



THE BEGINNING OF BREAD MAKING

As we all know, Bread is the most widely consumed food in the world. Not only is it an important source of carbohydrates, it's also portable and compact, which helps to explain why it has been an integral part of our diet for thousands of years. Going back to the beginning of bread making, humans started baking bread at least 30,000 years ago.

Prehistoric man had already been making gruel from water and grains, so it was a small jump to starting cooking this mixture into a solid by cooking it on hot burning stones.

The earliest leavened or yeasted bread is said to have been found in ancient Egypt, it was also the place where the first sourdough made an appearance.

Apart from being an everyday food, bread was also an important component of religious celebrations, for instance, Ramses 3 who was the second Pharaoh of the Twentieth Dynasty in Ancient Egypt, offered 2 lakh loaves of bread to the gods annually. The importance of bread to greek and Egyptians was passed on to the romans who created organisations and guilds to ensure proper quality of bread production and development.

By 600 BC the Persians had invented a windmill system for milling grains, and Mexicans made the first stone-ground corn tortillas around 100 BC.

It wasn't until 1834, that the steel roller mill was invented in Switzerland. This was revolutionary in the world of bread baking as now Instead of crushing the grain, the roller system broke it open instead, thereby making it easier to separate the endosperm, germ and bran.

The addition of chemicals came into play in the 20th century. Bread became whiter, softer and lasted much longer. The flour was heavily processed but the government enforced the adding back of minerals and vitamins.

However, with time, bakers realised the potential of natural flavours and started creating breads that had short shelf life but delivered a more profound taste and texture and that's how now we see so many bakers getting "back to their roots" and producing artisan, rustic, healthier breads without chemicals or additives.