

# BRETZEL

## German Cross-shaped Breads



-EXPO 2015-



### - Ingredients -

1 kg plain white flour  
(around 9 - 12 % protein)  
260 ml milk (lukewarm)  
260 ml water (lukewarm)  
80 g Butter (unsalted)  
1 tbsp malt extract  
(liquid or dried, or brown sugar)  
2 tsp fast action dried yeast  
(or 42 g fresh if using)  
2 tbsp salt (unrefined)

### For the finishing solution

1 l water  
3 tbsp baking soda  
(or lye if you're using it)



Plus 5h fermenting - 16' baking

Serves up to  
14 breads

### - Instructions -

- Add 100 g of flour, all the yeast and the water into a bowl. Mix, cover with cling-film and leave in a warm place for 5+ hours to create the yeast flavour. After that, add the rest of the flour, salt, milk, malt extract and melted butter. Mix and knead the mixture to make the dough firm (around 10 minutes) and leave for about 90 minutes, or until a point that has been pushed in gently springs back.
- When ready, knock the dough back and start forming shapes. The easiest way is to make batons around 2 cm thick. Roll the dough out to be a long (40 cm) rope with the middle 5 cm bulged to a diameter of around 3 cm, tapering to the ends being around 1 cm thick.
- Bring the two ends together about 5 cm in, overlap them, twist, and bring back to go over the main body. Almost like tying a knot. Leave for 30 minutes uncovered in a warm room to rise and develop.
- In the meantime bring the 1.5 lt of water to the boil in a large pot (around 20 cm diameter) and add the baking soda. If you can find food grade sodium hydroxide (lye), use at 3-4 tbs/litre but be VERY careful and DO NOT let children near it. ALWAYS wear gloves and eye protection.
- Once the dough has risen, place the trays next to a cold window with some wind blowing or use a fan. This develops a skin on the pretzels which gives that special chewy texture.
- Once done drop the shaped dough into the boiling solution (one at a time) until they float (about 5 second), fish out with a fish slice (or similar) and lay on a baking tray lined with baking paper.
- Sprinkle with sea salt (lightly at first, you find your own taste preference later) and slash the dough to a depth of around 1cm in the thick part at the top-back. If you want to top with cheese, leave off the salt, and add the cheese once the pretzel is baked, so 5 to 10 minutes extra in the oven later.
- Add the baking sheets to the 200° C oven for around 16 minutes, until a nice deep breadly brown is seen on the pretzels.
- Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely on a wire rack. They taste good warm, but better when cooled and crisped.

At the Hofbräuhaus beer hall in Munich, these giant pretzels, which have a similar texture to bagels, are served with soft butter.

This iconic German specialty is named after the Latin *bracellae* meaning 'little arms'. The early Christians were

the first to eat lenten bread in the shape of a cross with intersecting branches, very similar to today's pretzel. Some believe German monks invented the pretzel to reward children for learning their prayers.