

## **BILBE CIRCUS CHALLAH**

Adapted from Joyce Lit and TBS Family Recipe

(makes traditional TWO loaves)

7-9 Cups Bread Flour  
2 packets of Rapid Rise Yeast  
1 scant cup sugar (We use almost a full cup, try it and increase or decrease to your taste)  
2 Cups HOT water from the tap (temperature should be between 120 and 130 degrees)  
1 heaping Tablespoon kosher salt  
2 eggs  
½ Cup oil  
Glaze: 1 egg (beaten til mixed)  
Sprinkles of poppy & sesame seeds and kosher salt to your taste (We also LOVE Trader Joe's Everything But the Bagel seasoning!)

We use the KitchenAid mixer with the bread hook, but others might do it by hand.

1. Mix 1 cup sugar into 2 cups VERY HOT tap water (100-110 degrees) in a 4 cup measuring cup. Add 2 packets of yeast and mix well. Allow it to raise/make a foam about ¼ inch high. (Always mix sugar first, then yeast, or it won't rise)
2. Pour the yeast/water mixture into the mixer along with 2 cups flour and heaping tablespoon of salt and mix until lumps are gone.
3. Add the 2 beaten eggs, mix well
4. Add oil, mix well
5. Begin adding remaining flour "until" (it differs each batch due to humidity, your mood, or the kitchen gods). I keep adding until it is substantial enough to pour out onto the counter in a fairly firm ball. Add flour as needed, kneading as you go until it feels "right".
6. Oil a large glass bowl that you will use to let the challah rise in. Lightly oil the challah ball. Place it in the bowl and cover with a light dishtowel. (We dampen and ring out the towel before placing it over the challah ball in the bowl.)
7. Allow it to rise until it doubles in size. We like to set it aside and let it do its thing. It usually takes a couple of hours, but it really depends on the temperature of the room. (So save some time the first time out.) If you are pressed for time you can heat your oven at the start of getting your recipe together, turn it OFF after it feels warm, then, when the dough is ready to rise,

put it in the warm oven to rise. That takes much less time, but we personally like letting it rise at room temperature.

8. Take the challah dough that has doubled in size and gently "punch down" while in the bowl.
9. Divide dough in half then divide each half into thirds (or fourths if you prefer!).
10. Gently roll the thirds into longish "ropes", then braid 3 together to form each challah. The Bilbe Circus also enjoys weaving a fancier 4-braid or 6-braid loaf sometimes (recipe makes 2 challot).
11. Preheat oven/s to 350 degrees.
12. Place braided challah on a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper.
13. Gently glaze the challot with the remaining mixed egg (We use our fingers!) then sprinkle with toppings of your choice (or none!).
14. Bake until golden brown. (We adjust the temperature closer to 325 when more baking time is needed.) We bake for about 15 minutes, then switch racks and flip baking sheets 180 degrees for the second 15 minutes. This takes roughly 30-40 minutes.



B'tei Avon!