I love running. On the flipside, I love baking. No hobbies could be further from one another, but the strange thing is my reason for loving them is the same: they keep you in the moment. When I am running, I don’t think about errands I need to run, or chores I need to do, or homework I need to finish—I am there in the moment and all that I can think about is running. With baking, it is much the same. The only things in the world are you and what you are baking, and in that simplicity, there is beauty.

In these sorts of times, the past and future can feel enormous. That is why we have things like baking and running—or yoga, reading, hiking, music, other people—to keep us here in the present moment where all that matters is moving our legs or folding flour into the batter. Others seem to have noticed this as well: most people I know have been trying new recipes and taking the time to slow down for baking wonderful things.

From what I have observed, people seem to be baking lots of banana bread and sourdough, so I decided to put them together and give you this recipe for sourdough banana bread. If you have a sourdough starter, this is a good way to use the discard—if you do not, here is a link to make your own,\* and beyond banana bread, you can use it to make fresh loaves of sourdough, pancakes, muffins, and cake. Sourdough requires time and patience, but so does running—and as we have plenty of time now, now would be great to give it a try.

However, you stay in the moment and appreciate the smaller things, I hope this recipe finds you well. If you feel inclined, this is the perfect loaf to bake (after washing your hands) and deliver to a loved one—but I can say from personal experience that it is still delicious if you keep it all for yourself.

Enjoy!

Ella Triplett

**Sourdough Anise Banana Bread**

*Ingredients:*

¼ cup unsalted butter, softened

¼ cup brown sugar, packed

1/3 cup honey

1 egg

2 ½ large overripe bananas, mashed

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup unfed sourdough starter, stirred down

¾ cup whole wheat flour (or white whole wheat)

¾ cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

2 teaspoons anise seeds

1 teaspoon cinnamon

Pinch of nutmeg

1 teaspoon salt

½ cup walnuts, roughly chopped

*Instructions:*

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and line a 5 x 8 inch loaf pan with parchment.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter, sugar, and honey. Add egg, bananas, and vanilla and mix on low until just combined.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk flours, baking powder, baking soda, anise, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Add to wet ingredients and whisk or stir with a wooden spoon until just combined. Fold in walnuts.
4. Transfer batter to loaf pan and bake 50-55 minutes until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out dry with a few sticky crumbs (it will continue to bake in pan.)
5. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack and let cool completely.

*Recipe Notes:*

\*<https://www.kingarthurflour.com/blog/2012/04/05/creating-your-own-sourdough-starter-the-path-to-great-bread>

-If you do not care for anise, feel free to leave it out. Caraway seeds can be substituted, but I would reduce to 1 teaspoon since they are a bit stronger.

-Chocolate chips are always a good addition :)