

Food for Thought...

by Susan Gordon

Challah for the holidays

We have all enjoyed the tradition of dipping apples in honey for a sweet New Year. Have you ever wondered why we eat round challot on the High Holy Days? I did a little research and found that some say they represent a crown that reflects our coronation of God as the ruler of the world. Others have suggested that the circular shape represents the cyclical nature of the year.

It's interesting that the Hebrew word for year is "*shana*" which has a double meaning and comes from the Hebrew word "repeat" and also means "change". It seems that as the years go round and round, repeating the same seasons and holidays

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 Tablespoons (TB) dry yeast
- 2 Teaspoons (Tsp) Sugar
- 1/4 Cup warm water
- 1/2 Cup melted margarine or butter
- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 1 Tsp Salt
- 1-3/4 Cup hot water (hot from tap)
- 7 Cups 'High Grade' flour + more as may be needed
- 2 Eggs lightly beaten
- 1 Cup raisins
- 1 Egg yolk beaten with 1 Tsp water



as the year before, we are presented with a choice. Do we want this shana (year) to be a repetition of those before them, or do we want to make a change for the good?

When you make this recipe you'll find that Rosh Hashanah challot are not really circles, they are spirals. The spiral shape illustrates the climb up from repetition to a higher experience. Here's wishing you and yours a sweet, successful, uplifting, happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Preparation

Dissolve 2 Tsp Sugar and yeast in 1/4 cup of warm water. Let stand for 5 – 10 minutes (Yeast is ready when it is rising and puffy)

Stir in 1-3/4 cups water, salt, 1/2 cup sugar and butter or margarine to yeast.

Stir in 1/2 the flour. Add eggs and beat.

Gradually add the balance of the flour and the raisins. Knead until smooth and elastic (about 10 minutes).

Place in a greased bowl and cover with a tea towel. Let rise until the mixture has doubled in size (1-2 hours)

Punch down the dough. Remove it from the bowl and knead until knead until shiny and pliable.

Shaping the loaves (for two round loaves)

Divide the dough in half and then half again. You should now have 4 equal pieces of dough.

Roll one piece into a long smooth strip. Coil this strip into a circle place on a greased cookie sheet. Poke the end under the circle.

Divide one of the remaining pieces into two unequal strips 2/3 and 1/3. Roll into smooth strips.

Take the bigger of the two pieces and coil it on top of the first then take the second piece and coil it on top of the second. You should now have a three tiered conical form.

Do the same for the second loaf.

Baking

Preheat your oven to 190 degrees, 375 Fahrenheit or on gas 5.

Brush the loaves with the egg yolk & water mixture.

Bake for 30 – 40 minutes or until well browned. Cool on a wire rack.

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