



## SAUNDERS' MALT EXTRACT

Preparation

2  
HOURS

Bake Time

30-35  
MINS

Makes

1

Difficulty

HARD

# MALTED CHALLAH BREAD

Similar to brioche, Challah (pronounce Hal-lah) is a sweet-tasting yeasted egg bread that can be enjoyed simply with butter and a cup of milk, but is also fantastic with cream, jam and in bread and butter pudding. The braided design lends to its beauty. We provide instructions for a 4-strand braid. You can make a simple 3-strand braid or knotted rolls, but cooking times will vary.

## INGREDIENTS

### Bread

- 1 & 1/2 cups water
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 packet active dry yeast
- 1 egg
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 tbsp Saunders' Malt Extract
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tbsp oil, plus extra for greasing
- 2 tsp salt
- 4 & 1/2 - 6 cups plain flour (560g-750g)

### Egg Wash

- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup milk

## METHOD

- 1** Warm water to around 40°C – pour into a pyrex jug and heat in a microwave for 45 seconds if chilled from the tap. You can use a thermometer or check with your finger. It should be a similar temperature to warm bath water.
- 2** Transfer 1/4 cup of the water to the bowl of an electric mixer. Add sugar, and sprinkle yeast on top. Leave for 10 minutes to activate the yeast and froth up. Add egg, egg yolks, Saunders' Malt Extract, honey, and oil and whisk to combine. Add 4.5 cups flour and mix with a wooden spoon until a dough begins to form.
- 3** Place dough hook on stand mixer and knead dough on medium speed for 4 minutes. Dough should form into a nice ball and be slightly sticky. If you don't want to use an electric mixer, you can use your hands to knead the dough for 5-6 minutes on a well-floured surface. If the dough feels too sticky and not pliable, add extra flour, a quarter of a cup at a time. It should form a nice elastic, pliable ball.
- 4** Transfer dough ball to a well-oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap and a warm towel. Allow dough to rise for 1-1.5 hours until doubled in size – see notes on next page. After the dough has doubled in size, transfer dough to a well-floured surface. Punch it down, knead for a minute and divide into 4 equal parts.

## REMAINING STEPS NEXT PAGE

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## NOTE:

\*To rise, the dough needs a warm spot, around 30°-35°C. Higher humidity also helps this, so in summer the process might only take 45 minutes. In winter, you can proof the dough in an oven set to 50°C. Instead of plastic wrap, cover the bowl with a wet kitchen towel and add a shallow cake tin with about 1cm of water in it on a rack under the dough bowl / braided Challah. This will help increase humidity in the oven. Leave the door slightly ajar as you don't want the temperature to reach 50°C.

- 5 Roll each part between your hands into a long strand – doing it in the air helps the dough stretch into a nice long strand. They should be a uniform thickness, about 2cm in diameter with no seams.
- 6 Lay the four strands side by side. Pinch the top of the strands together. They might come apart as you braid, but can be pinched back later. Always braid with the first strand from the left in an over, under, over pattern. In other words we take the first strand from the left and have three to our right. The first one on the left will always go over the first strand on the right, under the middle strand and over the third strand. Repeat this process until the Challah is braided. Pinch the ends of the strands together and tuck them snugly under the Challah. Do the same with the pinched ends at the top.
- 7 Transfer to a baking tray lined with baking paper. Cover with a wet tea towel and allow to rise in a warm spot for 45 minutes until roughly doubled in size.
- 8 Preheat oven to 175°C.
- 9 Mix together the egg and milk in a small bowl. Brush the risen Challah gently with the egg wash, getting into the creases.
- 10 Bake for 35 minutes. Keep an eye on the colour of the Challah. If it is browning at around the 20 minute mark, cover it with a dome made out of tin foil. Remove the tin foil 5 minutes before finishing baking.
- 11 Remove from oven and allow to cool on a wire rack slightly before slicing or tearing and serving.
- 12 Baked Challah can be stored in a ziplock bag in the fridge for a week or frozen.

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