

International Christmas bread recipes for "Waiting for Living Bread" program

Slovakia: BISKUPSKÝ CHLEBÍČEK (BISHOP'S BREAD)

You will need: 1/4 pound of butter, 1/2 cup of icing sugar, 4 eggs, 1/2 cup of all purpose flour, 2 ounces of chocolate chips, 2 ounces of almonds, 2 ounces of chopped figs, 1 ounce of raisins, 2 ounces of candied chopped fruit, one tablespoon of baking powder.

Mix together butter, half of the sugar and yolks. Beat up a snow from the egg whites, add the other half of the sugar and finish the snow.

Fold together into the egg yolk mixture half of dry ingredients together with the half of the snow and finish adding rest of the dry ingredients together with the other half of the snow.

Bake in a bread loaf pan. Butter and flour your baking pan before putting the mixture in. Fill the pan about 3/4 full as the mixture will rise. Bake at 350 for 45 min. to one hour.

To make sure the Biskupský chlebíček is baked to perfection insert a toothpick in the middle of the bread. It should come out clean and your bread is done. Cool it before slicing. It can be sprinkled with icing sugar for festive effect.

http://www.iarelated.com/xmas/bc_bread.htm

Chile: PAN DE NAVIDAD

(Traditionally given to workers by employers, with a bottle of wine.)

4 c. flour
1 c. sugar
1 c. dried mixed fruits, diced (6 oz.) (peaches, pears, apples, raisins, prunes, apricots, dates, currents)
1/2 c. chopped almonds
1/2 c. chopped walnuts
1 tsp. cinnamon
pinch ground cloves
1/2 tsp. nutmeg (freshly grated if possible)
2 beaten eggs
2 Tb. butter, melted
1/2 c. milk
2 Tb. cognac (optional)

Sift flour and sugar into large bowl. Add fruits, nuts, and spices, and stir until well mixed. In a separate bowl, mix the eggs, butter, milk, and cognac, if using. Fold this mixture into the flour mixture. Smooth batter into a buttered 10" pie plate. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Germany: OLD-FASHIONED STOLLEN WITH ALMONDS

Sponge

1 1/3 cups plus 1 1/2 teaspoons lukewarm milk (95° F. to 100° F.)
1 1/2 teaspoons lukewarm water (95° F. to 100° F.)
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
1 fresh yeast cake
2 2/3 cups all purpose flour

Dough

3 1/2 cups plus 3 tablespoons (about) all purpose flour
1 1/3 cups raisins
2/3 cup blanched slivered almonds
2/3 cup chopped candied fruit
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 tablespoon ground cardamom
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt

For sponge: Stir 1 1/2 teaspoons lukewarm milk, 1 1/2 teaspoons lukewarm water and 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar in large bowl. Add yeast cake and stir until smooth. Let stand until foamy, about 10 minutes. Add flour and remaining 1 1/3 cups lukewarm milk and mix well. Cover and let sponge rise in warm draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour 15 minutes.

For dough: Mix 3 tablespoons flour with raisins, slivered almonds and candied fruit in medium bowl. Using electric mixer, beat unsalted butter and sugar in large bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, cardamom, vanilla and salt. Beat in sponge. Stir in fruit and nuts. Mix in enough remaining flour 1/2 cup at a time to form slightly sticky dough. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, adding more flour if very sticky, about 10 minutes.

Lightly oil large bowl. Add dough, turning to coat entire surface. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rise in warm draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 2 1/2 hours.

Grease heavy large cookie sheet. Punch dough down. Divide dough in half. Pat each half into 10 x 16-inch oval. Fold in half lengthwise; pat gently. Place on prepared sheet. Cover and let rise in warm draft-free area until almost double in volume, about 2 hours.

Position rack in lowest third of oven and preheat to 350° F. Bake until loaves are golden and sound hollow when tapped on bottom, about 1 hour. Transfer to rack and cool slightly. Serve warm or at room temperature. (Stollen can be prepared up to 1 day ahead. Cool completely. Wrap stollen in plastic and store at room temperature.) Makes 2 loaves.

Bon Appétit, October 1991

<http://food.epicurious.com/run/recipe/view?id=2568>

Ukrainia: CHRISTMAS KOLACH:

http://www.kitchenlink.com/msgbrd/board_3/tklcc.html

Since the earliest times, tribes of Ukrainian peoples have inhabited this naturally abundant corner of the world, with its fertile fields and rich, dark soil. Living in close harmony with the land, early Ukrainians had a deep understanding of the power of nature, so it's only natural that many of their holiday specialty recipes reflect the natural goodness of the land.

Today, you may find Christmas Kolach recipe served at holiday tables throughout Kyiv, where all Ukrainian family members are made welcome. At the feasts of the Christmas season, they celebrate the holidays along with the living, the departed, and the yet-to-be-born.

1 tsp. Granulated Sugar
1 cup lukewarm Water
2 packages Dry Yeast
2 cups Whole Milk
3 large Eggs, slightly beaten
1/4 cup Granulated Sugar
1 tsp. Salt
2 Tbs. Butter, melted
8-9 cups All-purpose Flour, sifted
1 whole Egg, beaten with 2 Tbs. Water for Glaze
2 Tbs. Poppy Seeds

Dissolve sugar in the lukewarm water and sprinkle the yeast over the top. Let the mixture stand for about 10 minutes.

Scald the milk in a large saucepan over medium-high heat and then let cool to lukewarm, about 110-F degrees.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the yeast mixture with the warm milk, eggs, sugar, salt, and melted butter. Add 3 cups of flour and beat until smooth. Cover the dough and let rise in a warm place for about an hour. Gradually mix in the remaining flour until a soft dough forms.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until the dough appears smooth and elastic. Place the dough in a greased bowl, turning once to coat with the oil. Cover and let rise for about an hour, or until doubled in size. Push down the dough and let rise for another hour, or until doubled in size again.

Divide the dough into three equal parts. On a lightly floured surface, divide one portion into three equal parts. Roll each portion into a 10-inch to 12-inch rope. Braid the three ropes together, starting at the middle and working your way out to both ends. Join the ends together to form a braided ring, leaving the center open. Repeat the rolling and braiding process with the two remaining portions of dough.

Place the loaves on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until almost double in size. Brush the loaves with the egg-and-water glaze and sprinkle with poppy seeds.

Bake in a pre-heated 375-F degree oven for about 45 minutes or until golden. Cool on wire racks. Serve warm or store in an airtight container for use later. Yields three loaves.

Wales: BARA BIRTH (SPECKLED BREAD)

- 2 cups butter
- 1 pound all-purpose flour
- 1/2 pound brown sugar
- 1 egg
- zest of 1 lemon
- 1/2 cup currants
- pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon molasses
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups buttermilk

Preheat oven to 375°F.
 Grease loaf pan and set aside.
 Rub together butter and flour. Add sugar, egg, lemon zest, currants, salt, and caraway seeds.
 Mix well. Stir in lemon juice and molasses. Add baking soda and buttermilk. Blend well. Pour into loaf pan.
 Bake 1-3/4 to 2 hours or until toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
 Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto rack to cool completely.

<http://www.web-holidays.com/xmas/worlddin.htm>

Holland: OLIEBOLLEN (OIL BALLS)

- 1 package yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 3/4 cup warm water
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups warm milk
- 3 tablespoon light corn syrup
- 4 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped apples

Dissolve yeast and sugar in water; let stand in warm place for 30 minutes. Combine eggs, milk, corn syrup, raisins, apples, and yeast mixture in large bowl. Add flour and salt into mixture. Mix well for 2-3 minutes. Test a spoonful of dough to see if it will fall into a "lump" form from the spoon. If not, add more milk. Let rise in warm place for 2 hours. Drop by teaspoons into 375° of vegetable oil. Fry until golden brown. Top with powdered sugar while still warm.

<http://www.dnc.net/users/king/recipe/olie.htm>
http://www.epicurious.com/e_eating/e04_xmas/euro.html

Greece: CHRISTOPSOMO

3 packages (3 tablespoons) active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water
1 teaspoon plus 1 1/2 cups sugar
2 tbs plus 7-8 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
5 eggs
1 1/2 cups milk, scalded and cooled
1 tsp masticha flavoring (see note) or 1 tsp vanilla extract
2 sticks (1/2 pound) unsalted butter, melted
1 cup slivered blanched almonds
1/2 cup white sultanas 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel

Combine yeast, warm water, 1 teaspoon sugar, 2 tablespoons flour, and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a bowl. Let stand in a warm place until mixture bubbles and foams, about 10 minutes.

In a large bowl, beat together 4 eggs, 1 1/2 cups sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, cooled milk, and yeast mixture. Add 3 cups of flour and masticha or vanilla extract. Add melted butter, almonds, sultanas, and lemon peel. Continue to add flour and knead well about 5 minutes, or until dough is quite stiff but elastic. Place in greased bowl. Cover first with plastic wrap and then with a damp towel. Let dough rise in a warm place until double in bulk. Punch down and turn over in bowl.

Cover and let rise for 30 minutes more. Shape dough into 6 ropes and braid 3 at a time. Place braids on a lightly greased cookie sheet and let rise for 40 minutes.

Beat remaining egg and brush each braid with it. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees, or until golden brown. Yields 2 large braids.

Variation: 1 cup mixed candied fruit can be added with the almonds.

Note: Masticha is a flavoring made from the sap of the mastichodendro bush, which grows only on the island of Chios.