



BASIC CHALLAH

INGREDIENTS:

2 ½ cups warm water
2 eggs
1 Tablespoon active dry yeast
1 Tablespoon salt
½ cup honey
8 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
4 Tablespoons olive oil 1 egg white + 1 Tablespoon water

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl, sprinkle yeast over warm water. Beat in honey, oil, 2 eggs and salt. Add the flour one cup at a time, beating after each addition, graduating to kneading with hands as dough thickens. Knead until smooth and elastic and no longer sticky, adding flour as needed. Cover with a damp clean cloth and let rise for 1 ½ hours or until dough has doubled in bulk.
2. Punch down the risen dough and turn out onto floured board. Divide in half and knead each half for five minutes or so, adding flour as needed to keep from getting sticky. Divide each half into fourths and roll into 4 long snakes about ½ to 1 inch in diameter. Pinch the ends of the four snakes together firmly. Take the snake on the far left and put it over the snake and put it over the snake to the right, under the next, and over the last. Now grab the snake that is at the furthest left and do the same. Repeat this until you've finished your braid, pinch the end and tuck it under to keep it from coming undone. Grease 2 baking trays and place finished braid on each. Cover with towel and let rise about one hour.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
4. Beat the egg white and water, then brush a generous amount over each braid. Sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds if desired.
5. Bake at 375 degrees F for about 40 minutes. Bread should have a nice hollow sound when thumped on the bottom. Cool on a rack for a half hour before slicing.

