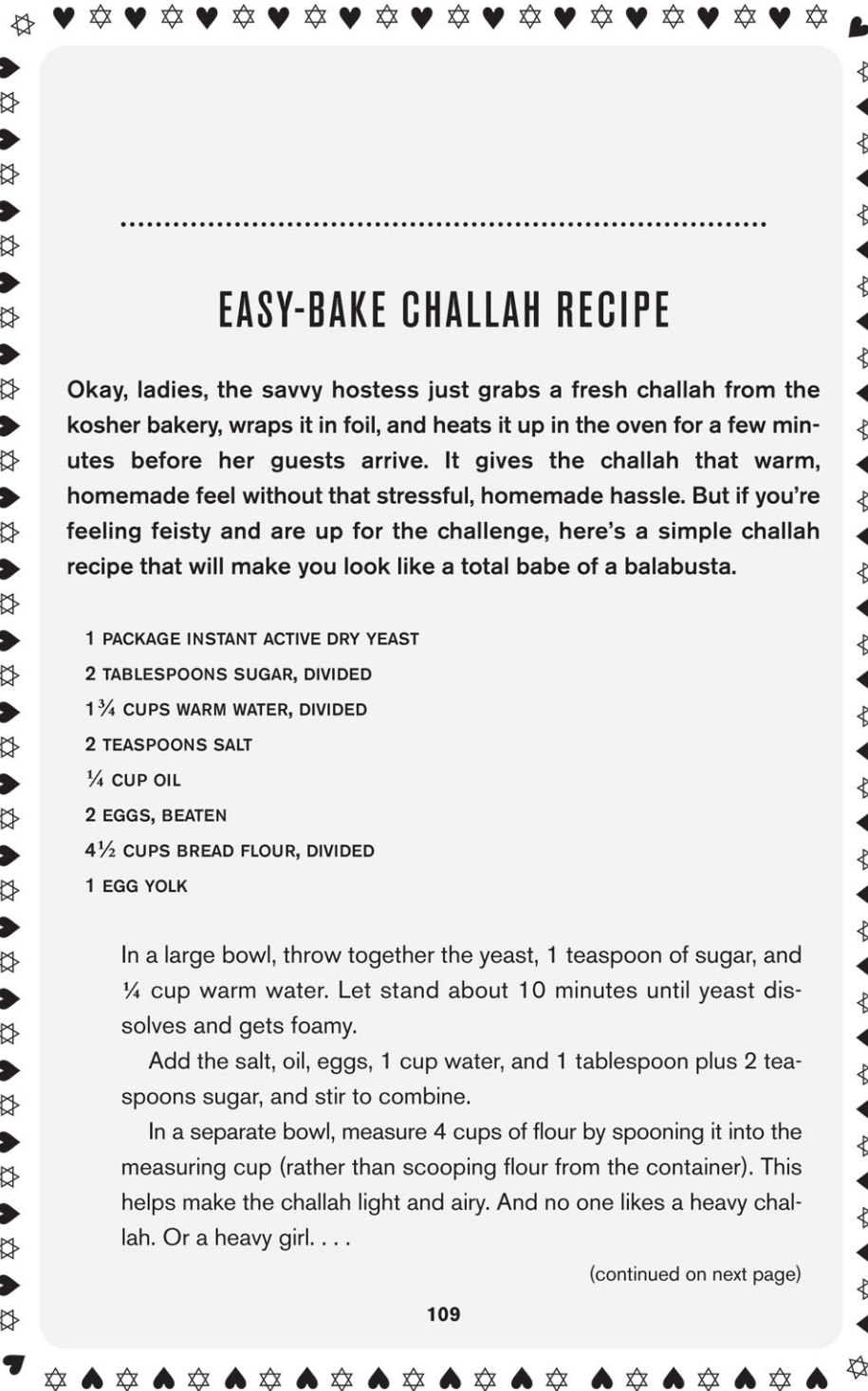




LIFE, LOVE, LOX

BY CARIN DAVIS

REAL-WORLD ADVICE
FOR THE
MODERN JEWISH GIRL



EASY-BAKE CHALLAH RECIPE

Okay, ladies, the savvy hostess just grabs a fresh challah from the kosher bakery, wraps it in foil, and heats it up in the oven for a few minutes before her guests arrive. It gives the challah that warm, homemade feel without that stressful, homemade hassle. But if you're feeling feisty and are up for the challenge, here's a simple challah recipe that will make you look like a total babe of a balabusta.

- 1 PACKAGE INSTANT ACTIVE DRY YEAST
- 2 TABLESPOONS SUGAR, DIVIDED
- 1 ¾ CUPS WARM WATER, DIVIDED
- 2 TEASPOONS SALT
- ¼ CUP OIL
- 2 EGGS, BEATEN
- 4 ½ CUPS BREAD FLOUR, DIVIDED
- 1 EGG YOLK

In a large bowl, throw together the yeast, 1 teaspoon of sugar, and ¼ cup warm water. Let stand about 10 minutes until yeast dissolves and gets foamy.

Add the salt, oil, eggs, 1 cup water, and 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons sugar, and stir to combine.

In a separate bowl, measure 4 cups of flour by spooning it into the measuring cup (rather than scooping flour from the container). This helps make the challah light and airy. And no one likes a heavy challah. Or a heavy girl. . . .

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Gradually add the 4 cups of flour (about ½ cup at a time) to the liquid mixture and stir to combine. It's important not to just dump it all in. That's the baking equivalent of skipping foreplay.

Remove dough from bowl; knead it on a well-floured surface with your well-manicured hands for 7 to 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. You can slowly add in up to ½ cup of flour if needed to make the dough less sticky.

Place dough in well-greased bowl, cover it with a clean towel, and store it in a warm place so it can rise. Grab your iPod and go work out for 1½ to 2 hours, or until dough doubles in bulk.

Punch down the dough; divide it into three sections, rolling each into an 11- to 12-inch rope. On a floured surface, braid the ropes like your mom used to braid your hair—minus the scrunchie.

Place the braided bread on a greased cookie sheet. Cover it with a clean towel and place it in a warm place for 1½ to 2 hours to rise. Go get a facial while waiting.

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Beat the remaining egg yolk with ¼ cup water, and brush the egg wash over the bread to give it that Pantene shine. If you want to accessorize, now's the time to sprinkle sesame or poppy seeds on top. Or dare to go bare. . . .

Bake for 45 to 50 minutes, or until the crust is golden.

Mazel Tov! Your skin looks great, your homemade challah is impressive, and you burned enough calories at the gym to actually eat a slice.