



Spiced Chocolate & Orange Babka

Preparation time: 30 minutes + proving time | **Cooking time:** 30 minutes | **Serves:** 2 x 1kg Loaves

Dough

½ cup (125ml) warm milk
 ⅓ cup (90g) honey
 2 teaspoons dry fast action yeast
 140g unsalted butter, melted
 3 extra-large eggs, lightly beaten
 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
 2 teaspoons orange zest
 4 ½ cups (675g) plain flour (eg. Lauke Wallaby)
 1 tablespoon cinnamon
 1 teaspoon salt

Chocolate filling

125g unsalted butter, diced
150g Haigh's dark chocolate pastilles
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 ⅓ cup (55g) icing sugar
 ⅓ cup (35g) cocoa

Syrup

½ cup (125ml) orange juice
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 1 cup (220g) caster sugar



- To activate yeast, combine milk, 1 tablespoon honey and yeast together in a small bowl, stirring to combine. Cover and leave to stand for 10 minutes or until bubbles appear on surface.
- Place yeast mixture in bowl of electric stand mixer with remaining honey, melted butter, eggs, vanilla, zest, stirring to combine. Add flour, cinnamon and salt stirring until combined. Using the dough hook attachment, mix for 5-10 minutes or until dough becomes soft, smooth, and elastic, and no longer sticking to mixing bowl.
- Place dough in a large lightly greased mixing bowl, cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for 1-2 hours or until doubled in size. Knock air out of dough and reshape into a ball. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- To assemble babka loaves, lightly grease 2 x 1kg loaf pans (21x11x7cm) and line with baking paper. Remove dough from refrigerator and set aside for 30 minutes, to come up to room temperature.
- For the chocolate filling, combine chocolate and butter together in a mixing bowl over a small saucepan of simmering water. Stir occasionally until melted. Add cinnamon, icing sugar and cocoa, stirring until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, divide dough into two equal pieces and shape into balls. On a clean lightly floured surface, roll each dough ball into 30cm x 40cm rectangles, with shorter side in front. Spread half the chilled chocolate mixture over dough, allowing a 2cm border. Starting with the short side in front, roll dough into a roulade. With seam side down, cut roulade in half lengthways and with the layers facing up, plait the two pieces together. Carefully place dough plait in prepared tin. Repeat process with remaining dough ball. Cover tins with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled in size.
- Meanwhile for the syrup, heat juice, cinnamon and sugar together in a small saucepan over a low heat, stirring until sugar has dissolved. Bring to boil and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside until required.
- Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan-forced).
- Place both tins on the middle shelf of preheated oven and bake for 30 minutes or until bread is golden and risen. Remove loaves from oven and drizzle over syrup. Allow loaves to cool before serving.

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