

Challah



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In the summer when there are many people at Silver Bay, I sometimes make three separate recipes worth of dough and then portion it out so that I end up with lots of loaves! The photo was taken on our screen porch on July 3, 2020.

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Tags : Bread Medium

Serves 4
Prep Time 1 hour
Total Time 5 hours

NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Amount per Serving (4 total)

Calories Who Cares

Fat

Carbohydrate

Protein

INSTRUCTIONS

INGREDIENTS

What You Need

- 1 ½ tbsp. active dry yeast
- ½ cup plus 1 tbs. sugar
- 1 ¾ cup water
- ½ cup canola or other neutral oil
- extra oil for proofing bowl
- 2 tbs. kosher salt or 1 tbs. regular table salt
- 5 eggs – 4 for challah dough, 1 for egg wash
- 8 to 8 1/2 all-purpose flour

Step 1 :

Place yeast, 1 tbs. of sugar in bowl of stand mixer fitted with dough hook; heat water in the microwave for about 30 seconds and then add water to bowl with yeast and sugar and let stand for a few minutes until yeast foams

Step 2 :

Add ½ cup sugar, 4 eggs, ½ cup canola oil, salt and 2 cups flour to yeast mixture in bowl and begin to mix (mixer should be set on stir or 2);

Step 3 :

As flour is incorporated, continue adding remaining flour, two cups at a time until you add 8 cups in total, mixing well until incorporated each time. Dough will be sticky; add the last 1/2 cup of flour if dough is too sticky to handle easily.

Step 4 :

Add a little canola oil to the bowl in which the dough will proof and swish it around until sides and bottom are greased; make sure the bowl is not cold to the touch so if it is, rinse in warm tap water and dry well before you add the oil coating; turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead for a couple of minutes (it doesn't require much) until you have a smooth ball, then place in proofing bowl and cover with a clean white dishcloth that is dampened a bit with water; place bowl of dough in a warm place (ideally an oven set to proof) and forget about it for at least 90 minutes and as much as 2-3 hours (the dough is very forgiving)

Step 5 :

After about 90 minutes to 2 hours, the dough should have risen and doubled in size at least; punch down then recover with cloth and leave to rise again for about 1 hour;

Step 6 :

After the second rise, remove dough from bowl and cut in half. Each half makes one large challah. Divide the one half into three equal parts and then roll with your hands to form three strands about 18 inches long. Put the strands together at one end, then braid them and tuck the ends under to form the challah, then place on a baking pan (I usually use a half sheet pan with a silpat or parchment paper); divide and braid the second dough ball, then place on a baking pan (can be same pan if its big enough for the dough to be separated by about 2 inches at least);

Step 7 :

Crack last egg in a small bowl, mix egg and yolk until well combined, then brush egg wash over the challah dough; let the dough sit in warm place (I usually leave the pan on top of my stove) and pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees;

Step 8 :

After about 45 minutes, brush the dough with remaining egg wash, then place pan(s) in the hot oven and bake for about 25 minutes. Depending on your oven or if you like your challah a little darker, you may want to bake for a couple of extra minutes but don't overbake.

CHEF'S TIPS

Homemade challah stays fresh much longer than anything you will buy – you can keep it out in a zip lock bag and it will stay a week (if it lasts that long!) It is great at room temperature, toasted or used as a base for French toast. Once it is cooled challah can be frozen in a zip lock freezer bag. To defrost, just take the challah out of the bag and let it sit out for about an hour. The dough can be divided into smaller portions, then subdivided, braided and baked in the same way (you may need to add another egg to the egg wash) if you don't want such large loaves. If so, keep one out then freeze the rest or share with a friend. There are other, fancier ways to braid and shape the dough. I make six braided, round challahs for the Jewish Holidays every year. I add a cup of yellow raisins to the dough as I am adding the third and fourth cups of flour to the dough to make a raisin challah for the holidays!
