

Chocolate Babka

serves 6–8

INGREDIENTS

DOUGH

¾ tsp. dry yeast or
0.7 oz. (20 g) fresh yeast
1.5 oz. (45 g) raw sugar
¾ cup (85 ml) warm milk
3.2 oz. (90 g) melted butter
1 egg
3 cups (330 g) spelt flour
¼ tsp. sea salt
1 egg yolk for the egg wash
1 tbsp. milk or cream for the egg wash

FILLING

2.5 oz. (70 g) dark chocolate
(70% cacao), broken up
into small pieces
5½ tbsp. (80 g) butter
2 tbsp. cocoa powder
2 tbsp. icing sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
Pinch of sea salt
1.7 oz. (50 g) chopped
pistachios (optional)

GLAZE (OPTIONAL)

½ cup (125 ml) water
½ cup (100 g) raw sugar

A quintessential New York dessert for those classic New York comedies, this one will take a while to make, but like an entire season of Friends, it's well worth your time.

Line a 10 in. (25 cm) baking pan with parchment paper.

Dissolve the yeast and sugar in the warm milk. Add the melted butter and the egg, whisk together using the dough hook on an electric stand mixer. Carefully add the flour bit by bit, ensuring that all ingredients are well combined. Knead the dough until it is firm. Cover with plastic wrap and let it proof for two hours in a warm place until it has doubled in size.

For the filling, melt the butter in a saucepan over medium to low heat. Remove from heat, add the sugar to dissolve and then add chocolate, cocoa and cinnamon.

For the glaze, mix the water and sugar in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer for five minutes. Set the syrup aside.

Take the dough out of the bowl and knead on a kitchen surface lightly dusted with flour. It is best to prepare the babka on a cool kitchen surface, as the chocolate filling may melt a little.

Shape the dough into a long rectangle with a rolling pin. The shorter side of the rectangle should be the same width as the baking tin. Spread the spiced chocolate filling onto the dough evenly, all the way to the edge. If using chopped pistachios, distribute across the chocolate filling now. Roll the dough tightly from the long side, if the dough is too soft and wet, chill in the fridge for 10 minutes. Seal the ends with a little water.

With a sharp knife cut the dough in half lengthwise. Weave the two resulting strands together, chocolate layers facing up, into a firm braid. You might want to cut the ends off before transferring the dough into a parchment paper lined baking tin.

To make the egg wash, whisk egg yolk and cream together. Brush the loaf with egg wash and again cover with plastic wrap.



Allow it to proof in a warm dark place for an hour and a half, or until it has doubled in size.

About 20 minutes prior to the end of the second proofing, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C) on the convection setting and bake the chocolate babka for 30–35 minutes. Check on the babka halfway through the baking time, as it may be necessary to cover it with tinfoil to stop the dough from browning too much. Remove from the oven, brush with glaze and let it cool. Remove babka from the pan and slice.

TIP If one whole babka is too much, simply split the dough into smaller portions and make little babka knots instead. The baked babka knots freeze easily and are perfect for reheating in the oven.

Level Difficult

Preparation time 4.5 hours

Cooking time 30 min