

## Prospora Recipe

*This recipe was passed down from Matushka Helen Benigsen (Holy Assumption Monastery, Calistoga, CA) to Matushka Barbara Sokolov (Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco) and then to Matushka Sophia Sokolov (Three Hierarch's Chapel). Its simple proportions and method make it ideal for baking in large or small quantities. This recipe can be easily doubled to fit the Hobart mixer in the refectory.*

1 ½ cups warm water  
1 ½ tsp active dry yeast  
½ tsp salt  
4 cups unbleached flour (give or take)

yield: 15-18 small prospora (commemorative loaves)  
or 1 large 8" lamb and 6-8 small prospora

- 1) Preheat the oven to 300 F (*see notes about refectory ovens*).
- 2) Let yeast dissolve in water for about 3-8 minutes or until it looks bubbly.
- 3) Add salt and mix gently with a fork or mixer until water is cloudy.
- 4) Mix on low speed while gradually adding flour. Remove from the mixer when the dough forms a ball and is not sticky. Add more or less flour as needed.
- 5) Turn dough out on a clean and floured surface. Knead for around 10 minutes adding more flour until the dough won't take any more. Poke the dough with your finger, and if it doesn't stick inside you've added enough.
- 6) Using a rolling pin, work from the middle and roll the dough out to desired thickness. *Around ¼ inch for small prospora or ½ inch or so for the lamb.*
- 7) Before cutting the dough, loosen it from the counter and sprinkle enough flour underneath so that it doesn't stick to the counter. Using a large bowl, coffee can or another cutter, cut out a circle\*. This is the base of the lamb. Put it on a baking sheet that has either been generously floured or lined with parchment paper.

Knead the remaining dough and roll it out once again to a similar thickness. Use a smaller can or bowl to cut out a slightly smaller circle. Brush away the excess flour and press the seal very firmly into it. Let the seal rest for a few seconds before removing it.

Using two fingers, generously spread water all over the top of the base round. Gently lay the smaller stamped circle onto the dampened bottom piece.

8) Use remaining dough to make little prosphora. Use the same technique except roll the dough a bit thinner. *A regular sized soup can works well for the base, and a tomato paste can works great for the tops of these smaller breads.*

9) Allow the prosphora to rise for around 30-35 minutes.

10) Bake at 300 F for about 40-45 minutes for a lamb and 30 minutes for small prosphora watching that the top doesn't get too dark (though it should look a little gold). You can check the oven around 7 minutes into the baking and "fix" any lop-sided imperfections in the smaller prosphora.

11) To check for doneness, gently tap or thump the bottom of the bread. If it sounds hollow, then it is cooked all the way through. The bottoms of the bread should also be a nice gold color in their centers. Cover with a clean towel and cool on a wire rack.

12) When completely cool, place in gallon sized ziplock bags. Each bag holds 1 lamb or about 16 small prosphora.

*\*When cutting the lambs, try to find mixing bowls or extra-large aluminum cans with about an 8" diameter for the base and 6" for the top (such as large coffee cans). These will fit the large wooden seal well. If using a metal can, use a bottle opener to cut a few holes in the bottom. This will give the air someplace to go when you press on the dough and make for easier cutting.*