**Ciabatta**

**Starter**

1/4 teaspoon active dry yeast

260g water

330g all purpose flour

Vegetable oil, for the bowl

Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix with a paddle attachment until a smooth and silky dough forms. Place in an oiled bowl and cover. Let sit at room temperature for 24-48 hours.

**Dough**

3g instant yeast

76g milk

285g water

15g olive oil

All the starter

250g all purpose flour

250g bread flour

15g salt

Cornmeal

1. If making the bread in a stand mixer: Stir the yeast into the milk in a mixer bowl; let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes. Add the water, oil, and biga (be sure to weigh the biga, don’t just measure it by volume) and mix with the paddle until blended. Mix the flour (be sure to weigh the flour, don’t just measure it by volume) and salt, add to the bowl, and mix for 2 to 3 minutes. Change to the dough hook and knead for 2 minutes at low speed, then 2 minutes at medium speed. The dough will be very sticky. Knead briefly on a well-floured surface, adding as little flour as possible, until the dough is still sticky but beginning to show evidence of being velvety, supple, springy, and moist.

2. Place the dough in an oiled square container, cover with a lid, and let rise at room temperature until doubled, about 2 hours, or overnight in the fridge. The dough should be full of air bubbles, supple, elastic, and sticky.

3. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. Tip the container onto a generously floured surface, being careful not to deflate the dough. Dust the top of the dough with more flour and cut it into 2 equal portions. Stretch each loaf into a rectangle about 15 by 5 inches, pulling with your fingers to get each portion of dough long and wide enough.

4. Quickly transfer each loaf to a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Dimple the loaves vigorously with your fingertips or knuckles so that they won’t rise too much. Cover the loaves with oiled plastic wrap and let rise until doubled in size, or about 2 hours.

5. About 30 minutes before baking, preheat the oven to 500°F. Spray the loaves with water, place in the oven, and immediately lower the oven to 450 degrees. Bake for 20-25 minutes, spraying the loaves with water every 3-5 minutes. When the are finished, the loaves should be golden brown and register 205 on a thermometer.