FOOD & CULINARY

Paul Hollywood Focaccia Bread Recipe

PUBLISHED
November 25, 2026

REFERENCE
#1795583814947619

Introduction: The Art of the Perfect Focaccia

There is something deeply satisfying about pulling a golden, aromatic tray of focaccia from the oven. The crisp, salty crust gives way to a soft, airy crumb, studded with fragrant rosemary and glistening with olive oil. Few breads capture the heart of Italian home cooking quite like focaccia, and when it comes to mastering the recipe, few names carry as much weight as **Paul Hollywood**. The celebrated British baker and *Great British Bake Off* judge is known for his precise techniques and no-nonsense approach to bread making. His focaccia recipe is no exception: it is straightforward, reliable, and yields a loaf that rivals those found in the best bakeries. Whether you are a seasoned home baker or a complete beginner, this **Paul Hollywood focaccia bread recipe**is designed to guide you every step of the way, ensuring a result that is both beautiful and delicious.

In this article, we will explore the ins and outs of this classic recipe, from the ingredients and equipment to the method and troubleshooting. We will also dive into the history of focaccia, the role of hydration, and how to achieve that signature open crumb. By the end, you will have all the knowledge you need to bake focaccia with confidence, and you will understand why this **Paul Hollywood focaccia bread recipe**has become a firm favourite among home bakers worldwide.

What Makes Paul Hollywood's Focaccia Special?

Paul Hollywood's approach to bread is rooted in simplicity and technique. He does not rely on complicated starters or obscure ingredients; instead, he focuses on getting the basics right. His **focaccia bread recipe**uses a high hydration dough, which is key to achieving the soft, airy texture that focaccia is known for. The dough is wetter than a standard bread dough, making it slightly trickier to handle, but Hollywood's step-by-step method makes it accessible. He emphasises the importance of kneading, proper rising times, and the crucial dimpling technique that gives focaccia its characteristic dips, perfect for holding olive oil and salt.

Another hallmark of Hollywood's recipe is the generous use of extra virgin olive oil, both in the dough and drizzled on top. This not only enriches the flavour but also helps create a crispy, golden crust. The recipe typically calls for strong white bread flour, which provides the necessary gluten structure to support the high hydration. The result is a focaccia that is light, chewy, and full of flavour—exactly what you would expect from a master baker.

Ingredients for Paul Hollywood Focaccia Bread

Before you begin, assemble your ingredients. The list is short, but quality matters. Here is what you will need for the **Paul Hollywood focaccia bread recipe**:

- 500g strong white bread flour – This provides the gluten needed for a good crumb structure. Do not substitute with plain flour, as the result will be denser.

- 10g salt – Fine sea salt works best. It is essential for flavour and also helps control yeast activity.
- 7g fast-action yeast – One standard sachet. If using active dry yeast, follow the manufacturer's instructions for activation.
- 320ml lukewarm water – The water should be around body temperature to activate the yeast without killing it.
- 60ml extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling – Use a good-quality oil for the best flavour. Reserve some for the top.
- Flaky sea salt for topping – Maldon or similar is ideal.
- Fresh rosemary sprigs – Optional but traditional. You can also add olives, cherry tomatoes, or garlic for variations.

Note: Some versions of this recipe include a small amount of sugar or honey to feed the yeast, but Paul Hollywood generally does not add sweeteners. The yeast will feed on the natural sugars in the flour.

Equipment You Will Need

You do not need a stand mixer for this recipe, though it can help. Here is what you will need:

- A large mixing bowl
- A wooden spoon or dough scraper
- Cling film or a clean tea towel
- A baking tray or rectangular baking dish (approximately 30x20cm)
- Parchment paper
- A bench scraper

If you have a stand mixer with a dough hook, you can use it for the initial kneading, but hand-kneading is perfectly fine and allows you to feel the dough's development.

Step-by-Step Method: How to Make Paul Hollywood Focaccia

1. Mix the Dough

In a large mixing bowl, combine the **strong white bread flour** and salt. Add the **fast-action yeast** and stir to distribute. Make a well in the centre, then pour in the **lukewarm water** and **60ml olive oil**. Using your hand or a wooden spoon, mix until all the flour is incorporated and a rough, sticky dough forms. Do not worry if it looks messy; this is a wet dough.

2. Kneading – The Key to Gluten Development

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Paul Hollywood recommends kneading for about 10 minutes by hand. The dough will be very sticky at first, so resist the urge to add too much extra flour. Instead, use a dough scraper to lift and fold the dough. As you knead, the gluten will develop, and the dough will become smoother and more elastic. If using a stand mixer, knead on low speed for 5–6 minutes. The dough should still be quite soft and slightly tacky but should hold its shape.

3. First Rise

Place the dough back into the bowl (lightly oiled to prevent sticking). Cover the bowl with cling film or a damp tea towel. Leave it in a warm, draught-free place for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until the dough has doubled in size. The time will vary depending on the temperature. In a cooler room, it may take longer; in a warm kitchen, it may be ready sooner.

4. Prepare the Pan and Shape

While the dough rises, prepare your baking tray. Line it with parchment paper and drizzle a little olive oil over the base. Once the dough has risen, turn it out onto the tray. Do not punch it down aggressively; instead, gently

stretch it to fill the tray. The dough may shrink back – let it rest for 5 minutes, then stretch again. Repeat until it fits the pan evenly. Cover loosely with oiled cling film and let it rest for another 30 minutes.

5. Dimple, Top, and Second Rise

Now comes the signature step: dimpling. Use your fingertips to press deep indentations all over the dough, right down to the bottom of the tray. Do not be shy; the dimples are what make focaccia so inviting and help trap the oil and salt. Drizzle generously with extra virgin olive oil, letting it pool in the dimples. Sprinkle over flaky sea salt and press fresh rosemary leaves into the indentations. Cover again and let it rise for a further 30–45 minutes, until the dough is puffy and has nearly doubled in height.

6. Bake to Golden Perfection

Preheat your oven to 220°C (200°C fan) or 425°F. Place the tray in the centre of the oven and bake for 20–25 minutes. The focaccia should be deep golden brown on top. If it is browning too quickly, you can cover it loosely with foil for the last 5 minutes. Remove from the oven and slide the focaccia onto a wire rack. Drizzle with a little more olive oil while it is still warm – this adds an extra luxurious finish. Let it cool for at least 10 minutes before slicing.

Tips for Achieving the Best Results

Even a simple recipe can have pitfalls. Here are some pro tips to ensure your **Paul Hollywood focaccia bread recipe** turns out perfectly every time:

- Use a high-hydration dough. The 65% hydration (320ml water to 500g flour) is key. Do not be tempted to reduce the water; the sticky dough will become manageable with kneading.
- Do not over-flour your work surface. A light dusting is enough. Excessive flour will dry out the dough and make the focaccia dense.
- Be patient with the rise. Focaccia needs time to develop flavour and airiness. Do not rush the process; if your kitchen is cool, let it rise longer.
- Dimple generously. Those indentations are not just decorative – they allow the oil to soak into the bread and create a soft, almost pudding-like interior in those spots.
- Use the best olive oil you can afford. It is a major flavour component. A mild, fruity extra virgin olive oil works beautifully.
- Experiment with toppings. While rosemary and sea salt are classic, you can add halved cherry tomatoes, black olives, thinly sliced red onion, or even a sprinkle of Parmesan in the last few minutes of baking.

Variations on Paul Hollywood's Focaccia

Once you have mastered the basic **focaccia bread recipe**, feel free to get creative. Here are some popular variations:

- Tomato and Basil Focaccia: Press halved cherry tomatoes into the dough before the second rise, and scatter fresh basil leaves after baking.
- Olive and Rosemary Focaccia: Add a handful of pitted Kalamata olives along with the rosemary. The salty tang of the olives pairs beautifully with the olive oil.
- Garlic and Thyme Focaccia: Infuse the olive oil with crushed garlic and fresh thyme before drizzling over the dimpled dough.
- Cheese-Stuffed Focaccia: Cut the dough in half after the first rise, place cubes of mozzarella or fontina in the centre, then top with the other half and proceed as usual. The cheese will melt into pockets of goodness.
- Whole Wheat Focaccia: Replace half the white bread flour with wholemeal flour. You may need to add an extra tablespoon of water, as whole wheat absorbs more moisture.

Troubleshooting Common Issues

Even with a trusted recipe, things can go wrong. Here are solutions to common problems:

- My dough is too sticky and won't come together. This is normal for high-hydration dough. Keep kneading – it will become smoother. Avoid adding extra flour.
- My focaccia is flat and dense. The dough likely did not rise enough. Ensure your yeast is fresh and the environment is warm enough. Alternatively, you may have over-kneaded and damaged the gluten.
- The top is too brown but the inside is undercooked. Your oven may be too hot, or the bread is too thick. Reduce the temperature to 200°C and bake a little longer. Also, make sure your pan is not too small, which forces the dough to be thicker.
- My focaccia is greasy. While focaccia is meant to be oily, you may have used too much oil on the top. Next time, stick to the recommended amount and let the oil pool only in the dimples.
- The salt is too prominent. Use flaky sea salt sparingly. You can also sprinkle it only in the dimples rather than all over the surface.

Storing and Reheating Focaccia

Focaccia is best enjoyed on the day it is baked, but leftovers can be stored. Wrap the cooled bread in foil or place it in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days. Do not refrigerate, as this will dry it out. To reheat, place slices directly on an oven rack at 180°C for 5–7 minutes. This restores the crisp crust and soft interior. Focaccia also freezes well – wrap tightly in plastic and foil, then thaw at room temperature and reheat.

Why Focaccia is a Perfect Bread for

Related Articles

- **Lion King Food Web**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/lion-king-food-web.pdf
- **Halogen Oven Recipes**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/halogen-oven-recipes.pdf
- **Lion King Food Chain**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/lion-king-food-chain.pdf
- **Food Chains And Energy In Ecosystems Lab Answers**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/food-chains-and-energy-in-ecosystems-lab-answers.pdf

TOPIC INDEX

#paul • #hollywood • #focaccia • #bread • #recipe

DIGITAL EDITION

paul-hollywood-focaccia-bread-recipe

DIGITAL EDITION

paul-hollywood-focaccia-bread-recipe

DIGITAL EDITION

paul-hollywood-focaccia-bread-recipe

DIGITAL EDITION

paul-hollywood-focaccia-bread-recipe