



No-Knead Brioche

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 14: Elegant Brunch Favorites

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

Instead of painstakingly adding softened butter to the dough while it is kneaded, we simply melted the butter and added it directly to the eggs. We dispensed with the stand mixer altogether and opted for an equally effective no-knead approach that lets time do most of the work. To build structure and ensure an even, fine crumb in the finished loaf, we divided the dough and shaped it into tight balls before placing them in the pans.

Makes 2 Loaves

High-protein King Arthur Bread Flour works best with this recipe, though other bread flours will suffice. If you don't have a baking stone, bake the bread on a preheated rimmed baking sheet.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 1/4** cups (17 3/4 ounces) bread flour
- 2 1/4** teaspoons instant or rapid-rise yeast
- 1 1/2** teaspoons salt
- 7** large eggs (1 lightly beaten with pinch salt)
- 1/2** cup water, room temperature
- 1/3** cup (2 1/3 ounces) sugar
- 16** tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Whisk flour, yeast, and salt together in large bowl. Whisk 6 eggs, water, and sugar together in medium bowl until sugar has dissolved. Whisk in butter until smooth. Add egg mixture to flour mixture and stir with wooden spoon until uniform mass forms and no dry flour remains, about 1 minute. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let stand for 10 minutes.
- 2.** Holding edge of dough with your fingertips, fold dough over itself by gently lifting and folding edge of dough toward middle. Turn bowl 45 degrees; fold again. Turn bowl and fold dough 6 more times (total of 8 folds). Cover with plastic and let rise for 30 minutes. Repeat folding and rising every 30 minutes, 3 more times. After fourth set of folds, cover bowl tightly with plastic and refrigerate for at least 16 hours or up to 48 hours.
- 3.** Transfer dough to well-floured counter and divide into 4 pieces. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time, pat dough into 4-inch disk. Working around circumference of dough, fold edges of dough toward center until ball forms. Flip dough over and, without applying pressure, move your hands in small circular motions to form dough into smooth, taut round. (If dough sticks to your hands, lightly dust top of dough with flour.) Repeat with remaining dough. Cover dough rounds loosely with plastic and let rest for 5 minutes.
- 4.** Grease two 8½ by 4½-inch loaf pans. After 5 minutes, flip each dough ball so seam side is facing up, pat into 4-inch disk, and repeat rounding step. Place 2 rounds, seam side down, side by side into prepared pans and press gently into corners. Cover loaves loosely with plastic and let rise at room temperature until almost doubled in size (dough should rise to about 1/2 inch below top edge of pan), 1½ to 2 hours. Thirty minutes before baking, adjust

oven rack to middle position, place baking stone on rack, and heat oven to 350 degrees.

5. Remove plastic and brush loaves gently with remaining 1 egg beaten with salt. Set loaf pans on stone and bake until golden brown and internal temperature registers 190 degrees, 35 to 45 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Transfer pans to wire rack and let cool for 5 minutes. Remove loaves from pans, return to wire rack, and let cool completely before slicing and serving, about 2 hours.

TECHNIQUE

MELTED BUTTER EASES THE WAY

Traditionally, making a rich dough like brioche means kneading all of the ingredients to develop gluten—except butter. Butter (softened to 68 degrees) is added tablespoon by tablespoon only after the mixture begins to develop into dough. This is a long and painstaking process. It's an important one, too: If the butter isn't added slowly, the dough can break into a greasy mess. When we decided to ditch tradition and use a "no-knead" technique, we realized that this would also solve our tricky butter problem. In a no-knead approach, the dough (which must be very wet) sits for a long time, stitching itself together to form gluten—all without any help from a mixer. With kneading out of the equation, we were able to melt the butter and add it all at once—a faster and far less demanding approach.

TECHNIQUE

BRIOCHE FOR BRUNCH

DAY BEFORE

Make dough; let rest for 10 minutes
Fold every 30 minutes for 2 hours
Refrigerate overnight

MORNING OF, 7 A.M.:

Shape; let rise for 1 1/2 to 2 hours
Bake for 35 to 45 minutes
Let cool for 2 hours

TECHNIQUE

LOOK, MA: NO KNEADING

Folding the dough as it proofs is an important step—and the only active work you'll have to do. Gently lift an edge of the dough and fold it over itself, turning the bowl 45 degrees and repeating until you've made a full circle (total of eight folds).

