Crusty French Bread Loaf

2 ¼ teaspoons active dry yeast

1 teaspoon sugar

1 ¼ cups warm water

1 ¼ teaspoons salt

2 ½ to 3 ½ cups flour

Combine yeast, sugar and water in bowl of standing mixer.

Let sit for 5 minutes.

Add flour slowly.  Add salt until just incorporated.

Cover bowl with towel and let rise for 1 hour.

Turn the dough out onto a floured counter.  Do not punch down.

Gently shape into a round and place dough in a floured proofing basket.

Cover bowl with a towel and let rise 30 minutes.

Preheat a dutch oven (with lid) in a 450 oven.

Turn dough out onto a piece of parchment on the counter.

Use the parchment to gently lower the loaf into the hot dutch oven.

Bake bread 30 minutes with the lid on.  Remove lid and bake another 10-15 minutes.

Remove loaf from pan and let cool.