

# A true believer

JEAN-MARC AMBROISY WAS TOTALLY CONFIDENT THAT ORGANIC BREAD COULD LOOK GOOD AND TASTE GOOD. BIONATIS IS THE NAME OF HIS COMPANY THAT HAS PROVED THIS POINT AND IT NOW SUCCESSFULLY MARKETS FROZEN ORGANIC BREAD PAR-BAKED TO 80%



**+** Haute Rivoire, located in the picturesque hills of the Departement Rhone-Alpes is about 90 minutes drive from Lyon. It is home to Bionatis. Jean-Marc Ambroisy (43), the son of a traditional baker dynasty from Lyon, has retreated to this location in order to make one of his dreams come true and that is to produce traditional French bread specialties of the highest quality as dough pieces of organic quality. With this concept he is an ex-

trepreneur newcomer because organic bakers in France are, if at all, either artisan bakers or suppliers to the retail trade.

Jean-Marc Ambroisy differs from his colleagues in other aspects as well. Today, his baguettes, flutes, batards and boules – in total he produces about 70 different products and product sizes – are 80% par-baked. His ambition is to shift this point as close to the 100% mark as possible.





**++ figure 1**  
The TraDivider scales the dough like a baker

**++ figure 2**  
The flour dusters are arranged upstream of the pre-proofer. At this position the flour is whirled around in a closed chamber. The dough pieces are moved through the "flour dust" which ensures that the pieces are coated with flour at all sides

**++ figure 3**  
The dough pieces are brought into oblonged shape by the belt

**++ figure 4**  
A roller pushes the dough piece gently for improved oven spring later

**++ figure 5**  
Jean-Marc Ambroisy

**++ figure 6**  
The rounder can be added via the discharge belt

When Ambroisy started his production in 2002 in Haute Rivoire, he found that the bakers he introduced his organic range to were skeptical. After all, every French baker is a master of the baguette. In the meantime, after numerous demonstrations and tastings, artisan bakers from all over France as well as large retail chains have become his customers. The supermarkets sell some of his bread types under the Bionatis brand; others under their own name. Added to this, all schools in France have to offer their pupils organic flutes one day of the week. Bionatis can supply them. Organic food is a growing market segment in France compared with all other sales channels. Managers at the top hotels have appreciated the trend and are now offering organic rolls for breakfast.

Ambroisy does not fear competition from larger bakeries. "Organic baked goods cannot be standardized as the raw



### Mecatherm at iba

Mecatherm and Gouet will present at iba a line similar to the one described here. The line will be shown in operation. The FTM oven on display at iba will have a new heating section. Visitors to the show can also see the production of Viennese products and Flammkuch (Tarte flambee) made on a second line. At the heart of the line is a double action oven by Gouet designed as a high temperature oven. Of course, the traditional Mecatherm line with vertical oven and baguette make-up will also be exhibited. +++

materials differ. We analyze each batch of flour and every other ingredient upon delivery and adapt the recipes accordingly. This is our secret for maintaining a high quality level. This is not a business for people operating fully automatic high performance plants."



This does not mean that Ambroisy steers clear of automation; he just uses it carefully. The products are made on a Mecatherm line with the dough divider TraDivider and a three-level FTM continuous oven. Approximately 70% of the dough is made up on a Bloc line by Mecatherm; the other 30% on a dough sheeting line which can be used additionally. In terms of raw material selection, Ambroisy makes sure as many local raw materials are used as possible. He has succeeded with flour, even though it was not easy to convince farmers to turn to the organic cultivation of grains. There are very few associations or official authorities supporting the conversion. ▶

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++ figure 7

++ figure 7  
The sprinker can be integrated in the line, if needed



++ figure 8

++ figure 8  
Oven discharge section of the FTM continuous oven

++ figure 9  
Automatic slicer

++ figure 10  
Almost baked. The typical French slashes are already browned

++ figure 11  
Boule (round wheat bread), flute and baguette

Wheat preferment used as traditional levain is used for about 30% of the recipes. A tandem pre-ferment plant provides for the required quantities which are added via the automatic ingredients weighing system. Mixing is done in a VMI spiral mixer; the dough is allowed to rest for one hour in bowls.

According to Ambroisy, the dough divider TraDivider is one of the most important stations. It operates just as a baker who portions the dough with a dough scraper. For that the pre-portioning unit places the soft dough – baguette dough with a hydration of 78%, flutes with 72% – in large pieces that overlap into the container which is an elongated vat. When the vat is full, the bottom moves up

slightly to ensure equal distribution. After this, blades push into the dough from below and divide it. Firstly each second dough piece is lifted up by forks and placed onto the conveying belt and then the forks transport the remaining dough pieces onto the belt. The next station is a flour duster with a total of three sprinkling units, which are in a housing. Inside the housing, fans ensure that each dough piece is completely dusted with flour. Then the dough piece is slightly pressed down by a belt resulting in an oblong dough piece with a height of 5 cm. and via a slightly gradient ramp the dough pieces are moved up into a large pre-proofing unit. On their way to the next make-up station the dough



++ figure 9



pieces move back and forth through the pre-proofer. At each end they are turned and placed on a belt underneath. In this way, the side that has just dried comes into contact with the belt and sticking to the belt material or smearing is prevented as a result.

Subsequently there are three ways of handling the dough pieces: a) passing through an open laminator where they are sheeted and then coiled up yielding a thin baguette stick or flute; b) taking a detour via a discharge belt and a rounder before being returned to the line shaped as a boule; c) passing through the laminator with the short side first and being coiled up into a short but thick batard.

Back in the system, the rounded bread loaves are placed by way of a V-shaped chute onto the feeding belt to the proofer; always three loaves parallel to each other. Batards are deposited in two rows via a swing which is parallel or offset. Batards, baguettes and flutes are then transported to the sheeter where they are protracted just as the baker would do. If rolls need to be produced, they are cut at this point and placed at intervals from each other in a controlled pattern. The replacement of a belt segment produces the opportunity to sprinkle all products with seeds or kernels or to roll them in the decorating material required. After that they are placed on 800 x 960 cm peel boards.

The products are then deposited either continuously or in cycles, depending on the product and its stability. The peel boards are transported gently and with high precision so that the slashes applied by the automatic slasher are precisely positioned on the surface of the products.

The next station is a proofer, a multi-vertical system (MVS) by Gouet. It can accommodate 360 peel boards with a proofing time of 90 minutes. It is a paternoster system which accepts the peel boards horizontally, then moves them upwards in a stack on a plastic rail system, transfers them to the top of the proofer on the other side and then moves them downwards again. The plastic material allows for a complete wash-down of the proofer. One motor moves the



entire system which automatically ensures precise alignment. The products are then baked in an FTM continuous baking oven by Mecatherm before they are transported via cooling and freezing spiral to the packaging section. Two separately controllable sections of the three-deck FTM oven move the baguettes on narrow-grid wire belts. The convection heat stabilizes the bottom and the lower sides of the product while the radiation from above produces a tender crust and a vivid bloom. A specialty is the loader which transfers the products from the peel boards to the oven belt. It is virtually an extra long textile band which is wound up on both ends. The belt moves depending on the direction of the rolls. The triple length of the textile belt allows for change-over of the belt section in case of contamination or accumulation of dirt and even if the belt tears, which is rather improbable, it can be rewound and the interruption to production is short.

Jean-Marc Ambroisy uses this line for his products which range from 40 g wheat rolls to baguettes, flutes and 1.2 kg round bread. A new addition to the product range is an 800 g pure rye bread, a new creation by the passionate baker. This bread is also made on the Mecatherm line. Ambroisy explains, "It is just a matter of dough and process management, no secret for bakers who have mastered their art." +++

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