



Harvest Apple Challah

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This challah is totally different from the braid or spiral of golden bread you're used to. Stuffed with sweetened, cinnamon-scented apple chunks, it's prepared like monkey bread. Though the process is messy, the result is well worth it!

Dough

- 4 ounces lukewarm water
- 2 5/8 ounces vegetable oil, safflower preferred
- 3 ounces honey
- 2 large eggs
- 17 ounces King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- ¼ ounce salt
- 3/8 ounce instant yeast (I use SAF Gold because of the high sugar content)

Apple filling

- 3/4 pound apples (2 medium-to-large apples), NOT peeled; cored and diced in ¾" chunks (about 9 ½ ounces, prepared)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 ¾ ounces granulated sugar

Glaze

- 1 large egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water
- coarse white sugar, optional



Recipe summary

Hands-on time:

35 mins. to 45 mins.

Baking time:

55 mins.

Total time:

4 hrs 30 mins. to 4 hrs 40 mins.

Yield:

One 9" round challah, about 16 servings

Tips from our King Arthur bakers

- Be sure to use good-quality honey and oil in this recipe. Since they play such a major part, they have to taste good. We prefer safflower oil, as it's neutral-flavored. Canola oil can produce off flavors in baking, so best not to use it here.

Directions

1) To make the dough: Combine all of the dough ingredients and mix and knead them by hand, mixer, or bread machine, until you have a soft, smooth dough.

- 2) Allow the dough to rise, covered, for 2 hours, or until it's puffy and nearly doubled in bulk. If you've made the dough in a bread machine, allow it to rise in the machine for an extra hour after the dough cycle is completed. *Can stop here and refrigerate the dough overnight.* If doubling the recipe, and using a bread machine, take it out after one hour rising.
- 3) Lightly grease a 9" round cake pan that's at least 2" deep. Or grease a 9" or 10" springform pan.
- 4) Toss the apple chunks with the sugar and cinnamon.
- 5) Gently deflate the dough, transfer it to a lightly greased work surface, and flatten it into a rough rectangle, about 8" x 10".
- 6) Spread half the apple chunks in the center of the dough.
- 7) Fold a short edge of the dough over the apple to cover it, patting firmly to seal the apples and spread the dough a bit.
- 8) Spread the remaining apple atop the folded-over dough.
- 9) Cover the apples with the other side of the dough, again patting firmly. Basically, you've folded the dough like a letter, enclosing the apples inside.
- 10) Take a bench knife or a knife, or even a pair of scissors, and cut the apple-filled dough into 16 pieces. Cut in half, 32 pieces total. This will be very, VERY messy; the dough is slippery, apples will fall out, sugar syrup will ooze... it's not pretty. Don't worry, and don't stress about making all the pieces the same size.
- 11) Lay the dough chunks into the pan; crowd them so that they all fit in a single layer (barely). Lots of apple chunks will fall out during this process; just tuck them in among the dough pieces or simply spread them on top.
- 12) Cover the challah gently with lightly greased plastic wrap or a proof cover, and allow it to rise for about 1 hour, until it's a generous 2" high. It should just crest the rim of a 9" round cake pan. Towards the end of the rising time, preheat the oven to 325°F.
- 13) Whisk together the egg and 1 tablespoon water. Brush the dough with the egg mixture, and sprinkle heavily with the coarse sugar, if desired. If you're going to drizzle with honey before serving, omit the sugar.
- 14) Place the bread in the lower third of the oven on a cookie sheet (it leaks). Bake it for 55 minutes, or until the top is at least light brown all over, with no white spots. Some of the higher-rising pieces will actually char; that's OK.
- 15) Remove the challah from the oven, and after 5 minutes loosen the edges and carefully transfer it to a rack.

16) Serve the bread hot, warm, or at room temperature.
Drizzle with honey just before serving, if desired; or serve
with honey for dipping.