

Shani's Challah Recipe

(Email me with any questions, shani.eisenberger@gmail.com)



- Dissolve 9 teaspoons of dry yeast in 4 cups of warm water.
- Add one cup sugar, mix lightly and let sit for 10 minutes.
- Add 7 cups of high gluten flour and mix/knead until smooth.
- In a separate bowl mix 3 eggs, one cup of canola oil, and two tablespoons of salt.
- Add egg/oil/salt mixture to dough slowly mixing.
- When smooth slowly add 5-6 cups of flour and keep on kneading, mixing until it forms into a smooth dough

(I use a 6 quart kitchen aide but this can be done by hand)

- Let rise for 2 hours lightly punching down every half hour.

***At this point (only if 5 lbs of flour were used) the following blessing is recited and a small piece of dough is removed and then burned. See explanation below.**

Baruch ata Adonoy, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidishanu bimitzvo'sav, vitzivanu lihafrish challah min ha-issa.

Blessed are You God, King of the Universe, Who made us holy with His commandments, and commanded us to separate challah from the dough.

- Spray non-stick cooking spray like Pam in pans, braid, and place in pans. Egg top, put desired topping (crumbs, poppy seeds, sesame seeds...)
- Let sit for another half hour while oven preheats to 350 degrees.
- Bake for about 45-50 minutes.
- When browned take out of oven and take out of pan to cool.
- Enjoy!

*In times of the Holy Temple, this piece would be consecrated for use by the kohanim (priests) and their families. Today, although the Temple no longer exists tangibly, it is still the focus of our spiritual vision of our identity as a people. To commemorate it, we take the piece of dough and either discard it (after wrapping it so that it doesn't come in direct contact with the rest of the trash) or burn it. If you burn it, it should be wrapped in aluminum foil, and nothing else should be baking in the oven at the same time. The moment after "challah" (what the piece is called) is removed is a time of profound spiritual closeness to God. It is a conduit between this reality and a level of being far beyond the walls of our kitchens. Many women will take advantage of this moment to pray for their families, for our people, and for the restoration of the Temple, or for anyone who is in need of special merit.
