

Einkorn Challah

Eli Rogosa - growseed.org



Bread was offered to the Hebrew Goddess on a golden table in the desert tabernacle¹. My home-baked challah sits on a simple hand-carved Shabbat breadboard but it certainly does have a heavenly aroma! Eastern European Challah resembles an eggy brioche that is crusty and braided. Einkorn is safe for most people with gluten allergies. Einkorn challah is more delicious and far healthier than modern wheat bread. It looks so beautiful when the dough is twisted into a traditional braid. The secret to rich challah luster is two brushings of egg wash. Einkorn flour is available on: growseed.org

Ingredients

5 1/4 cups (630 g) sifted einkorn flour (plus 1/3 cup for kneading surface)
1 tsp salt
1/4 tsp active dry yeast or 1/4 cup sourdough starter with 2 Tbsp more flour
1/4 cup olive oil (50 g), heavy cream or yogurt
4 medium eggs (plus one egg for wash)
1/4 cup (82 g) maple syrup or honey

Makes two loaves.

¹ Bread of the Face-to-Face Encounter - 'Lechem Ha'Panim'

Dough consistency depends on complex variables such as flour grade, the size of the eggs and even the humidity in the air. Be ready to adjust by slathering the working surface with oil if your dough feels too dry, or use flour if it is moist and supple.

Optional - Add a teaspoon vital wheat gluten for tighter braids, a teaspoon vanilla extract with teaspoon flour or substitute 1 cup of tapioca flour for 1 cup einkorn flour for a crispier texture.

Directions

Whisk together eggs, maple syrup, cream or oil (optional vanilla). Add sourdough starter to wet ingredients or yeast to flour. Mix salt and flour (yeast and gluten). Mix wet ingredients into dry ingredients. Dust working surface with flour. Knead until smooth.

Traditional Blessing: Place your hands over the dough and say a silent blessing, then remove a small portion. Place in your compost to return to the earth or burn in the oven as an offering. At the table, invite everyone to place their hands on the challah, chant a blessing and break bread!

Braiding: The dough should be tight so that the strands hold their shape well. Divide the dough into even pieces according to the number of strands you will braid. For well-formed braids, flatten each section into a flat oval, then roll up tight like a rug.

To make the 6-braid challah, divide into 6 equal balls. Flatten and roll up. Place floured parchment paper on a large baking sheet. Place the 6 strands in a row parallel to one another. Pinch together at the top. Move the outside right strand all the way over to the left. Take the second strand from the left and move it to the far right. Take the outside left strand and move it to the middle. Move second strand from the right over to the far left. Continue until all strands are braided. As you braid say to yourself (alternating sides): *Second up. End to the middle. Second up. End to the middle.* Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate over night. The next day, brush a beaten egg on loaves. Optional: sprinkle with sesame, chia or poppy seeds. Preheat oven to 375°. Brush again. Bake for about 40 minutes till golden.

The meaning of the challah in ancient Israel was the dough portion of bread that was gifted to Levite musicians and Cohanim priests. I separate a portion of each dough and burn or compost it with a silent blessing to the earth, or bake an extra dough to gift to a friend.

Four Braid Challah

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Divide dough into four pieces, roll flat then roll up like a rug. Line up and pinch end together.



** Take the left braid and move it over to the right two braids*



then to the left under one braid.



Take the right braid and move it left over two braids



then to the right under one braid.



*Repeat from * until the done, then pinch ends together.*



Six Braid Challah

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Six braids pinched together at top



Left side to the right side.



Second over.



Side to the middle.



Second over.



Side to the middle.

Repeat 'second over - side to the middle', alternating sides till all the braids are done.

