



SHERRY-SOAKED FRENCH TOAST (TORRIJAS)

25 MINUTES

This is our take on torrijas, Spain's version of French toast. Cinnamon and citrus are typical flavorings, but for complexity, we also added dry sherry, which infused the bread with a subtle nuttiness and caramel undertones. Challah isn't typical for torrijas, but we liked its eggy richness and tender crumb. Torrijas are especially good warm from the oven, when the outsides are

delicately crisp and the insides are soft and custardy, but they're also great at room temperature. Unlike regular French toast, the bread for torrijas is sweetened throughout, so skip syrup for serving—berries or a fresh fruit compote are the best accompaniments. You'll need a thermometer to gauge the temperature of the oil for frying.

Don't use stale challah. Stale bread will soak up too much of the sherry mixture.

INGREDIENTS

4	1-INCH-THICK SLICES CHALLAH BREAD, HALVED ON THE DIAGONAL
1	CUP DRY SHERRY
1	CUP POWDERED SUGAR
2	TEASPOONS GRATED ORANGE ZEST, DIVIDED, PLUS $\frac{3}{4}$ CUP ORANGE JUICE
$\frac{3}{4}$	CUP WHITE SUGAR
$\frac{3}{4}$	TEASPOON GROUND CINNAMON
$\frac{1}{8}$	TEASPOON GROUND CLOVES
4	LARGE EGGS
$\frac{1}{2}$	CUP ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
$\frac{1}{2}$	CUP GRAPESEED OR OTHER NEUTRAL OIL

DIRECTIONS

Heat the oven to 350°F with a rack in the middle position. In a large baking dish, arrange the challah in a single layer. In a medium bowl, whisk the sherry, powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon of the zest and the orange juice. Pour the mixture over the bread; do not wash the bowl. Let stand for 5 minutes, then flip each piece of bread. Let stand until the bread absorbs most of the liquid, another 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small, shallow bowl, stir together the remaining 1 teaspoon zest, the white sugar, cinnamon and cloves. In the same bowl used for the sherry mixture, whisk together the eggs, flour and 1 tablespoon of the sugar-spice mixture. One at a time, remove the soaked bread slices from the baking dish and dunk in the egg mixture, coating on both sides, then return them to the baking dish.

In a 12-inch skillet over medium, heat the oil to 350°F. Set a wire rack in a rimmed baking sheet. When the oil is ready, place half of the slices in the pan and cook until golden brown, about 1 minute. Using a thin metal spatula, flip each piece and cook until the second sides are golden brown, about 1 minute longer. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining slices of bread. Place the baking sheet in the oven and bake until the centers are cooked through, about 5 minutes. Using tongs, dip each slice into the remaining sugar-spice mixture, turning to coat, then transfer to a serving plate. Serve warm.