

RAINBOW CHALLAH

Lori Klinghoffer,
courtesy of Shannon Sarna, author of *Modern Jewish Baker*

MAKES 2 11-INCH CHALLAHS

Pareve



INGREDIENTS

Dough:

- 1 ½ tablespoons dry active yeast
- ½ cup, plus 2 tablespoons, plus ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 ¼ cups lukewarm water
- 4 ½-5 cups unbleached bread flour
- ½ tablespoon fine sea salt
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs

Topping:

- 2 egg yolks (or 1 whole egg)
- 1 teaspoon water
- ¼ teaspoon coarse sea salt (optional)
- 2-3 tablespoons sesame seeds (optional)
- 2-3 tablespoons poppy seeds (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

For the dough:

In a small bowl, place the yeast, ½ teaspoon sugar, and lukewarm water. Stir gently to mix. Allow to sit 5 to 10 minutes, until it becomes foamy on top.

In a large bowl or stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, mix together 1 ½ cups of the flour, salt, and ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar. Add the water-yeast mixture and oil to flour. Mix thoroughly.

Add another 1 cup of the flour and eggs and mix until smooth.

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Lori's Rainbow Adaptation:

Before adding the remaining flour, divide the dough into equal portions; each of which will become one of the strands for your braiding (use a scale to ensure equal strands).

Add one color to each portion and knead into the dough along with part of the remaining 1½ to 2 cups flour for about 5 minutes.

Repeat this for each color and place each colored dough into a separate greased bowl, cover with a damp towel, and allow to rise for at least 3 hours.

Once the dough has risen, you'll have the equivalent of 2 strands in each bowl, so divide each colored dough in half, one for each challot.

Back to Shannon's Process: Braid the challahs into desired shape.

Place braided challah on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or silicone baking mat. Allow the challah to rise another 45 to 60 minutes, or until you can see the size has grown and the challah seems light. This step is very important to ensure a light and fluffy challah.

Preheat oven to 375°F while the dough rises.

For the topping: In a small bowl beat 2 egg yolks with 1 teaspoon water. Brush the egg wash liberally over challah. Sprinkle with coarse sea salt, sesame seeds, or poppy seeds if desired.

Bake 24 to 26 minutes, or until the color is golden.

Transfer to a wire rack and let cool completely before serving or freezing.

NOTES: The challah can be flavored if desired; add any of the following after the eggs have been mixed into the dough:

- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic + 2 tablespoons dried rosemary
- ½ cup dark chocolate chips + ½ cup chopped dried tart cherries + 2 teaspoons vanilla extract + 1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon dried basil + ½ cup chopped pitted kalamata olives
- 2 tablespoons Za'atar spice + 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped pickled jalapeños + ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese

Storage: Wrap cooled challah tightly in plastic wrap and store at room temperature for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw at room temperature, then reheat in a 300°F oven for 5 minutes.

Warning: While not a nut, sesame may trigger allergic reactions in those with nut allergies.