

Bagels

 markbittman.com/recipes-1/bagels

February 28, 2019

Recipes



Makes
8 to 10 bagels

Time
3 to 4 hours, largely unattended

These are real bagels—bagels with chewy insides and respectable crusts—not the puffy kind sold so often nowadays. Cooking a bagel is a two-step process: First you boil, then you bake. Other than that, they are as simple as any other bread. (Malt syrup, the traditional sweetener, can be bought in some specialized cooking shops or wherever beer supplies are sold.) The classic method for

shaping bagels is to roll the dough into a rope and wrap it around your hand. I find this produces extra work at best and wildly misshapen bagels at worst. Far easier is to cut the dough into circles and poke the hole with your finger.

INGREDIENTS

3 1/2 cups all-purpose or bread flour, plus more as needed

2 1/4 teaspoons (1 package) instant yeast

2 teaspoons sugar

2 1/2 teaspoons salt

Neutral oil (like grapeseed or corn) for greasing

2 tablespoons malt syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the flour in a food processor. Add the yeast, sugar, and salt and process for 5 seconds. With the machine running, pour (don't drizzle) 1 1/2 cups water through the feed tube. Process for about 30 seconds, then remove the cover. The dough should be in a well-defined ball, only slightly sticky and very easy to handle. If the dough is too dry, add water 1 tablespoon at a time and process for 5 or 10 seconds after each addition. If it is too wet, add a tablespoon or 2 of flour and process briefly. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured counter or tabletop and knead for a minute or 2 longer by hand, adding as much flour as necessary to make a smooth, tough, very elastic dough.

2. Lightly grease a large bowl with oil and dump in the dough, turning it over once to coat with the oil. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature until roughly doubled in size, about 2 hours. If you would like to let the dough rise for a longer period of time, which will help it develop flavor, refrigerate for up to 12 hours; bring it back to room temperature before proceeding.

3. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured counter and press down on it to deflate so that the dough is roughly 1 inch thick. With a cookie or doughnut cutter, or a floured drinking glass (about 3 1/2 inches in diameter), cut out as many circles as you can. Gently press the scraps together and cut out a few more circles. Keeping the rest of the dough circles covered with a kitchen towel as you work, flour an index finger and poke it through the center of each circle to form a hole. With the tip of your finger touching the counter, move your finger around in circles so the dough spins around it and the hole gets a little bigger. That's your bagel. When they're all shaped, cover and let rise for about 30 minutes.

4. While they rise, pour the malt syrup into a large pot of water and bring it to a boil. Heat the oven to 400°F. Put an ovenproof skillet (preferably cast iron) on the floor or the lowest rack while the oven heats. If you're using a baking stone, put it on the rack above the skillet while the oven heats; if not, line baking sheets with parchment paper or lightly grease with oil. Drop the bagels, one at a time, into the boiling water; don't crowd. The bagels will sink, then rise to the surface. Boil for 45 seconds on each side, then remove them with a slotted spoon and put on a lightly greased rack to drain; continue boiling in batches.

5. Put the bagels on a floured pizza peel or flexible cutting board, or on the prepared baking sheets. Use the peel or cutting board to slide them onto the stone, or slide the sheets into the oven. Partially pull out the rack with the heated skillet and very carefully pour 1 cup hot water into the skillet (it will create a lot of steam). Slide the rack back in and immediately close the oven door. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the bagels are nicely browned. Remove, spray with a bit of water if you would like a shinier crust, and cool on a wire rack; these keep well for a day or 2.

Onion Bagels

The best, in my opinion. Two methods: The first, which is simple, is to add about 1/2 cup roughly chopped onion to the food processor along with the flour. The second, a little more flavorful, is to sauté 1/2 cup minced onion in 1 tablespoon butter or oil, stirring until very soft, about 10 minutes. Knead these into the dough by hand after removing it from the food processor. In either case, when you're ready to bake the bagels, brush them with a little water and sprinkle each with about a teaspoon of very finely minced onion.

Raisin Bagels

Knead about 1/2 cup raisins into the dough by hand after removing it from the food processor. About 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon is good here as well.

Bagels Topped with Sesame Seeds, Poppy Seeds, Coarse Salt, Etc.

There are two ways to do this. As you remove the bagels from the boiling water, drain briefly and dip the top of each into a plate containing whatever topping you like. Alternatively, just before baking, brush the bagels lightly with water or egg wash and sprinkle with the topping. The first method gives you a thicker topping; the second gives you more control. For everything bagels, combine 2 tablespoons each poppy seeds, sesame seeds, granulated garlic, and granulated onion with 1 tablespoon kosher salt.

Montreal-Style Bagels

These have the same cult following as their New York-style counterparts, with a crisper crust and sweeter, less fluffy center—a must-try for all bagel lovers: In Step 1, add 1/3 cup honey, 3 tablespoons neutral oil, 1 egg, and 1 egg yolk.

You'll need more flour—up to 1 cup extra—to get the right consistency. After the first rise, shape the dough as directed in the recipe or divide it into 16 even pieces, roll each into an 8- to 10-inch rope, and pinch the ends together to make a ring. To cook, heat the oven to 450°F and increase the malt syrup to 1/4 cup (you can also use honey). Follow the directions in the preceding variation to coat in poppy seeds or sesame seeds, then bake for 20 to 25 minutes.

Recipe from How to Bake Everything

Making Bagels



STEP 1

After cutting out rounds of dough, insert a floured finger into the center.



STEP 2

With the tip of your finger touching the counter, move your finger to spin the dough and widen the hole.



STEP 3

Once the shaped bagels have risen, boil them, without crowding the pot, before baking.

[Print](#)