



Fond du Lac Public Library

Breads of the World: Germany

Presented 8/15/2017 by Anoush Cowles

Soft Pretzels

(Makes 12 pretzels)

Ingredients:

2 cup lukewarm water
1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon brown sugar
2 Tablespoons softened butter
2 Tablespoons active dry yeast
6 cups all-purpose flour
1 Tablespoon salt
2 quarts water
½ cup baking soda
1 egg, beaten
Coarse salt (or large-crystal salt)

Directions:

1. In a large mixing bowl, add the first 6 ingredients – water, sugar, butter, yeast, flour and salt – in that order.
2. If using a stand mixer, use the dough hook attachment to gently mix and knead the ingredients into a soft dough, 8-10 minutes. If mixing by hand, bring the ingredients together with a wooden spoon until loosely mixed and then turn out onto a clean surface and knead by hand for 8-10 minutes, or until the dough is smooth, pliable and soft (but not sticky). If not using dough immediately, refrigerate up to 2 hours.
3. Divide the dough into 12 equal portions and let rest for 5-10 minutes.
4. While dough is resting, preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
5. In a large pan, warm the 2 quarts of water. Cover 3 to 4 cookie sheets with parchment paper. Place a small bowl of water close at hand.
6. After dough has rested, roll each piece of dough into a rope 24 to 36 inches long. The rope should be about finger-thick with tapered ends. If the dough resists and springs back, let it rest a few minutes. If the dough is too soft to roll comfortably, dip your fingers in the water bowl and dampen your palms; this will aid you in rolling out the dough.

7. After each rope is rolled, immediately twist each into the classic pretzel formation. Place each pretzel on parchment-covered cookie sheet.
8. To shape pretzels: lay the rope in an arch and bring the two ends together. Twist the ends twice. Pull the twisted ends up and lay the ends over the sides of the arch. With your finger dip into the water bowl, and add a bit of water where the dough overlaps to help it keep its shape in the next step.
9. After you have shaped all 12 pretzels, add the baking soda to the pan of hot water. It will bubble up but subside. Gently drop 1-2 pretzels at a time into the baking soda bath for 10-15 seconds. Remove them with two slotted spatulas. Place on parchment-lined cookie sheet.
10. After all the pretzels have been dipped, you may want to gently reshape them and stretch them out a bit. Brush them with a beaten egg wash and sprinkle lightly with coarse salt. Don't overdo the salt.
11. Bake at 400 degrees for 15-17 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool a bit before eating.
12. Serve with softened butter, beer cheese spread (recipe below) or mustard.
13. These are best eaten the same day. To reheat, bake at 350 degrees for about 5 minutes.



Beer Cheese Spread

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese or other sharp cheese, cubed (do not use pre-shredded cheese)
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon brown mustard
- 2 Tablespoon softened butter
- ½ cup beer of your choice (plus extra if needed)

Directions:

1. In a food processor, pulse the cheese until finely chopped.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately or store in refrigerator.
4. Note: If not serving immediately, you may want to add a bit more beer because the spread will firm up in the fridge.