

Challah!

By Mark Binder & Jonathan Berlowe Binder

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour, plus 5-7 more cups for kneading and extra for the counter
- ½ cup sugar
- 1½ tablespoons of active dry yeast (equivalent of 2 yeast packets)
- 2 cups water
- 1 egg
- ½ cup canola oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon kosher salt
- 2 egg yolks (can be substituted with 1 full egg and 1 teaspoon water)

Supplies: Large bowl, towel, counter, cookie sheet with parchment paper, small bowl, wire cooling racks. Consider purchasing a silicone baking mat if you plan to make challah frequently.

Making the Dough

- In a large bowl, add and stir together: 1 cup of flour, 2 cups warm water (about 110 degrees F, feels warm to the touch), sugar, yeast. The mixture does not need to be completely smooth.
- Let sit for approximately 10 minutes until mix bubbles/froths (to make sure the yeast works).
- Whisk the egg.
- Stir in the following: Kosher salt, 1 whisked egg, canola oil, 1 cup of flour.

Kneading

- Add 1 cup of flour at a time until the dough starts to “hang together” in a big ball.
- Spread flour over the counter and dust your hands with flour to reduce sticking.
- Scrape the dough out of the bowl and place it on the floured counter.
- Knead the dough, pushing in and folding it over continuously. Take a rest if you need it.
- Continue adding flour until the mixture feels soft and smooth “like a baby’s bottom.” This will likely take 4 or more cups of flour.
- Place smooth, kneaded dough back in the bowl and cover it with towel to let it rise until it doubles (about 1½ - 2 hours).
 - *See below if you want to make the dough on Thursday night and braid and bake on Friday*

After the first rise

- Allow dough to rise until it doubles (it takes about 1.5 – 2 hours to double). You can let the dough rise past this amount of time.
- Punch down gently on the dough.
- Flour the counter and carefully place the dough on the counter, flattening and spreading it out.
- Cut the dough equally into long, thin sections (you’ll need 3 strands for a classic 3-braid challah and 6 strands for a 6-braid challah)
- Roll out each rope with lightly floured hands. Length/thickness impacts the length/height of your braided challah.

Challah Help: Call Jonathan Berlowe Binder at 301-654-7074/301-503-8390 or email at jsbbinder@gmail.com

This recipe was developed by Mark Binder, an author and storyteller in Providence, RI. You can find out more about him and his work at www.markbinder.com.

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- Braid the challah. Pinch one end of the ropes together and braid. When finished braiding, pinch the other ends of the ropes together.
 - For a 3 braid – braid as if you are braiding hair. Left over the middle, right over the middle.
- Place the braided challah on parchment paper/cookie sheet (or silicone baking mat) for the second rise (30 minutes – 1 hour)

After the second rise

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
- Create an egg wash by mixing two egg yolks together (can substitute one whole egg and one teaspoon water)
 - *See below if you want to use the egg whites to make meringues*
- Glaze or “paint” the braided challah with the egg wash. Feel free to add sesame/poppy seeds or other toppings.

Bake the Challah

- The internal temperature should be 190 degrees F and the challah loaves should be golden brown.
 - Small challah: bake for 15-20 minutes
 - Medium challah: bake for 20 – 25 minutes
 - Large challah: bake for 25 -35 minutes

Eat

- Let cool on wire cooling racks.
- [HaMotzi](#) blessing & eat. Enjoy!
- Store in plastic bags. Don't put in bag until cool.

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Make Dough Thursday & Bake on Friday

- Make dough Thursday (same steps as above through first rise).
 - Place bowl with dough in refrigerator, cover with towel or upside-down plate.
- Remove bowl from refrigerator Friday and allow dough to get to room temperature (2+ hours)
 - Follow steps starting “after first rise.”

Making Entire Recipe in 3-4 Hours

- Place the covered dough (for first rise) in the oven. Allow dough to rise until almost doubled.
 - Braid challah as normal.
- Use a heated oven for the second rise of the braided challah (heat oven to 200 degrees & then turn oven off).
 - Bake challah as normal.

Bonus Meringue Recipe

- 2 egg whites
 - 1/8 teaspoon of table salt
 - ½ cup sugar
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - Optional: 8-16 ounces of chocolate chips
 - *Preheat oven to 350 degrees (for crispier meringues, preheat oven to 200 degrees)*
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- Beat egg whites and table salt (until stiff but not dry).
 - Slowly add sugar & beat until stiff and satiny but not granular.
 - Gently stir in by hand vanilla extract, add chocolate chips if you’d like.
 - Drop by spoon onto a cookie sheet (or parchment paper).
 - Bake at 350 degrees F for 20-35 minutes until dry to the touch.
 - For crispier meringues, bake at 200 degrees F for 1-2 hours.
 - Eat! (store in airtight container)

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