

Champagne Baba

(1 large or 12 small baba's)

sponge:

100 g water
1 tsp instant dry yeast
1 TBsp sugar
100 g bread flour

dough:

180 g bread flour
½ tsp fine salt
¼ tsp instant dry yeast
1,5 tsp vanilla sugar
3 large eggs
90 g melted butter

soaking syrup:

150 g sugar
150 g water
120 g champagne (or Asti Spumante or fruitjuice)

200 g apricot jam (or use a sugar glaze)

Mix all the ingredients for the sponge together in a large bowl (the one you'll be kneading the dough in). Now sprinkle 180 g bread flour over the sponge, so it is covered and leave to rest for about 1 hour.

Now add the salt, ¼ tsp dry yeast, vanilla sugar and eggs. Start to mix this. If using a standmixer, use the paddle attachment. When it comes together after a few minutes, add the melted (and slightly cooled) butter and keep working it. The dough is a bit batterlike, but be sure to get some gluten developed.

For one large Baba:

Place it in the moulds. You can use a loaf tin or a round baking form (I used a paper Panettone mould (Ø13,4 x H 9,5 cm), filled about half way up. Cover with plastic and leave to rise until 2-3 cm under the rim of the mould.

In the meantime don't forget to preheat the oven to 180°C (350-360°F).

While the baba bakes make the soaking syrup. Combine the sugar and water in a small pan and heat until sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes. Cool until warm. Add the champagne; set aside.

Bake for about 45-55 minutes, until golden brown on top. If the bread gets too dark too soon, protect the top with a sheet of tin foil. Check the temperature in the bread with a thermometer, it should be about 93°C. Take out of the oven and the tin and place on a deep

dish. Poke the bread with a long wooden skewer from top to bottom. Brush the syrup all over it, and get as much as possible inside the bread, so take your time. Collect the syrup from the plate and keep pouring and brushing it, until all is absorbed in the bread.

For 12 small baba's:

Grease a tray with 12 little moulds (containing about 75 ml each) and divide the dough in them. The dough shouldn't be filling more than half of the shapes. Cover with plastic and let rise until almost to the rim.

In the meantime don't forget to preheat the oven to 180°C (350-360°F).

While the baba bakes make the soaking syrup. Combine the sugar and water in a small pan and heat until sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes. Cool until warm. Add the champagne; set aside.

Place in the preheated oven and bake for about 18 minutes, The baba's should be golden on top. Check the temperature in the bread with a thermometer, it should be about 93°C.

Take them out of the oven and out of the mould. Place them in a wide shallow dish in one layer. Pour the champagne syrup over the baba's. Now keep turning the baba's one by one on all sides, including top and bottom, until all the syrup is absorbed.

Topping and serving:

Now heat the apricot jam in a small pan and let it boil, add a little water if it is too thick. Brush or pour it over the top. You can also opt for a simple sugar glaze. This topping keeps the moisture in. If you eat the baba's on the baking day, you can also skip the topping

For an extra festive feel, serve with whipped cream and fresh fruit or jam.

The baba is best eaten on the day that it's baked. But if not, keep in the fridge.

(Recipe: Lien -inspired by a Beth Hensperger recipe)

Original post can be found on my blog "Notitie van Lien" ©2017.

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