

Professor Bread's

CHALLAH RECIPE

*(Adapted from Peter Reinhart, *The Bread Baker's Apprentice*)*

INGREDIENTS:

8 cups all-purpose or bread flour	2 tsp. - 1 Tbs. salt
4 tsp. fast acting dry yeast	2 Tbs. sugar
5 eggs + 3egg yolks (save eggs whites for an egg wash)	4 Tbs. corn or canola oil
1 ½ cups warm water (plus up to 4 Tbs. if needed)	poppy seeds

(for 2 large braided loaves)

1a) Mix together all the dry ingredients (not the poppy seeds) in a large bowl.

1b) In a separate bowl whisk the oil, eggs and yolks and 1½ cups water. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture and mix with a spoon until the dough forms into a ball-like shape. Add the additional water, if needed.

2) Put the dough out onto a floured surface and knead for 10 minutes. Add a little flour whenever it starts to become very sticky (slightly tacky is good). Kneading is finished when the dough is very elastic; test by pressing a finger against the ball of dough - the dough should spring back.

3) Put approx. 1 Tbs. of corn oil into the mixing bowl and return the dough, making sure to coat the entire surface with oil. Cover the bowl with a cloth and leave in a warm spot (like an oven that has been heated slightly and turned off). Let the dough rise until doubled in size; this will take about 1 ½ – 2 hours.

4) Take the dough out of the bowl and gently push the air out of it. Cut the dough into two equal parts and divide each of these into three parts if you are making braided loaves. (Challah is traditionally braided but this is not essential and this dough will make wonderful breads baked in loaf pans). To braid: Roll out the pieces into strands of equal length and then braid together 3 of the strands. Place the loaves in the loaf pans or on baking sheets lined with baking parchment and brush with the egg wash.

5) Cover the loaves with plastic wrap and leave them in a warm place to rise again; this will take about 30 - 45 minutes.

6) Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Brush loaves again with the egg wash and sprinkle with the poppy seeds. Bake for 40 - 50 minutes. The loaves should be a nice light brown on top. To test if they are ready, take one of the loaves out of the pan and tap the bottom; it will sound hollow when it's finished.

7) Cool for at least 15 minutes and enjoy!

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