

Emily's Cherry-Almond Braid

Makes 2 medium or 3 smaller braids.

A purple ribbon county fair favorite of Emily Walter Terry and Linda Beech

Basic Sweet Dough Recipe

1 cup milk, scalded
½ cup cold water
⅓ cup sugar
1 package active dry yeast (2 ¼ teaspoons)
1 egg
1 teaspoon salt
½ cup vegetable oil
4 ½ to 5 ½ cups flour

Cherry-Almond Filling

Softened butter or margarine
1 cup brown sugar
½ cup chopped whole or slivered almonds
½ cup cut-up well-drained maraschino cherries (pitted bing cherries may substitute)
2 teaspoons almond extract
2 tablespoons flour
Mix thoroughly. Makes enough filling to fill two or three braids.

Directions

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, mix milk, water and sugar; take the mixture temperature to be sure its cooled to 115° F, then sprinkle yeast over top.
2. Add egg, salt and 2 cups flour. Beat with mixer for 2 minutes. Add oil and 1 more cup of flour. Beat until mixed. Stir in enough flour to make a soft dough.
3. Change to a dough hook attachment and knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Lightly cover bowl with oiled plastic wrap; let rise until doubled.
Overnight option: If desired, you may put the dough in a 2-gallon plastic bag sprayed with cooking spray and place in the refrigerator to rise overnight. Deflate dough after about an hour or when doubled. Warm dough at room temperature 1 hour when ready to shape.)
4. After dough has risen, punch down; divide equally into 2 or 3 equal portions. Let rest, covered with plastic wrap, 10 minutes.
5. Roll one portion of the dough into a long rectangle. (Demonstration <https://youtu.be/rjXmjoEMsN8>) Cut 1-inch strips about one-third of the way into both long sides of the rectangle. Spread the uncut center area of the dough lightly with softened butter or margarine. Sprinkle on half or one-third of the cherry-almond filling. Criss-cross the dough strips over the filling to make a braid, seal ends. Repeat with the remaining portion(s) of the dough.
6. Place each braid on a parchment-covered cookie sheet, cover lightly and let rise until doubled.
7. Bake in a preheated 350° F. oven for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown and a thermometer reads 190-195° F. Makes 2 or 3 braids. You may leave the braids plain or, when cool, drizzle with a simple powdered sugar glaze, if desired.

Source: Adapted Kansas Wheat Commission 1990's spokesperson baking demonstration, Garden City, KS.
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