

Challah Bread

By Tori Messinger

Bring a touch of tradition to your kitchen with this soft, golden, slightly sweet challah bread—braided to perfection and sure to impress at your table!

Yield: 2 small loaves or 1 large loaf

Prep Time: 2 and 1/2 hours

Bake Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 Cups (500g) Caputo "00" Chefs Flour
- 1 Cup (225ml) Warm Water
- 1/4 Cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/4 cup Olitalia Extra Virgin Olive Oil, extra for your bowl
- 4g Active Dry Yeast or 10g Caputo Lievito Dry Yeast
- 1 Tablespoon (10g) Kosher Salt
- 2 Medium Eggs, 1 for Egg Wash

Optional Toppings:

- Sesame Seeds
- Poppy Seeds
- Everything But the Bagel Seasoning



Instructions:

Forming Challah Dough

1. In a small bowl, add warm water, sugar, and yeast (Caputo Lievito or active dry yeast). Let this sit for 10 minutes, until the yeast begins to get foamy.
2. To a large bowl, add Caputo "00" Chefs Flour, yeast mixture, 1/4 cup of Olitalia Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and 1 egg. Combine and knead for 10 minutes.
3. Next, add salt and knead for another 2-3 minutes until combined.
4. Place your dough in a well-oiled bowl with Olitalia Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Let the dough rest for 1 hour, or until doubled in size.
5. Punch down the dough and reform it into a ball, cover it, and let it rest for another 30 minutes.
6. Take out your dough and decide how many loaves you're making. If you are making 1 loaf, separate it into 4 parts. If you are making 2 loaves, separate into 8 parts. Specific measurements below:
 - a. (2 loaves) 8 parts—110 g each
 - b. (1 loaf) 4 parts—220 g each
7. Roll each piece into a long strand; be sure to pop any air bubbles you see.
8. Let the strands rest for another 30 minutes before you braid the dough.

Braiding Challah Bread

1. Once your strands have rested, reroll them out to get them a bit longer.
2. Place your 4 strands vertically on a parchment-lined baking sheet and pinch them all together at the top.
3. Cross the top left strand to the top right corner and the top right strand to the top left, overlapping each other.
4. Now take the farthest right strand and place it down the middle.
5. Now take your second strand on the left and cross it over to the open space on the right.
6. Repeat steps 1 through 3, alternating from the left and right.
7. Watch the video on our website to see these steps in action!

Proofing, Baking, and Serving

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. Once your challah is braided, cover it in plastic wrap and begin to make your egg wash that you will brush over the top.
3. Crack one egg into a small bowl and whisk together with a splash of water. Brush this over your challah and add any additional toppings; we recommend sesame and poppy seeds.
4. Cover your bread in plastic wrap and let it proof for 30 minutes to an hour, until the dough slowly springs back when you press on it.
5. Once proofed, remove the plastic and brush another round of egg wash onto the challah before placing it in the oven.
6. Bake your challah for 30-35 minutes until golden brown!
7. Remove from the oven and immediately cover with a clean dish towel for 10-15 minutes. This will trap the steam and create the softest inner layers.
8. Once cooled, slice, serve, and enjoy!

Notes:

- Toppings are all optional! Plain tastes great too.
- Leftovers make for the best French Toast :)

