

Chocolate Brioche

Makes 1 large brioche

Ingredients:

- 7 g dry yeast
- 65 mL tepid water (80°F to 90°F)
- 30 g granulated sugar + a pinch, divided
- 50 g unsalted butter, cut into smallish cubes
- 125 mL whole milk
- 10 g salt
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 420 g all purpose, unbleached flour, divided
- 14 g unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 30 g icing sugar
- non-stick cooking spray or 2 tbsp melted butter



Ingredients for the glaze:

- 1 large egg yolk
- splash of water

Directions:

1. Spray two large mixing bowls with non-stick cooking spray, or rub with butter or olive oil and set aside.
2. Whisk the yeast into the water with a pinch of sugar in a measuring cup and allow to proof, about 5 minutes.
3. Heat the milk with 1/3 cup granulated sugar and the cubed butter until warm to touch and the butter has entirely melted. Stir in the salt until melted. Allow this mixture to cool to 110°F.
4. Once cooled, pour the milk mixture into the large stand mixer bowl attached with a whisk and add the eggs one at a time, mixing well to combine. You should have about 1 litre of liquid. Divide into two portions of about 500 mL each and set one portion aside.
5. Put the cookie paddle onto your stand mixer. To one portion, add about 100 g of the flour and beat on low for about 3 minutes or until it comes together. Now switch to the bread dough paddle and add the remaining flour or as much as needed, kneading on medium-low speed to make a soft dough that is clean off the sides of the bowl. Now knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Transfer to one of the bowls that has been prepared. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm dark place to double in size (1 or 1 1/2 hours).

6. For the chocolate portion, sift 210 g of flour with the unsweetened cocoa and icing sugar.
7. Retrieve the second portion of the liquid and add the cooled melted Belgian chocolate and mix well.
8. Add about 100 g of the sifted flour, cocoa and icing sugar and beat on low for about 3 minutes or until it comes together. Add the remaining flour or as much flour as needed kneading on medium-low speed to make a soft dough that is clean off the sides of the bowl. Now knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Transfer to the other bowl that has been prepared. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm dark place to double in size (1 or 1 1/2 hours).
9. When dough has doubled in size (both the chocolate and the plain versions) punch down and deflate them. Cover again and allow to rise until doubled in size (about 45 minutes to 1 hour).
10. Line a large baking sheet with parchment. Divide the plain, white dough in 2 equal portions (I find a scale very helpful) and roll into approximately 16" lengths. Divide the chocolate dough into 2 equal portions. Combine the four ropes on a lightly floured surface and braid. Press together the ends and fold under the braid. Place on lined baking sheet and allow to rest for 40 minutes.
11. Preheat the oven to 375° F. Combine the egg and cold water or heavy cream and mix well. Brush the braid with the glaze and bake for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and brush the expansion joints of the braid and return to bake for an additional 15 to 20 minutes or until the internal temperature is about 200°F. If they brown too quickly, cover browning parts with a little piece of foil.
12. Cool before slicing. This can be frozen in an airtight plastic bag for about 1 month.