



Green baguettes and black bread – in Meitzendorf, the baker with the Rasta hairstyle "composes" what is known as "Das-da" bread.

The "Möhring Bakery" in Meitzendorf in Saxony-Anhalt is patronized by local people as well as those who are curious about its innovative products, which along with the traditional craft of baking, contain every amount of creativity, love and the desire to try out new things. The son of the family business in Saxony-Anhalt is a "forward thinker" – someone who has networking in his blood, who uses social media just as much as historical light rye flour, algae or cuttlefish sepia, and thinks far outside of the box.

The display in the "Möhring Bakery" makes passers-by mouths' water: the gateaux, cakes and biscuits all look very enticing. The baskets with the bread and bread rolls contain the classic baked products – as well as things you've never seen before, let alone tried. If you feel like trying something new, this is the place for you. After all, in this bakery, an innovative spirit is in the air. The latest machinery testifies to the fact that this family business is far from being stuck in the past. By the time that you meet "junior", one thing is clear: things here are different than they are in most other bakeries. Marcus Ostendorf has baking in his genes. This shouldn't come as any surprise, as after his mother Kerstin, he is the seventh generation of bakers from this family. When his family bought the bakery from the local municipality in 1843, they certainly wouldn't have dreamed of what things would be like here 175 years later – even if a sense of creativity always ran in the family. "We always wanted to do more than just bake," explains Kerstin Ostendorf, whose birth surname was Möhring. "Today we call it cross-generational marketing. In the old days it was known as wanting to offer something for everyone." It is now her son, Marcus, who gained his master baker's certificate in 2017 and whose smartphone is one of his most important workplace tools, who is currently breathing new life into the business.

Marcus Ostendorf shares recipes in chat groups

The baker with the Rasta hairstyle and colourful prints on his work apron partakes in a variety of chat groups and chats with bakers in America and several other countries. In the "Natural Baking" group, he discusses "hard facts" with colleagues, as he says. This is a group where people "cut to the chase and post ingredients and recipes". "We don't think in terms of competition, we're beyond that," he explains. Marcus, who hails from Meitzendorf, can talk about his ideas and baking, which he calls "a creative task", at length, and of the baked foods that have been created following internet research or which are inspired by personal experiences.

"Das-da" bread: the new treats

Marcus Ostendorf normally starts work at the bakery at 2 am. In addition to his everyday business, he also devotes himself to recipes for the kind of bread, bread rolls and baguettes which are rarely seen in bakeries. Now and again, he glances at his smartphone. One chat group discusses the use of natural ingredients and chemical-free baking. It was from a chat group of this kind that a new range of products has come into being: in Meitzendorf, "Das-Da" bread is a best seller – for which there is, of course, a special online thread. The "Das-Da" range of bread is also available at bakeries with which Marcus Ostendorf communicates. The name reflects a customer request which is heard in many-a-German bakery: "I'd like that, there please" – in German, "that there" is "Das da". It is by this name that the "Möhring Bakery" offers new varieties of bread every Tuesday and Friday with changing offers every two weeks – varieties that aren't standard offerings, such as tomato-buttermilk, sauerkraut-ham and red wine-cheddar. It is on this basis that Marcus Ostendorf and his family are living out their enthusiasm for baking. "Beethoven composed music like a madman, and we're taking a similar approach to our baking," says "junior", with a laugh. Whether it is local people, the catering professionals he succeeds in convincing at trade shows and events, or the commuters who drop by especially – they all appreciate the enthusiasm to "compose", eagerly await the new "Das-da" creations, and can be heard asking: "what's available today?" The details of the unconventional baked goods from Saxony-Anhalt are also posted on Facebook or Instagram, where the baker from Meitzendorf usually makes a point of adding that health-related concerns aren't neglected. Indeed: along with variety, it is considered a top priority. As far as possible, the Ostendorf family tries to bake without using additives. They like to devote a lot of time to the dough. To "allow the initial stages to work," as Marcus Ostendorf explains. He tells us that those who ensure a long fermentation period give the ingredients time to do their work. "That, in turn, helps break down the impurities that prevent people with food intolerances from enjoying bread."

Vegetarian bread creations

Macus takes little time out from his profession. His smartphone buzzes away constantly, and he's on the road, meeting with other innovative bakers who want to offer their special products to adventurous connoisseurs. Word has got around that Marcus Ostendorf is sending photos via WhatsApp and exploring the possibilities for making freshly baked baguettes "on the spot". And also, that he is willing to give anything, "that spreads good vibes" a go. The Meitzendorf Bakery is currently making black bread rolls for a burger bar in Magdeburg, because they go well with their water buffalo meat. Cuttlefish sepia is added to the dough which is used for making the pitta bread. Marcus Ostendorf then mentions how in this respect, in the future, he is considering using activated carbon for vegetarians. He spends a lot of time weighing up the vegetarian options, not only because he supplies baked goods to a shop that sells "unpacked" goods in Magdeburg which makes good sales with them. The "Magic Stick" is another offer: a product that shop offers to customers who don't like wheat bread. Pumpkin seeds, chia seeds and goji berries are all baked into the spelt-bread baguette.

Green baguette with algae extracts

The latest green bread creation, which looks as if it comes from another planet, is something quite different. The ingredient used for its colouring comes from the algae farm "PureRaw" in the town of Klötze in the Altmark region. Its manager, Kirstin Knufmann got to know Marcus Ostendorf at the "Kreativwirtschaft trifft Ernährungsbranche" (*The creative economy meets the food sector*) workshop which was organised by the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Magdeburg. Knufmann, a newly crowned *Leader of Culture and Creativity* – named in November 2018 on behalf of the German federal government – gave the baker a tester bottle of algae, which he is using in a recipe for a burger bun. This cooperation should be developed further, explains Ostendorf. He can certainly imagine the creation of algae baguettes. He has had the green ingredient in mind for a long time. He is currently rewriting his previous recipes for the cooperation he is forging with the Klötze-based business so that they suit the respective type of algae. "Suitable and tasty" are key words in the vocabulary of the "Möhring Bakery". For this reason, the team also sources its supplies from the "flour mill" in Thale. The Ostendorf family swears by the "light rye flour" grown by the farmers in the Harz region. The historic variety of grain is hard to find elsewhere, explains Marcus Ostendorf. This rye, which was brought from France to Germany in the 19th century by the Huguenots, has "unbeatable advantages". It can be cultivated without the use of mineral fertilizers and pesticides, and for many people it is more tolerated in baked goods than conventionally farmed grains. In Meitzendorf, the light rye flour is used to make wholemeal bread. Moreover, the bread could soon be taken home in special bags. Marcus Ostendorf has teamed up with a cooperation partner who focuses on sustainability, and who, along with other projects, is trying to dye old linen with leaves or to recycle materials, as the young baker says: "when creative craftsmen and foodies work together, it spreads good vibes."

Our website uses cookies to provide our services to you. Third party cookies are also used. By giving your approval, you agree that we may use cookies. You can change the cookie settings at any time.

Author: Manuela Bock

Required Cookies	These cookies are required for the basic functions of the website. Therefore, you cannot deactivate them. No personal data is collected or stored.
Functional Cookies	These cookies allow us to analyze the website usage so that we can measure and improve its performance. No personal data is collected or stored.

10.01.2019

