HOLY SATURDAY AND EASTER · MARCH 27 TO 28, 2027

Braided Easter bread

Prep 40 min **Cook** 30 min **Rise** 2 hr **Total** 3 hr 10 min **Makes** One large wreath, about 12 slices
Level Medium

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. The decorative eggs go in raw and cook in the oven. Wash hands after handling raw eggs and do not taste the raw dough. Treat the baked eggs as decoration unless they are firm and the bread goes into the fridge within 2 hours.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Check sprinkles and egg dye labels. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Dough

- 3½ to 4 cups (440–500 g) all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup (65 g) sugar
- 2¼ tsp (1 packet, 7 g) instant yeast
- 1 tsp salt
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon or orange
- ¾ cup (180 ml) milk
- ¼ cup (55 g) butter
- 2 eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla extract or ½ tsp anise extract

To finish

- 5 raw eggs in their shells, dyed with food coloring (optional)
- 1 egg beaten with 1 tbsp milk, for brushing
- Rainbow nonpareils or sprinkles

METHOD

1. Warm the milk and butter until the butter melts, then cool until just warm to the touch (about 105–110°F, 40–43°C).
2. In a large bowl, mix 3½ cups (440 g) of flour with the sugar, yeast, salt, and zest. Add the warm milk, 2 eggs, and vanilla and mix to a soft dough.
3. Knead 8 to 10 minutes, adding flour a spoonful at a time only if very sticky, until smooth and elastic. Cover and let rise in a warm place 1 to 1½ hours, until doubled.
4. Divide the dough into 3 pieces and roll each into a rope about 24 inches (60 cm) long. Braid the ropes, bring the ends together into a ring, and pinch them to seal. Set the ring on a lined baking sheet.
5. Gently tuck the dyed raw eggs into the braid, spaced around the ring. Cover and let rise 45 minutes, until puffy. Heat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
6. Brush the bread, not the eggs, with the egg wash and scatter the sprinkles over it.
7. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, until deep golden and hollow-sounding underneath, covering loosely with foil if it browns too fast. Cool on a rack.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Dye the eggs (with a grown-up)
- Roll the ropes and help braid
- Tuck the eggs into the wreath
- Shake on the sprinkles

GOOD TO KNOW

- Without the eggs, the dough makes a lovely plain wreath or two small braided loaves.
- If your parish blesses Easter food on Holy Saturday, bring the bread in your basket.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Risen Lord, as we break this Easter bread, fill our home with your new life. Alleluia!