm already craving bread and we haven't even scooped a cup of flour yet. I scan the recipe to gauge just how long I'll have to wait until our baguettes are ready to eat. The news is grim—four hours. The first lesson in baking school? Patience. If you want to make great bread, you have to be willing to wait for it.

The curriculum for this four-day course includes the kinds of bread I never thought I'd be able to make

myself: Sicilian focaccia, sourdough boules, even croissants. Some of these doughs need to rest and rise—often more than once—so we tackle a couple of recipes simultaneously. As our kneaded baguette dough rises beneath our workstations, we start laminating dough for our croissants, repeatedly rolling and folding in butter to create a flaky pastry. After the croissant dough (55 layers in all!) goes into the refrigerator to chill, we turn our attention back to the baguettes. They need to be meticulously shaped and slashed—I cut mine into an *épi de blé*, which resembles a sheaf of wheat.

Near the end of the day, our baguettes emerge from the oven and our instructor cuts them up, scattering pieces for us to try. I snatch the biggest slice I can find, slather it with warm salted butter and take a huge bite. Does it live up to the perfect baguette we described earlier? You bet.



Our stations are stocked with tools and ingredients.



Sourdough boules get slashed before baking.



The pastries look almost professional!

IF YOU GO: You can take the train to nearby White River Junction, or fly into Burlington (a 90-minute drive to Norwich). The class runs several days, so it's best to stay nearby. The Hanover Inn Dartmouth, a historic 108-room New Hampshire hotel, is just a five-minute drive from the school (from \$189 per night; hanoverinn.com).