

## *Challah*

A Jewish meal is not a real meal if bread of some sort is not served. Challah is the traditional bread for a Sabbath meal. It can be braided with three or six strands, in a line or in a circle, be plain or have poppy seeds or sesame seeds added. Leftover challah makes wonderful French toast.

### **Ingredients**

12 cups all-purpose flour

7 eggs

1/2 cup white granulated sugar

2 heaping Tbs. yeast

1/2 lb. margarine

2 1/2 cups warm water

2 Tbs. salt

oil

flour

### **Utensils**

measuring cup

measuring spoons

2 small bowls

large mixing bowl

pastry brush

wooden spoon

wax paper

cookpot **or** microwave-safe

bowl

towel

knife

paper towels

fork

4) 4 1/2 X 10 inch bread pans

Preheat the oven to warm (140°F to 150°F). Separate one egg into the small bowls. Beat the yolk with the fork. Melt the margarine in a cookpot on the stove or in a microwave-safe bowl in a microwave oven. Grease a piece of wax paper large enough to cover the bowl. Grease and flour the bread pans. Mix the flour and salt together in the mixing bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour and place 1/4 cup sugar, then the yeast, then cover the yeast with another 1/4 cup sugar. Thoroughly mix the sugar and the yeast together in the well. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance. Slowly pour in the melted margarine into the warm water, and mix well. Add the liquid mixture to the yeast mixture and work it in well with your hands. Add 5 eggs to the mixture one at a time, and knead the mixture after each egg is added. Add the white of the separated egg and knead thoroughly for about 10 minutes. All the flour should be absorbed by this point. If the dough is too wet, add more flour a little at a time.

Cover the bowl with the greased wax paper, and then with the towel. Place the bowl in the oven, and let it rise for 30 minutes. The dough should be almost double in size. Remove the bowl from the oven, and punch down the dough, then briskly knead it for 10 minutes. Cover the bowl again with the greased wax paper and the towel. Place the bowl back in the oven, and let it rise for 5 to 10 minutes, until the dough is almost double in size. Remove the bowl from the oven, and punch down the dough again, then briskly knead it for 5 to 10 minutes.. Cover the bowl again with the greased wax paper and the towel. Place the bowl back in the oven, and let it rise again for 15 to 20 minutes.

Turn the dough out onto a clean, dry floured surface and knead it thoroughly. Using a knife, cut the dough into 4 pieces. Then divide each of the pieces into 6 pieces (for a 6-strand braid). Add a little flour, knead each piece individually, and form it into a ball. Cover the parts of the dough that are not being worked with a moist paper towel so they don't dry out. Hand-roll each ball

into a 13 inch long rope. Place 6 ropes side-by-side, and bring the tops together. Pinch that end together to seal them. Bring the extreme right rope over the three nearest ropes. Then bring the extreme left rope over the nearest three ropes. Continue braiding the loaf until the end is reached, then pinch the end together to seal it. Braid the remaining loaves. Using a pastry brush, brush the tops of the loaves with the egg yolk. Be sure to get the yolk down into all the twists of the braid. Place the bread in the pans, and put the pans in the oven for 20 minutes to rise again. After 20 minutes, increase the oven temperature to 200°F for 15 minutes, then increase it again to 275°F for another 15 minutes. Finally, increase the temperature to 375°F for 10 to 15 minutes and bake until the bread is golden brown.