

Chabad of Orange County

Presents...



CHALLAH BAKING WORKSHOP

**ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MAKING
LOTS OF DOUGH*!**

Compiled by

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*) This is not just a pun, but a tradition! In the Book of Ezekiel (44:30) it is written that separating Challah elicits blessings for general blessing in the home, specifically for *Parnasa* - livelihood.

Classic Sweet Challah

Yields: 6 Medium or 8 small challahs

Ingredients:

- 6 Tbsp dry yeast
- 4 cups warm (not hot) water
- 2 tsp. sugar
- Mix above ingredients in a large bowl. Wait until yeast is activated – 5-8 minutes.

While yeast is activating, mix together:

- 5 eggs (check for blood spots)
- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- 2 heaping Tbsp salt
- 1 cup canola oil
- (Optional: 1 tsp. vanilla extract).
Pour into yeast mixture.



Lastly add:

- 5 lb bag of bread/ high gluten flour. You may need to add 1/4 cup more than the 5 lb bag. It's ok if the dough is a bit sticky.
- Knead for 15 minutes by hand or 7-10 minutes by machine.
- Place dough in a large oiled bowl, or spray dough on all sides with an oil spray. Cover with a towel and let rise for 2 hours.
- Let rise for 1- 1 ½ hours...If dough is a bit sticky, put oil on your hands rather than adding extra flour.
Say the blessing on separation of Challah. Take off a piece (at least size of egg) and bake it until it is burnt (this can be done at a later time).
- Use a knife to cut dough. Form into braids or whatever shape you like.
- Let rise another 45 min but not too much more or it may fall.
- Brush with beaten egg yolk or entire egg.
- Line baking pan with parchment paper.
- Bake at 350 for about 35-40 minutes. For a crunchier outside, bake 450 for 15 minutes, and then 350 for 15 minutes.
- Bake on middle shelf, or if possible, switch the challahs to another rack half way through the process so challah spends equal time under the top heating element and the bottom heating element.
- You know when it's ready when: The bottom of the Challahs are golden too and that you should hear a tapping sound when you tap on it.
- Put Challah on a rack or turn them to the side or upside down when ready. That way you get a crusty (not soggy!) bottom!

Ideas that can be added to any dough

The possibilities are endless!

1. **For sweet Challah** knead into dough:

- Yellow and/or dark raisins
- Chopped nuts
- Chopped dried apricots
- Cinnamon and sugar
- Crumble: (recipe below)



2. **Chocolate/Chip Challah:**

- Knead in mini-chocolate chips
- Cocoa mixed with sugar (will be demonstrated)

3. **Onion & Olive challah:**

Knead in sliced black olives, and/or sautéed onions & several cloves of pressed, fresh garlic (will be demonstrated).

4. **Egg Wash:**

For A Challah to look shiny: Brush unbaked, formed Challah with a beaten egg. If desired, add a teaspoon of vanilla sugar or chopped fresh garlic to the egg wash and baste Challah with wash and bake.

5. To **garnish** top of Challah after egg wash has been brushed on, Sprinkle on any of the following:

- Sesame seeds
- Sunflower seeds
- Poppy seeds
- Pumpkin seeds

Crumble Topping Recipe (Parev):

1 stick margarine
1 c. flour

3/4 c. sugar
Dash of cinnamon (opt)

Crumble together margarine and flour. Add sugar by hand. Mix until large crumbs form. Sprinkle on top of an unbaked sweet Challah pressing crumble into dough slightly. Bake according to Challah directions. *Makes enough for several Challahs.*

The Mitzvah of Challah

What is Challah?

In its more widely-known usage, the Hebrew word challah refers to the **two loaves of bread** that form the core of the Shabbat meal. But in its more basic, biblical and halachic meaning, challah is the piece of dough that is traditionally separated and consecrated to G-d every time we bake bread.

The first portion of your kneading, you shall separate as a dough offering (challah)... In all your generations, give the first of your kneading as an elevated gift to G-d (Numbers 15:20-21)

The **Separation of Challah** is one of the 613 mitzvot (divine commandments) that constitute the body and soul of Jewish life. The mitzvah of Challah applies to both men and women. Challah has long been associated as a 'woman's mitzvah,' but in reality, it's applicable to both men and women. Replete with spiritual meaning, it has a far-reaching effect on the mind and heart of the one who fulfills it, on the household, and on the very character of the home.

How to separate Challah

Challah is taken from dough consisting of the five grains: wheat, barley, oat, spelt and rye. It is separated after the flour and liquid are well mixed together, while the dough is still whole, before it has been divided and shaped into loaves. Before the piece of dough is separated, the following blessing is said:

Baruch atah ado-noy elo-haynu melech ha-olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hafrish challah

Blessed are you, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to separate Challah.

Then remove a small piece, approximately one ounce, from the dough. Raise the piece up and declare, "This is challah" (in Hebrew, "harei zeh challah." Now put aside the piece you removed from the dough ("the challah"), and bake the rest. Since we cannot give the Challah to the Kohanim (High Priests) and since we may not use it ourselves, the prevailing custom is to burn the piece separately. It should be burned in the oven, but not at the same time as other foods are being baked in the oven.

If one forgot to separate Challah before baking, it may be separated after. Place all the loaves together, cover them with a cloth and then take a piece from one of the loaves, saying the blessing when applicable. The sages tell us that observing this commandment "will cause a blessing to the rest of your house". This is an auspicious time for women to request blessings from G-d.



The Kabbalah of Challah

“Lechem Mishna” – the Double Loaf



This "double loaf" (in Hebrew: lechem mishneh) commemorates the manna that fell from the heavens when the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years after the Exodus from Egypt. On Fridays, a double portion would fall, to include provisions for Shabbat (when manna did not fall).

Covering the Challah



The Challah is covered with a cloth covering during the blessing of the wine. It is customary to use a dedicated cloth called a challah cover for this purpose, although any improvised cover is acceptable. The Challot are also placed on a plat, or Challah Board. The manna, which were small pellets of complete nourishment, would fall early in the morning and be protected by layers of dew. Thus, by placing the Challahs between the protective layers of the table cloth or Challah cutting board from underneath and the Challah cover from above, we create a model of the manna miracle at our Shabbat meal.

Dipping Challah into Salt



Important note: We always dip the bread in salt, not only Challah and not only on Shabbat.

Our table is considered an altar (see Ezekiel 41:22 and Ethics of our Fathers 3:3), and in the Holy Temple salt was offered together with every sacrifice (Leviticus 2:13). Salt never spoils or decays, therefore, it is symbolic of our eternal covenant with G-d. That's why the verse refers to it as "the salt of your G-d's covenant. Salt also adds taste to everything. Our bond with G-d is supposed to add meaning and flavor to every moment of our lives; even when we are not directly involved in spiritual pursuits.

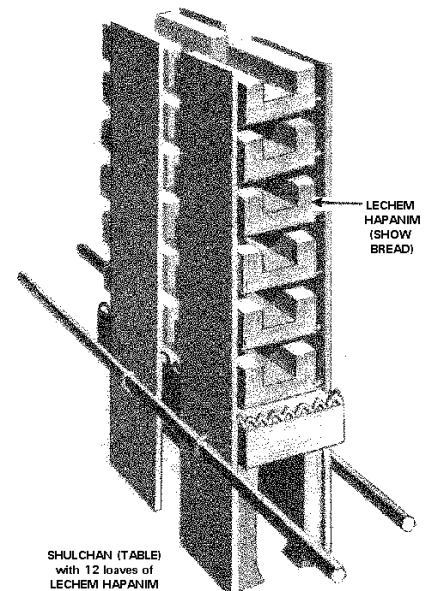
Why is Challah Braided?



The Challah-Bread also symbolic the 12 showbreads which were placed every Shabbat on the table in the Holy Temple sanctuary (representing the 12 tribes of Israel).

2 challot with 3 braids on Friday Night = 6; 2 challos with 3 braids on Shabbat day = 6. $2 \times 6 = 12!$

Others simply bake a breakaway with 12 pieces.



Shabbat Foods Gematria 7 (Shabbat)

(This insights, taught by the Gaon of Vilna) uses the type of *Gematria* is what the mystics call *Mispar Katan Mispari* (integral reduced value), also referred to in mathematics as the digital root, or repeated digital sum, where the total numerical value of a word is reduced to a single digit.

NER (Shabbos candles) (spelled nun, reish)
 $50+200=250$, and $2+5+0=7$

YAYIN (wine for Kiddush) (spelled yud, yud, nun)
 $10+10+50=70$, and $7+0=7$

CHALLAH (loaves of bread) (spelled ches, lamed, hei)
 $8+30+5=43$, and $4+3=7$

DAG (fish) (spelled daled, gimmel)
 $4+3=7$

MARAK (soup) (spelled mem, reish, kuf)
 $40+200+100=340$, and $3+4+0=7$

BASAR (meat) (spelled beis, shin, reish)
 $2+300+200=502$, and $5+0+2=7$



א	=	1
ב	=	2
ג	=	3
ד	=	4
ה	=	5
ו	=	6
ז	=	7
ח	=	8
ט	=	9
י	=	10
כ	=	20
ל	=	30
מ	=	40
נ	=	50
ס	=	60
ע	=	70
פ	=	80
צ	=	90
ק	=	100
ר	=	200
ש	=	300
ת	=	400

To learn more about Challah, visit
www.ChabadOrange.com/challah