



Polish Babka

This rich bread, laced with rum syrup and drizzled with icing, is often served at Easter in Polish households. Babka is a Polish word for grandmother; the loaf is baked in a Bundt pan so that, when it's served, it looks like a grandmother's wide, fluted skirt. Although it's traditionally shaped that way, babka can be shaped any way you please; just bake it in a loaf pan, if that's what you have.

This recipe was inspired by one in our 1990 200th Anniversary Cookbook, which includes a wealth of recipes and information from cultures around the world. You'll notice that, despite being made with yeast, it's an easy batter bread; "no-knead" isn't as new a concept as you might think!

Babka

- 1/2 cup lukewarm milk
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- heaping 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) softened butter
- 2 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- 1/4 cup currants or raisins (golden raisins preferred)
- 1/4 cup candied mixed fruit or candied mixed peel; or mixed dried fruit, chopped

Rum syrup

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup water*
- 1 to 2 tablespoons rum*
- *Or substitute apple juice for the water and rum.

Icing

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons milk; or a combination of milk and rum or apple juice

Directions

1. Place everything except the fruit in a mixing bowl, and beat at medium speed until cohesive. Increase your mixer's speed to high, and beat for 2 minutes.
2. Add the fruit, beating gently just to combine.
3. Cover the bowl, and let the dough/thick batter rest/rise for 60 minutes; it won't appear to do too much.
4. Scoop the batter into a greased 10-cup Bundt pan. Cover the pan, and let the dough rest/rise for 30 minutes, while you preheat your oven to 350°F.
5. Bake the babka for 35 to 40 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer



AT A GLANCE

PREP

10 mins. to 15 mins.

BAKE

35 mins. to 40 mins.

TOTAL

2 hrs 15 mins. to 2 hrs 25 mins.

YIELD

1 loaf, 12 to 16 servings

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inserted into the center of the loaf reads at least 190°F.

6. While the babka is baking, prepare the rum syrup. Combine all of the syrup ingredients in a small saucepan set over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a boil, and boil, swirling the liquid in the pan, until the sugar dissolves. Remove from the heat.
7. Remove the babka from the oven. Poke it all over gently with a toothpick or fork, and slowly pour the syrup over the babka's surface.
8. When the syrup is fully absorbed (about 20 minutes or so), carefully loosen the babka's edges, and turn it out of the pan onto a rack.
9. To make the icing: Mix all of the ingredients together, stirring until smooth. Drizzle over completely cool babka.
10. Yield: 1 loaf, 12 to 16 servings.

Tips from our bakers

- Don't have a Bundt pan? Bake the bread in an 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" loaf pan, instead.