

Brioche

Makes 14 buns. From [Baking with Julia](#), by Dorie Greenspan, William Morrow, 1996. Recipe by Nancy Silverton.

While I did not transcribe this recipe word for word, since this post is part of the [Tuesdays with Dorie: Baking With Julia](#) series, I also did not adapt the recipe at all. The changes I made for my post are detailed in the narrative.

The Sponge:

1/3 cup warm whole milk (100°F to 110°F)
2 ¼ teaspoons active dry yeast
1 large egg, beaten
2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Put the milk, yeast, egg and 1 cup of the flour in the bowl of a heavy-duty mixer. Mix until everything is just blended. Sprinkle the remaining flour over the top. Rest the sponge, uncovered, for 30 to 40 minutes. The top of the flour coating should crack, indicating that the yeast is alive and bubbling.

The Dough:

1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1 ½ cups, (approximately) unbleached all-purpose flour
1 ½ sticks unsalted butter at room temperature

Add the sugar, salt, eggs and 1 cup of the flour to the sponge. Using the mixer's dough hook, mix on low, for about a minute, just until the ingredients look like they are about to form a dough. Still mixing, add another half cup of flour. When the flour is completely incorporated, turn the speed up to medium, and mix for 15 minutes, scrapping down the sides of the bowl and the hook occasionally. As the dough mixes, it will come together and start slapping the sides of the bowl. If this doesn't happen after 10 minutes, you can add a little more flour, up to 3 tablespoons, to achieve a good consistency, and the right slap.

Your mixer will get warm during this process, but it should be fine. (Check with the machine's manufacturer if you have any questions.) Let the dough mix for the full 15 minutes or your brioche won't have the right texture.

Next, make sure that the butter is of the same consistency as the dough – pliable, but not melting, or warm. You may need to bash the butter with a rolling pin, or work it on the counter with a dough scraper to achieve this. When the butter is ready it will be smooth and soft, but still cool.

Add the butter to the dough a few tablespoons at a time, with the mixer running on medium-low. If you are doing it right, your dough will fall apart at this point. But keep adding butter! When you have it all in the bowl, turn the speed to medium-high for a minute and then reduce the mixing speed to medium and beat for another 5 minutes – the dough will come back together and start slapping the sides of the bowl again. If it doesn't come together after the first 2 to 3 minutes, add up to one more tablespoon of flour and continue to beat.

When you are done, the dough will be smooth, and surprisingly cool. It may stick to the sides of the bowl.

First Rise:

Butter a large bowl and transfer the dough to that, buttering the top of the dough mound as well. Cover the bowl tightly and let the dough rise at room temperature till it is doubled in bulk, 2 – 2 ½ hours.

Second Rise and Chill:

Gently deflate the dough; slide your fingers under it, lifting a section of the dough and letting it fall back down, working your way all around the dough. Cover the bowl again, and refrigerate for at least 4- 6 hours, preferably overnight. The dough will rise and may double again in the refrigerator.

After this long chill, the dough is ready to use in any brioche recipe.