

Pesto Bread

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Dough Rising Time: 2 hours

Baking Time: 30 to 35 minutes

Ingredients:

For Dough

- 2 cups Warm Water
- 2 tablespoons Olive Oil
- 2 tablespoons Sugar
- 1 tablespoon Active Dry Yeast
- 1/2 cup Milk Powder
- 1 tablespoon Salt
- 5 - 5 1/2 cups Bread Flour

For Filling

- 4 heaped tablespoons Pesto
- 1 cup grated Extra Sharp Cheddar



Directions:

For Dough

1. In a large bowl or bowl of your mixer, combine, water, oil, sugar and yeast; stir to combine and leave it aside for about 10 minutes until foamy.
2. Add milk powder, salt and up to 4 cups of flour adding 1 cup at a time and stirring with a wooden spoon after each addition.
3. Turn out dough to a lightly floured surface and knead by adding remaining flour as required until it no longer sticks to your hands. (If using a stand mixer, knead the dough with dough hook for about 3 to 4 minutes adding flour as required.)
4. Place dough in lightly greased bowl, turning once to grease top.
5. Cover with plastic and let rise in warm draft free place for about 1 hour or until doubled in bulk.

Filling and Shaping Dough

1. Punch dough down and divide into two equal portions. (Keep one covered while working with the other.)
2. Take one portion of dough and on lightly floured surface with a rolling pin, roll it into approximately 9 x 14 inch rectangle shape.
3. Spread 2 tbsp of pesto and 1/4 cup of cheese, evenly over the surface. Fold in the sides about 1/2 inch to create a border.
4. Starting at a short end, roll dough tightly, pinch dough to seal seam, and turn seam side under.
5. With a sharp knife, cut the rolled dough lengthwise and open up to expose the inside filling.
6. Take each of the cut piece and braid together with the cut side always facing up.
7. Place this into lightly greased (8 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch) loaf pan.
8. Repeat the same process with the other portion of dough.
9. Cover both pans loosely with plastic and let rise in warm draft free place for about 1 hour or until doubled in bulk.
10. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit 30 minutes or so before baking.
11. Top both the loaves with remaining cheese and bake for 30 to 35 minutes. Check 10 minutes before they are done to see if they need to be covered with aluminum foil if they are getting too brown.
12. Remove from loaf pan immediately and cool on wire rack.