

French Toast

From the episode: *Lazy Day Breakfast*

Serves 4

For best results, choose a good challah or a firm, high-quality sandwich bread, such as Arnold Country Classics White or Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Hearty White. Thomas' English Muffin Toasting Bread also works well. If you purchase an unsliced loaf, cut the bread into 1/2-inch-thick slices. To prevent the butter from clumping during mixing, warm the milk in a microwave or small saucepan until warm to the touch (about 80 degrees). The French toast can be cooked all at once on an electric griddle, but may take an extra 2 to 3 minutes per side. Set the griddle temperature to 350 degrees and use the entire amount of butter for cooking.

INGREDIENTS

- 8** large slices hearty white sandwich bread or good-quality challah (see note)
- 1 1/2** cups whole milk , warmed (see note)
- 3** large egg yolks
- 3** tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1/2** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2** tablespoons unsalted butter , melted, plus 2 tablespoons for cooking
- 1/4** teaspoon table salt
- 1** tablespoon vanilla extract
- Maple syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Place bread on wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet. Bake bread until almost dry throughout (center should remain slightly moist), about 16 minutes, flipping slices halfway through cooking. Remove bread from rack and let cool 5 minutes. Return baking sheet with wire rack to oven and reduce temperature to 200 degrees.

2. Whisk milk, yolks, sugar, cinnamon, 2 tablespoons melted butter, salt, and vanilla in large bowl until well blended. Transfer mixture to 13- by 9-inch baking pan.
3. Soak bread in milk mixture until saturated but not falling apart, 20 seconds per side. Using firm slotted spatula, pick up bread slice and allow excess milk mixture to drip off; repeat with remaining slices. Place soaked bread on another baking sheet or platter.
4. Heat $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon butter in 12-inch skillet over medium-low heat. When foaming subsides, use slotted spatula to transfer 2 slices soaked bread to skillet and cook until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until second side is golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes longer. (If toast is cooking too quickly, reduce temperature slightly.) Transfer to baking sheet in oven. Wipe out skillet with paper towels. Repeat cooking with remaining bread, 2 pieces at a time, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of butter for each batch. Serve warm, passing maple syrup separately.

TECHNIQUE

KEYS TO PERFECT FRENCH TOAST

1. START WITH DRY BREAD

Drying bread in 300-degree oven before soaking and frying leads to toast that's soft, not soggy.



2. HOLD THE WHITES

Using yolks, not whites, in soaking liquid cuts down on eggy flavor.



3. SOAK PROPERLY



Soaking bread in flat baking pan for just 20 seconds per side ensures even saturation and no sogginess.



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