

Anne's White Bread

Bread



Yield: Makes 3 loaves

1 tsp of sugar
1 Tbsp of traditional yeast
1 Tbsp of salt
1 Tbsp of dough enhancer (optional - see footnote*)
4 cups + 1/4 cup (for yeast activation) of warm water
9 cups of all-purpose flour
1 egg (for glazing)

- 1** In a small bowl, combine the yeast, sugar and 1/4 cup of warm water. Stir just to combine and allow to stand for 10 minutes until it has activated. You'll know the yeast is ready when little islands of foam form on top of the mixture. In the meantime, put the salt (and, if you're using it, dough enhancer) into a large bowl. Pour in the remaining 4 cups of warm water and stir to combine.
- 2** When the yeast mixture has activated, stir it into the large bowl of water and salt. Slowly add 6 cups of the flour, working it into the liquid mixture until you have a sticky dough. Once everything has come together, pour it the dough onto a lightly-floured work surface and knead in the remaining 3 cups of flour. When the flour is completely incorporated, knead the dough for about 8 minutes until it becomes elastic and smooth. If the dough is wet after kneading it for a few minutes, lightly work in a little more flour. When the dough no longer sticks to your hands, place it in a large, lightly-oiled bowl, cover it with plastic wrap or a clean tea towel and let it rise in a warm, draft-free space for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, or until it has at least doubled in size. It should not spring back when poked.
- 3** Gently punch down the dough and divide into 3 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a rectangle approximately the size of your bread pan. Tuck excess underneath to form a parcel.
- 4** Place each parcel of dough into a lightly-buttered loaf pan, seam down. In a small bowl, whisk the egg and gently brush it over each loaf. Cover the loaves with plastic wrap or a clean tea towel and let them rise for 45 minutes - 1 hour, until the dough reaches about 1 1/2 inches from the top of the pan, and the corners have filled in. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
- 5** Bake for 30-35 minutes, until the tops of the bread are brown. Remove from pans immediately and allow to cool on a wire rack. Bread will keep on the counter in a bread bag or box for 5 days. Freeze additional loaves.

* **Footnote:** A variety of dough enhancer recipes are available online, and they are also available to purchase. While a dough enhancer is certainly not necessary for baking excellent bread, it can help with smoothness, elasticity and can increase shelf life. And, if you're making a whole-grain dough, it can help alleviate some of the heaviness. Here's a recipe that will yield enough for 10 loaves of bread. Stir together and store in refrigerator in an airtight container:

1 cup wheat gluten	1 1/2 tsp citric acid or ascorbic acid power
1/2 cup skim milk powder	1 1/2 tsp ginger powder (you won't taste this)
2 Tbsp soy lecithin granules	