

The Sweet Boys' Chocolate Babka

Yield: 3 loaves.

For the dough:

- 1½ cups warm whole milk, about 110 degrees
- 2 packages dry active yeast
- ¾ cup white sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 egg yolks
- 1½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 cups all-purpose flour, plus some for work surface
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 sticks butter, cut into 1-inch pieces, room temperature

For the filling:

- 24 ounces dark chocolate
- 2½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 jar apricot preserves
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder
- ½ cup butter

For the streusel topping:

- 1½ cups confectioners' sugar
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ sticks unsalted butter, room temperature

To make the dough: Pour warm milk into a small bowl. Sprinkle yeast and a pinch of sugar over milk. Stir lightly. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.

In the bowl of an electric mixer with paddle attachment, beat together the sugar, eggs, vanilla, and yolks. Add yeast mixture and beat to combine.

In a bowl, combine flour and salt. Add to egg mixture and beat on low speed until almost all of the flour is incorporated. Change to a dough hook. Add butter pieces and beat until completely incorporated, about 10 minutes. Dough should be smooth, soft, and slightly sticky.

Turn out dough onto a floured surface. Knead until smooth. Butter a large bowl and place dough in it. Turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap. Store in a warm place until doubled in size, about an hour.

To make the filling: Place chocolate, cinnamon, preserves, sugar, espresso powder, and butter in a food processor and pulse into coarse crumbs. Set aside.

To make the streusel: In a large bowl, combine sugar, flour, and butter. Using a fork, stir to combine, making crumbs up to 1-inch big. Set aside.

Punch down dough and transfer to a clean surface. Let rest 5 minutes. Cut into 6 equal pieces. This will make 3 loaves using 2 logs of dough per loaf. Generously grease 3 loaf pans.

On a floured surface, roll dough into a 16-inch square about ⅛-inch thick. It does not have to be perfect!

Crumble ⅓ of the chocolate filling evenly over dough, leaving a ¼-inch border. Roll



dough up like a jelly roll. Pinch edges to seal. Twist roll 5 to 6 times.

Roll out the other 5 pieces of dough and sprinkle with chocolate filling. Take 2 of the filled dough logs and twist them together. This will make 3 loaves.

Place twisted roll in pan. Repeat with the other 2 rolls. If the logs are bigger than the pan, just tuck them under to make it fit.

Add ⅓ cup of streusel over the top of each loaf.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and bake babka for about 35 minutes. Cool in pans.

Tips: Twist the logs to get that classic swirl inside the babka. If you have extra cookies or cake, add that to the food processor when you make the filling. If you aren't a chocolate fan, try a cinnamon and sugar filling instead. Although not traditional, babka can be eaten with a big scoop of ice cream!