

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. Hold on a second. Before you pour that extra sourdough starter down the drain, have a listen to today's episode. I'm going to share my top five ways to put that discard starter to good use and I'll also share how having a sourdough starter actually helps me to stay on track with my menu planning, believe it or not. So here we go. I'm your host Jill Winger, and this is the podcast for people who are disenchanted with conformity. If you like to swim upstream while the rest of the herd rides the river of least resistance or you're drawn to growing, shepherding, nurturing, producing, or crafting, rather than just consuming, well, you're probably in the right place. This podcast is for people who are old fashioned on purpose and choose to truly live, not merely exist. If you're a trailblazer, a Maverick, a homesteader, a modern pioneer, or a backyard farmer, you have found your tribe.

Speaker 1 ([01:12](#)):

All right, we've got to start off by talking I think first about why you might have sourdough discard in the first place. Because I have taught workshops on sourdough in the past and I literally have people in the audience look at me with this horrified expression when I mentioned pouring sourdough starter down the drain or you know how having extra starter that we don't know what to do with, they're like, why would you waste it? Why is there leftover starter? So I want to explain how this phenomenon can occur. And just so you know, if you're wanting to start your own starter, I have a whole podcast episode on that very topic, so I'm not going to dive into that today, but we do have that out there. So go check it out. It contains all the instructions you need. All right, so the rhythm of a sourdough starter is that you're going to generally feed it every day unless it's in the fridge, hibernating.

Speaker 1 ([02:15](#)):

And then you don't have to. But if it's out on your counter and you're using it on a fairly regular basis, you're gonna feed it about every 24 hours. Now some of the time you're going to be using it in your bread recipes and that's great, but there are other times, certain days that are a little bit busy where you just need to feed it to keep it alive. Kind of like children: gotta feed it to keep it alive. But you're not necessarily going to use it to bake a loaf of bread. Now the problem is if you continue to feed your starter, it will eventually overtake your kitchen, especially if we're feeding it on a one to one to one ratio, which is what I recommend. Now when I say one to one to one, what I'm referring to is that we want to feed our starter.

Speaker 1 ([03:09](#)):

With these measurements, we're going to take whatever amount of starter we have in weight and we're going to feed it an equal amount of flour in, in that same weight, and then an equal amount of water in that same weight. So if we have eight ounces of sourdough starter in the jar, we're going to feed it eight ounces of flour and eight ounces of water. And that's going to keep it happy. Now the problem is, is if you do that every day, it's going to grow exponentially fast and pretty soon you're going to have, you know, 16 ounces of starter that needs to be fed, 16 ounces of flour in 16 ounces of water. And if you're not baking with it every single day, it's going to become a monster very quickly. So, you may need to pour off some of your starter to get it down to let's say that eight ounce Mark or that 12 ounce Mark before you feed it.

Speaker 1 ([04:07](#)):

So you're not only just using tons of flour, but then you're also not having to use a five gallon bucket to store your starter. So that's why a discard process or the discard part of our feeding routine becomes important. Another reason it may be important is that sourdough starter can either be active or inactive. And when I say active, what I'm referring to as a starter that is growing is growing up the sides of the jar. It has lots of bubbles. It's expanding rapidly. Usually between two to three hours after you feed it, maybe even sooner. And you can watch it. And if you see your starter growing not too long after it's been fed, you know it's very active and it's also very much capable of helping your bread dough to rise without the addition of commercial dry yeast. Now that's what we all want.

Speaker 1 ([05:08](#)):

That's the ideal sourdough dream. But not all starters are that happy and that active all the time. So what do you do when you're trying to maybe awaken a dormant starter or you're trying to get a starter happy again and you're going to have a few days or maybe even a week, period of time when it's not super active and not suited for bread baking. And it's, that's what I would call a more inactive starter. It's still alive. It's not moldy, it's still healthy. But when you feed it, it doesn't really have a whole lot of bubble action. So that is another instance where I want to be able to use up some starter, but I know I can't use it to bake bread. So what do I do with it? And that is where some of the ideas in today's episode are going to come in handy because just because your starter isn't super active doesn't mean it can't be put to good use.

Speaker 1 ([06:06](#)):

So let me give you an example here so you can kind of visualize this process. Our sourdough starter, we have it on the counter right now. We've been feeding it every day. I will admit there was a couple of days there that it may not have gotten fed right at the 24 hour mark. So when I pulled it or I pulled it off the counter last night, I noticed that I had about two or three cups of starter, but it was not active enough to bake a loaf bread. And I know I want to bake bread either tonight or tomorrow, so I need it to get active again. So I knew I wanted to feed it to kind of be like, Hey buddy, wake up. Now, it's not going to kill it if you miss a feeding, but I don't recommend it. Okay. Don't do what I do. Anyway.

Speaker 1 ([06:50](#)):

So I needed to be able to get some of the starter out of the jar because there was about three cups of starter in there. And if I'm going to feed that equal weights of flour and water, like Holy moly, all of a sudden I have a whole lot of starter. I don't want that much. So I knew I needed to get some out of there so I could either pour it down the drain or I could use it. So I decided to make sourdough biscuits for supper. And so I found a recipe that used discard plus baking powder because then I knew I wouldn't be dependent on the starter itself to give me any sort of rise because I knew it probably couldn't because it was a little bit weak and slightly hungry cause Jill neglected it. But anyway, so this biscuit recipe allowed me to pour some of the starter out of the jar.

Speaker 1 ([07:38](#)):

I added it to the biscuits and then it reduced that amount in the jar. So I was able to then feed it the appropriate amount of flour and water. And now it's bubbly this morning. And I can use it tonight to get some bread dough rising while we sleep. So that is why discard recipes, at least for me, are a really, really important part of sourdough. And honestly there are some weeks when I use far more discard type of recipes than I actually do sourdough bread recipes. So here, and let me just say there's tons of discard recipes out there. So all you need to do is just spend some time on Google. Some are better than

others. Um, but there's lots of ideas out there. Here are my five go-to's though. Hey friend, I'm interrupting this episode for just a sec so we can talk about seeds.

Speaker 1 ([08:30](#)):

I'm getting a ton of emails and messages right now from folks who are on the hunt for a reliable source of organic heirloom seeds. And I just have to say I have fallen head over heels for true leaf market lately. In the past I've gotten really frustrated when I try to find certain seeds locally because they're either sold out or they just don't have the varieties I want. But true leaf market like having a virtual seed rack in your home at your fingertips, they have a ton of varieties including all the vegetables, the herbs, the flowers, the microgreens and their seeds have a very high germination rate and bonus. They ship crazy fast. Head on over to [theprairiehomestead.com/seeds](http://theprairiehomestead.com/seeds) to have a look at their very user friendly website and add a packet or 12 maybe to your seed stash for this year. And now back to our episode.

Speaker 1 ([09:27](#)):

Okay, so my top five sourdough discard recipes. My GoTo's. Number one, pancakes or waffles. Now I have a recipe for these in my cookbook. If you have my cookbook, it's in the breakfast section. If not, there's lots of recipes online, but I love this one and we will do it sometimes three or four times a week because it just takes the sourdough starter straight from the jar, like two cups worth. You stick it in a bowl. You don't have to add any additional flour, just a little sweetener and some eggs and some oil and salt and you are good to go. It's so easy that Mesa, our nine year old will make it, all by herself and they're good. They're not overly tangy, although it depends a little bit on your starter, but the kids love them and it's just so simple.

Speaker 1 ([10:13](#)):

And the same batter can be used pretty much as is for either pancakes or waffles. So that's probably our number one discard trick. Now, another one that is in my cookbook but also can be found online are, and this is surprising, but bear with me here, sourdough brownies. I know it sounds weird, but sourdough and chocolate actually go really well together. It's a very happy combo and you can add it to a brownie recipe as some of the liquid and it gives a really nice little depth of flavor and it uses up the starter and it's brownies. Like you can't go wrong with it. So, try it, there's also some sourdough chocolate cakes that float around. So that's kind of a surprising way to sneak some sourdough into various baked goods and probably your family will be none the wiser. Number three, this is also a super popular option would be sourdough crackers.

Speaker 1 ([11:22](#)):

And when I first heard about making crackers from scratch years ago, I thought, I thought, what a hassle. Like, no way am I going to mess with that, but it's way easier than you think. And you can kinda just roll them out. I don't go crazy. They're not perfect. There are definitely rustic crackers, but you roll them out on some parchment paper, put some salt on top, you can stick them in the oven while something else is baking. And the kids love them and they're just so much better than all of the crackers at the store that had the junky ingredients and it uses your sourdough starter. So it's a win win. I have a recipe for those also in my cookbook. But again, there's tons of sourdough Cracker recipes online. You can add cheese, you can add Rosemary and herbs, all kinds of combinations.

Speaker 1 ([12:09](#)):

So that is definitely a favorite. I will warn you though, they go quickly. So I recommend a double batch or maybe even a triple batch just to make it worth your while. Okay. Number four. Now I'd say this with a little bit of a caveat, because I've been working on getting a good recipe for this. I've been trying a bunch of different recipes and I've had meh results. So, watch for hopefully in the near future my own iteration of this coming on the blog, but sourdough muffins, I like making muffins on weekend mornings just as a fun breakfast and I've been experimenting with how sourdough starter can go into a muffin, whether it's like a banana muffin or a poppy seed, to help use up some of that starter. I will say that some of the recipes I have tried from the all powerful Google have not been awesome.

Speaker 1 ([13:07](#)):

We've had some overflowing, we've had some doughy wet, icky muffins. We've had some dry muffins. I'm still working on finding a recipe that I like, that I know you will like. And once I figure that out, I will publish it on my blog. In the meantime, if you want to try the muffins, you can go try some Google searching and maybe let me know if you find a recipe like, but I know it's, I know the combination, I know the ratios are there, it's just tweaking it a little bit more. And the same goes for biscuits. Like I mentioned to you a minute ago, last night I tried some sourdough biscuits that were very similar to your standard baking powder biscuit, but instead of like a buttermilk, they used some sourdough starter. And I'm close on those. I'm close. The ones that I've made thus far are not as flaky as I would like them to be.

Speaker 1 ([14:01](#)):

I even had one of those bad, I should've taken a picture. They ran all over the oven. Like I cut the biscuits out, I put them on my baking sheet and it was like this biscuit, like melting mess. And that was not one I would share with you, but I'm still working on getting the ratios right on that. And then of course, I will share it with you guys on the blog and on social media once I have it figured out, just not there quite yet. Okay. And lastly, sourdough coffee cake, again, this is one that's lots of varieties on Google. I've been experimenting with this, but you can add some sourdough starter into your batter of coffee cake. The coffee cake is not necessarily a healthy breakfast, but it's a great brunch addition or you can bring it to a potluck or bring it to with friends,, or just have it with a ton of fruit and eggs and try to pass it off as suitable breakfast fare.

Speaker 1 ([14:57](#)):

But I've had some pretty decent results. I think the cinnamon and the sourdough are a good combination, so I'll let you know how that goes. But so far the kids have enjoyed the testing results on that one. But anyway, those are some of just my go-tos. There's lots more out there. I think there's probably a way to add sourdough discard to pretty much anything. And I promise I'd tell you how it helps me with my menu planning. But honestly when I know that I need to use up sourdough, it drives me to get more creative in figuring out how to use it in recipes. Like last night we probably wouldn't have had biscuits if I hadn't needed to use up the sourdough starter, but the, the starter prompted me to make the biscuits and then I fried up some eggs and put some avocado and we had these little egg avocado sandwiches, things for supper.

Speaker 1 ([15:50](#)):

And it just kind of helped me stay on track. And often when I know I'm going to have discard throughout the week, I can weave that into my menu planning, which if you've heard previous episodes, I'm not a rock star menu planner. I kind of do a day at a time. But the sourdough gives me ideas, so, Oh, well I have discard. So what if we do pancakes for breakfast or Oh, I have discard, let's make some brownies

and take those to our get together with friends. And it just gives me a way to stay on track a little bit with menu planning and keeps me inspired, looking for new ways to use it up. So if you've got a tried and true favorite sourdough discard recipe, shoot it my way. I'm always open. Love to try new ones. I'd love to check out what's working for you.

Speaker 1 ([16:40](#)):

So if you are falling in love with the idea of an old fashioned intentional kitchen full of nourishing food like sourdough and rich memories with your family, you will love my heritage kitchen handbook. I've packed this little E-guide full of my best tricks for cooking and eating like a farmer even if you live in this city and you can grab it for free over at [www.heritagekitchenhandbook.com](http://www.heritagekitchenhandbook.com) and that's it my friend if you enjoyed today. I would be honored if you'd leave a quick review over on your favorite podcast player. And thanks so much for listening. We'll catch up next time on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.