

CHALLAH BREAD RECIPE

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 1 cup

lukewarm water

- 2 teaspoons

active dry or instant yeast

- 1/4 cup

plus 1 pinch granulated sugar, divided

- 4 1/2 cups

all-purpose flour, plus more as needed

- 1 tablespoon

kosher salt

- 2

large eggs

- 1

large egg yolk (reserve the white for the egg wash)

- 1/4 cup

neutral oil, such as vegetable or canola, plus more for the bowl

For the egg wash:

- 1

1 large egg white

- 1 tablespoon

Water

Instructions

1. Place 1 cup lukewarm water in a small bowl. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons active dry yeast and 1 pinch of the granulated sugar, and stir to combine. Let sit until you see a thin frothy layer across the top, 5 to 10 minutes. This means that the yeast is active and ready to use. (If you do not see this or if your yeast won't dissolve, it has likely expired and you'll need to purchase new yeast.)
2. Whisk 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, remaining 1/4 cup granulated sugar, and 1 tablespoon kosher salt together in a stand mixer. (Alternatively, use a large bowl and knead by hand.)
3. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture. Add 2 large eggs, 1 large egg yolk, and 1/4 cup neutral oil to the well. Whisk this mixture to form a slurry, pulling in a little flour from the sides of the bowl.
4. Pour the yeast mixture over the egg slurry. Mix everything together with a wooden spoon or flexible spatula until a shaggy dough that is difficult to mix forms.
5. Mix with the hook attachment on low speed until a soft, smooth, and tacky dough forms, 6 to 8 minutes. (Alternatively, turn out the

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dough onto a floured work surface and knead by hand for about 10 minutes.) If the dough seems very sticky 5 minutes into the mixing time, mix in more flour a tablespoon at a time as needed.

6. Lightly coat a large bowl with oil. Transfer the dough ball into the bowl and turn to coat in the oil. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

7. Divide the dough into 3 or 6 equal pieces (about 3 or 6 ounces each), depending on the type of braid you'd like to do. Working on a lightly floured work surface, roll each piece of dough into a long rope about 16

inches long. If the ropes shrink as you try to roll them, let them rest for 5 minutes to relax the gluten and then try again.

8. Arrange the ropes vertically, then gather and squeeze them together at the very top. If making a 3-stranded challah, braid the ropes together like braiding hair or yarn and squeeze the other ends together when complete. If making a 6-stranded challah, the directions are below in the Recipe Notes.

9. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the braided loaf on top and sprinkle with a little flour. Cover with a kitchen towel

and let rise in a warm place away from drafts until puffed and pillowy, about 1 hour. About 20 minutes before baking, heat the oven to 350°F.

10. Whisk 1 large egg white and 1 tablespoon water together in a small bowl with a fork. Brush it all over the challah, being sure to get in the cracks and down the sides of the loaf.

11. Bake, rotating the baking sheet halfway through, until the challah is deeply browned and the center registers at least 190°F, 30 to 35 minutes total. Transfer the challah onto a wire rack and let cool until just barely warm before serving, at least 45 minutes