



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Whole Wheat Brioche (rewritten from Peter Reinhart's *Whole Grain Breads*)

I reduced the yeast in the final dough to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon, hoping I could stretch the rising time to 8-10 hours, or overnight. This was too little, but I still think the method is worth trying, but with 1 teaspoon yeast.

I froze the brioche rolls after shaping, before rising. I let them defrost in the fridge for a few hours before moving them to room temperature to rise.

The melted butter kept leaking out of its pre-dough. Once the dough had chilled somewhat, I stirred it back in, so that the pre-dough would be homogeneous.

For the final cup of flour, after both pre-doughs are combined, I used white flour. I know that's cheating, but I've had better results with Reinhart's whole wheat bagels when white flour is used at the end, and I thought it was probably similar here. The rolls are still 80% whole wheat.

Pre-dough 1:

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (8 ounces) whole wheat flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk, scalded and cooled
16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted

Mix all of the ingredients until thoroughly combined. Cover and refrigerate at least 8 hours and up to 3 days.

Pre-dough 2:

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (8 ounces) whole wheat flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon instant yeast
4 large eggs, slightly beaten

Mix all of the ingredients until thoroughly combined. Using a rubber spatula or wet hands, knead the dough in the bowl for a couple minutes; it will be very tacky. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes, then knead again for 1 minute. Cover and refrigerate for at least 8 hours and up to 3 days.

Final dough:

Both pre-doughs
1 cup (4.5 ounces) whole wheat flour (see note)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons instant yeast (see note)
3 tablespoons sugar

Egg wash:

1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water and a pinch of salt

1. Chop the chilled pre-doughs into to 12 pieces each. Combine the pre-doughs, flour, salt, yeast and sugar in the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with the dough hook (or a large bowl if mixing by hand). Mix on slow speed for 3 to 4 minutes, scraping the bowl as needed, (or knead with wet hands) until the pre-doughs are assimilated into each other. Add flour or water, as needed, to form a soft and slightly sticky dough. Knead (either with a mixer or by hand) for 3 to 4 minutes, until the dough is cold, firm, and slightly tacky. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes.
2. Divide the dough into 12 equal pieces and round each into a smooth ball. Spray 12 brioche molds or a 12-cup muffin pan with spray oil. To shape the brioche, roll each piece of dough into a cone; poke a hole through the larger end and slip the small end through the hole. (I also sometimes just formed a much smaller round from a small portion of the dough and stuck that on top of the larger round. I didn't notice a difference in the baked versions of the two shaping methods.) Place the shaped rolls into the prepared pan and cover loosely with plastic wrap or a damp towel. Let rise at room temperature for 3 to 4 hours, until the dough has grown to about 1½ times its original size.
3. Adjust a rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 425 degrees. Brush the risen rolls with egg wash and place them in the oven, lowering the temperature to 400 degrees. Bake for 17 to 25 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through, until the brioche are dark golden brown, measure 195 degrees in the center, and sound hollow when tapped on the bottom (after one is removed from its pan).
4. Remove the rolls from their molds; cool on a cooling rack for at least 20 minutes before serving.