

“Yom Tov Round Challah”  
from The Jewish Holiday Cookbook by Gloria Kaufer Greene

Ingredients:

2 packets (4 ½ tsp.) active dry yeast  
1 & 2/3 cups warm water  
1/3 cup sugar  
¼ cup honey  
½ cup vegetable oil (may be half olive oil)  
3 large eggs  
2 tsps. salt  
about 7-7 ½ cups unbleached all-purpose or bread flour  
½ cup light or dark raisins  
1 Tbl. each anise and sesame seeds (or 2 Tbl. of either one) (optional)  
(I add 1 finely chopped peeled apple. Can dust dough with cinnamon before braiding)

Glaze:

1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tsp. water

In a large mixing bowl combine yeast with 2/3 cup water and 1 tsp. sugar. Let mixture rest 5-10 minutes, or until it begins to foam. Add remaining water, sugar, honey, oil, eggs, salt and about 4 cups of flour. Beat loose dough with electric mixer or with a wooden spoon for 3 minutes. Add raisins and seeds if desired. By hand or with heavy duty mixer slowly stir in just enough of remaining flour to form a soft, slightly sticky dough. Cover with plastic wrap and let it rest 5 minutes. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface and knead it adding small sprinkles of flour if necessary to keep it from sticking, for about 10 minutes, until smooth and satiny. (I add flour until dough just becomes not sticky.)

Put in an oiled bowl and turn so it's oiled all around. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let rise 1 ½ hours.

The recipe calls for punching down the dough, dividing it in half, covering it and letting it rise the second time. You can eliminate this step if pressed for time. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. (At the Chabad Mega Challah Bake Mussy Levertov uses an oiled surfaced.)

Form the dough into round shapes. You can make two large loaves, 4 small ones, or rolls, as you wish. Place on cookie sheets covered with parchment paper or lightly oiled.

Round Shapes I have used:

1. Make a braid with 3 long “ropes” and then turn it around into a circle. Put on oiled or parchment paper lined pie pan.
2. Using a round pyrex or glass pie pan paper lined or oiled, make little balls to fill the bottom. These break apart nicely when baked. Donna Schmidt taught me this method.

3. Make a ball with about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the original dough. Brush with egg glaze. Make 6 strips and form into a Jewish star. Press onto top of dough. You can use the strips to form the year, a name, a dove, etc.
4. I have also made a sukkah-shaped challah. I pat a piece of dough into the bottom of an oiled 8 x 8" square pan. Be sure it is oiled all the way up the sides. Roll out 10-12 "ropes" and weave them on top of the pan to form the branches. Put a few drops of green food coloring into beaten egg yolk and brush the branches with this glaze. (If you like you can mix some glazed candied fruit made for baking into the branch dough before you form the ropes.)

After loaves are shaped, let rise covered 45 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°. Brush with egg glaze or olive oil. You can sprinkle with sesame seeds, poppy seeds or a mixture, or leave plain. Bake rolls or small loaves for about 25 minutes; large loaves about 40 minutes, till golden brown on top and bottom. Bottom of each loaf should sound hollow when tapped. If they are browning too much before they are done, cover loosely with foil.

Let cool on wire racks. Cool thoroughly if you plan to freeze them. Wrap in foil and again in freezer wrap.