

Choreg With Halvah (Sweet Bread)

Choreg:

Fill one cup with eggs (usually 6 to 8 eggs)
1 cup milk
1 ½ cups sugar
1 teaspoon ground fenugreek
1 ½ tablespoons ground mastic gum (can substitute xanthan gum)
2 packs yeast
½ cup warm water (100 degrees Fahrenheit)
2 sticks of unsalted butter, melted
½ teaspoon each of cinnamon and cloves
1 teaspoon each of ground anise seed, fennel seeds
A pinch of nutmeg
All-purpose flour

Halvah Filling (Optional):

1 cup tahini
1/3 cup of honey
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
½ teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt
1 large egg
1½ cup finely chopped halvah
Sesame Seeds for sprinkling (optional)

Place the yeast in warm water, along with 1 teaspoon of sugar and allow to bloom in a draft free corner for about 15 minutes. Put the eggs, milk, sugar, fenugreek, mastic gum, the melted butter, and all of the spices in a large bowl. Add the yeast once it has bloomed and start adding flour. Knead with both hands until the dough does not stick to your hands when kneading. Cover with a towel and let the dough rise in a draft free corner for about 2 hours.

If adding halvah filling, stir the tahini with honey, vanilla, cinnamon and the salt. If too thick, add 2 tablespoons of water to smooth it out. In a separate bowl, beat the egg with 1 tablespoon of water. Set aside.

Once the dough has risen, preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Cut the dough in half. Cover one half and work with the other.



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Divide other dough on the work surface into three equal pieces. Using a rolling pin, roll one piece into a rectangle. Spread 1/4 cup of the tahini mixture on top, making sure you leave a half inch border on each side. Sprinkle the crumbled Halvah on top of this mixture. With the long side facing you, roll up the dough into a log. Press and seal the ends together. Repeat with the remaining two pieces. Arrange the three logs on one of the baking sheets and braid them together.

Brush with the egg wash and sprinkle with the sesame seeds (optional). Bake the Choreg for about 30 minutes in the middle of the oven, making sure you rotate in the oven depending on each oven. I usually use convection bake for my choregs and I don't feel the need to rotate the pans.

If you chose not to use the halvah filling, cut the dough into three pieces, roll them out into logs and braid them and bake the same way. You can also shape them into smaller individual pieces.