

Braided White Bread Recipe

Looking for the perfect bread to serve with your soup or pasta dinner? Braided white bread is the perfect tear-apart bread to serve at intimate dinner settings and at family gatherings.

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cup water, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp or 2 pkg. (1/2 oz.) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup soft butter or shortening
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 cups bread flour, about

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix together the room temperature water and the yeast. Add the butter, sugar, and salt. Stir. Add 3 cups of the bread flour and mix it well. Add in enough remaining bread flour to make a dough that follows the spoon around the bowl. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead it for 10 minutes, adding more flour as needed until the dough is firm and smooth to the touch. Place the dough in a medium greased bowl. Turn dough over in the bowl so that the top is also lightly greased. Cover with a clean cloth or plastic wrap and let it rise in a warm, draft-free place for one hour.
1. Punch down dough. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured board or surface and knead out the bubbles for about five minutes. Divide the dough into 6 equal pieces. Set 3 pieces aside. Roll out the remaining 3 pieces of dough between your hands, making 3 strips, about 12-inches long. Line strips side-by-side on floured board. Braid strips, starting from the center and working to the end, and pinch bottom ends together. Braid the other side of the loaf, from center to end, and pinch the ends together. Set the braided loaf on a greased baking sheet and repeat the steps for braiding the remaining 3 pieces of dough. Cover the loaves with a kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let it rise in a warm, draft-free place for 30 minutes or until doubled in size.
2. Bake the bread at 350 degrees F for 40 minutes or until the bread top is golden brown and the bread sounds hollow when the top is tapped. Remove the breads from the baking sheets and let them cool on rack.

Bread Baking Tips:

Bread flour has a higher amount of gluten than all-purpose flour. This means that bread made with bread flour will rise higher than bread made with all-purpose flour. You can make your own bread flour by adding 1-1/2 teaspoons gluten to each cup of all-purpose flour you use in your bread recipe.