

CHALLAH

Good for 2 -3 braids depending on desired size (see below). Adapted from Jeffrey Hamelman's "BREAD: A BAKERS BOOK OF TECHNIQUES AND RECIPES"

- 607 g / 4 2/3 cups all purpose flour
- 300 g / 2 1/3 cups bread flour
- 160 g honey / 7.5 tablespoons
- 2 large eggs + 5 yolks (total egg/yolk weight ~ 185-200 g)
- 85 g / 5.5 tablespoons vegetable oil (can use olive oil or neutral oil such as canola)
- 300 ml / 1 1/4 cups water
- 17 g / 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 13 g / ~4 teaspoons instant yeast
- additional 1 egg + a tablespoon water for egg wash

Total finished dough weight ~ 1665 g. Makes three ~ 555 g braids or two 835 g braids. For a test, I divided the dough into two 750 g portions and used the remaining dough for a mini test braid. I like the 750 g size. Some challah recipes I reviewed yield one loaf at about 950 g! Play around with it.

1. Place all the ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook.
2. Blend on low speed for several minutes to incorporate everything then increase to second speed and knead for 6 minutes.
3. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place for about two hours, gently degassing the dough at one hour. NOTE: alternatively you can refrigerate the dough after the first hour's rise, either for several hours or overnight. If doing so, gently degas the dough a couple of times more over the next several hours. You can divide and shape the dough directly from the fridge.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface, gently degas and divide into your chosen sizes.
5. For each braid divide the dough into three pieces (if doing a three strand braid) and pre-shape each into a rough cylinder. Let rest on an un-floured work surface about 20 minutes, covering the dough with plastic wrap.
6. Then roll each piece into a 14-15" rope and braid together. Place on a parchment lined sheet pan. Cover with lightly oiled plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place for an additional 1.5-2 hours.
7. Toward the end of the rise heat the oven to 375°F.
8. When ready to bake, brush the tops of the braids thoroughly with egg wash.
9. Bake about 30 minutes until nicely browned.
10. Cool and enjoy.