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les  
**FILLES**  
de  
**MADELEINE**

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## chocolate pecan babka

adapted from now, forager

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### ingredients

makes two 13 x 24 cm loaves

for the babka dough

596 g all-purpose flour

2 scant tsp (7 g) instant yeast  
(or 2 tsp active dry yeast)

114 ml whole milk

114 ml water

3 large eggs, lightly beaten

114 g granulated sugar

1 tsp salt

1 tsp vanilla extract

114 g unsalted butter, room  
temperature and cubed

for the chocolate pecan filling

120 g unsalted butter, very soft

75 g dark brown sugar

120 g dark chocolate (at least  
70%), finely chopped

100 g pecans, chopped

coarse sea salt or fleur de sel

egg wash, to finish

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### how to

for the babka dough

1. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, combine flour and instant yeast. (If using active dry yeast, follow manufacturer's descriptions to mix with warm milk and water.) In a small saucepan, combine milk and water and gently heat until just slightly warm. Set aside while you whisk together eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla extract.

2. Start the stand mixer on low and gently pour tepid milk mixture onto the flour. Add egg mixture and continue mixing on low until the dough forms. Turn speed on medium and mix for another 5 minutes until the dough is completely smooth.

3. With the mixer running on the lowest speed, add the butter, one piece at a time, only adding the next when the former is completely incorporated. (This process can take up to 10 minutes.) Once all the butter is incorporated, put the mixer back on medium speed and continue mixing for another 5 minutes until smooth and shiny. The dough will not pull away from the sides or form into a ball, though. That's okay.

4. Use a spatula or bench scraper to transfer the dough to a large, clean bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature for 1 to 1.5 hours, until doubled in size. Transfer the bowl to the refrigerator and allow to rest overnight.

for the chocolate pecan filling

1. When ready to make the babka, stir together softened butter and brown sugar in a small bowl. Set aside.

2. In another bowl, combine finely chopped chocolate and chopped pecans. Set aside.

to make and shape the babka

1. Butter two loaf pans and line with parchment paper.

2. Remove dough from the refrigerator and divide into two equal parts. Return one half to the refrigerator and loosely shape the other into a rectangle. Generously flour your work surface and roll dough into a 26 x 30 cm rectangle. Lift and turn the dough between rolls so as to prevent sticking, and use extra flour as needed. Place the dough with the short edge facing towards you and use the heel of your hand to flatten the opposite edge, pressing down and pushing away from you at the same time. You want the far end to stick to the counter - this will help seal the log later on.

## chocolate pecan babka

(continued)

3. Using an offset spatula, spread about half of the butter mixture onto the dough. Leave a 2 cm border at the flattened top edge of the dough, but go all the way to the sides everywhere else. Evenly divide half of the chocolate pecan mixture on top, then sprinkle with a little bit of coarse sea salt.
4. Starting from the short edge closest to you, start rolling the dough into a tight log. Lightly pull back the dough after each roll to tighten, then again when completely rolled. Using a large, lightly oiled knife, cut the log in half lengthwise. (Leave about 1 cm attached at the top for easy braiding.) Turn each half so that the filling is facing upward, then lift one side over the other, continuing down until the dough is twisted into a tight spiral. Seal the bottom and tuck the ends under, then carefully lift the babka into the prepared loaf pan. Repeat the process with the second half of dough.
5. Cover the loaf tins with plastic wrap or a clean towel and leave to rise at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours, until babka is puffed. About 30 minutes before the babka has finished rising, preheat oven to 180°C (350°F) and place a rack in the center.
6. Brush the top of each loaf with egg wash, then place both pans onto a baking sheet. Transfer to the oven and bake for 45-50 minutes, until deeply golden and a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Should the edges start to look too dark before the baking time is up, cover the pans with aluminum foil to prevent further browning.
7. Remove from the oven and let cool on a wire rack for at least 10 minutes before unmolding. Allow the babka to cool to room temperature before cutting into it.