

The **Sunday Taste & Talk** tables continue as does my pleasure in meeting and talking with everyone. And the sunshine. I especially enjoyed the late burst of Indian summer sun when we temporarily relocated to Roots and Shoots for their rather stupendous **Apple Day**.

Who knew there could be so many varieties of Apple. I should have guessed as there used to be many, many varieties of wheat. Sadly that is no longer the case: More on that next month!

A couple of customers have recently come back to me with an observation and a comment on the Borodino and Saratoga respectively; neither being entirely complimentary. I absolutely love this!

I can't and don't test every batch of bread but I can and do observe. Sometimes I forget my observations! As a result of the feedback I had another look at the Borodino, and realised I'd developed a strange habit in how I scooped up the "mud pie" and deposited it in the tin. Similarly, with the Saratoga, I'd mysteriously forgotten about or ignored the cooler evenings. The temperature of the overnight soak ("autolyse") is critical to this loaf's texture and flavour.

What is **Spelt**? Is it wheat? Is it gluten free? No.

Spelt is an ancient hybrid wheat that is rather "promiscuous". It is high in protein and "bio-availability"; it's much easier for us to breakdown and metabolise all the available minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates and fibre when compared to wheat. It's also typically wholemeal, so there's certainly more there! Spelt is easy to digest, good for you, has a wonderful "crumb" and tastes very good! My "**Stamford Bridge**" 100% Organic Stoneground Spelt loaf has all these qualities; definitely worth a try.

Whilst the Greeks and then the Romans loved Spelt, the combine harvester did for it; bread wheat became the norm. Spelt's "low yield" and husk, whilst protecting the grain (requiring less insecticide and improving storage) made it more expensive to process. And, of course, it isn't whiter than white.

I've been asked about **slicing bread**. I don't have a slicer yet, but I do own a selection of very sharp (and blunt) bread knives. If the crust is very hard or soft it can be a struggle to slice, especially with a less than sharp knife. For those of you who weren't in the Scouts or Guides (or a lumberjack), the trick is to let the knife blade do the work. Downward pressure should be minimal, whilst sawing back and forth. Also bear in mind the angle of the blade (slightly over the horizontal), which is not easy to achieve if you're below average height and using a counter top. The loaf can also be turned to start the cut on an "edge".

Now available: "Naseby" – 100% Wholemeal Loaf

Coming soon: A special with figs...

John – Kennington Baker