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Homemade Bagels Makes 8

Whether you prefer your bagels savory or sweet, this easier-than-you-think recipe adapts to whatever toppings or fillings you're craving. We chose to add sesame, salt, poppyseed, and everything toppings, but the sky is the limit!

Dough Ingredients:

1 tablespoon active dry yeast
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1-1/2 cups lukewarm water
3-3/4 cups bread flour
(15% protein or the highest available)
2-1/2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon brown sugar

Water Bath

4 quarts water
1 tablespoon brown sugar

Directions:

1. In a medium sized mixing bowl, pour the active dry yeast and sugar into 1-1/2 cups lukewarm water. Let the ingredients stand for 5 minutes, then stir together to further dissolve.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the flour, salt, and brown sugar. Add the water mixture and knead with a dough hook for 10 minutes. Remove the dough from the mixing bowl, place on a lightly floured surface. Continue to knead by hand until the dough forms a firm, stiff ball.
3. Place the dough ball in a large bowl, that has been lightly greased with olive oil. Cover the bowl with a damp dish towel and let it rest in a warm environment for about 1 hours, or until it has risen at least 1-1/2 times in size.
4. Line a baking sheet (or two, if necessary) with lightly oiled parchment paper. Divide the dough into 8 even pieces, using a kitchen scale for accuracy. Roll each piece into a ball on a very lightly floured surface. Gently press a flour coated finger in the center of each dough ball and twirl the dough to stretch the hole until it is about 2" in diameter resulting in a dough ring. Place each ring on the parchment-lined cookie sheets. Cover the sheets with a damp towel and let the dough rest for another 30 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Combine the water and brown sugar in a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and use a slotted spoon to lower the bagels into the boiling water one at a time, boiling 4 at once if there is room. Wait until each bagel floats to the top (this should only take a few seconds) and let them boil for 2 minutes. Flip each bagel to the other side and boil for an additional minute. Use a slotted spoon to remove the bagels and place them back on the baking sheet. Repeat this with the four remaining bagels.
6. In a small bowl, whisk the egg yolks and cream together. Use a pastry brush to brush the egg wash on top of each of the bagels and then sprinkle on the toppings of your choice (go light on the salt, a little goes a long way!). Bake the bagels for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown. Cool and serve with homemade cream cheese.

Egg Wash

2 large egg yolks
1 tablespoon cream

Optional Toppings:

Coarse sea salt
Sesame seeds
Poppy seeds
Dried onion

(Mix them together for an "Everything Bagel Seasoning," or go without for a classic plain bagel)