

Easter Bread

Tsoureki Tou Paska

INGREDIENTS:

Servings: 1 large loaf

Fresh yeast	1/2 oz
or dry active yeast	1/4 oz
Warm milk	1/2 cup
Plain flour	4 cups
Eggs	3
Egg yolk	1
Superfine sugar	1/2 cup
Grated lemon rind	1 tsp
Salt	1/4 tsp
Nutmeg	1/4 tsp
Melted butter	3 1/2 oz
Butter	for greasing
Sesame seeds or sugar	several pinches

TOOLS:

Small bowl
Flour sifter
Saucepan
Large bowl or electric mixer
Pastry brush
Kitchen towel
Baking tray or Kugelhopf mold

INFO:

This festive bread is considered so rich and luxurious that members of the Greek Orthodox Church consider it appropriate for celebrating Easter Sunday, which they consider the holiest day of the year.

TIME:

prep time : 01:00

cook time : 00:40

PREPARATION:

Dissolve the yeast in half of the warm milk, 1/2 cup of flour and 1/2 tsp of superfine sugar. Let rest for 10 minutes. Combine the rest of the flour, the salt and nutmeg, and then sift into a large bowl. Make a well in the center then add the yeast mixture, 2 eggs, the egg yolk, the rest of the superfine sugar and the grated lemon rind. Start mixing. When the dough begins to form, slowly add the melted butter (reserve a little of the melted butter for later). Knead the dough for 10 minutes. Add more flour if the dough is too sticky. Shape the dough into a ball and brush with melted butter. Cover the bowl with a kitchen towel and leave in a warm place until it has doubled in size, about 1 1/2 hours.

On a floured work surface, punch the dough down and then knead it for 3 minutes. Brush with butter, cover with a kitchen towel and let rise for 30 minutes.

On a floured work surface, punch the dough down again and then knead it for 3 minutes.

Divide the dough into 3 equal portions. Roll each piece into a foot long rope. Braid the 3 ropes and then press the ends together to form a circle. Grease a baking tray or kugelhkopf mold with butter then add the braid. Cover the bowl with a kitchen towel and leave in a warm place for about 1 1/2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 375° F. Beat the remaining egg and brush it onto the bread. Sprinkle with sugar or sesame seeds and bake for 35-40 minutes.