

Challah



Preparation time: 30 minutes

Rising time: 2½ hours

Baking time: 30 minutes

Total time: 3½ hours

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons plus pinch sugar
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 4 cups white flour
- sesame or poppy seeds

Directions

1. Dissolve the yeast in the warm water with a pinch of sugar. Let sit for 5 minutes until foamy.
2. Beat eggs in a small bowl, then pour $\frac{3}{4}$ of the beaten egg into a large bowl and store the small bowl with remaining egg in the fridge. Add sugar, oil, salt, and yeast mixture to the large bowl.
3. Stir or knead flour, one cup at a time, into the large bowl to create a wet dough (if it's too dry, the braiding will unravel easily). Knead the dough for approximately 10 minutes on a floured board.
4. Place the dough in a bowl and let rise for about 45 minutes in a warm place, covered with a damp towel or plastic wrap. Punch dough down and let it rise again for about 45 minutes.
5. Divide the dough into three pieces. Form each third into a long rope, about the length of a cookie tray. Pinch the ends together and tightly braid the three pieces, then pinch together the other ends. Transfer to a greased cookie tray, then cover and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour.
6. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Brush the top and sides of the loaf with the remaining egg mixture from the fridge. Sprinkle sesame or poppy seeds onto the entire loaf. Bake for 30 minutes, until the bottom sounds hollow when tapped. Cool on rack before cutting and storing.