

SWEET NEW YEAR'S BREAD

Note: Traditionally, a coin is baked into the bread to symbolize prosperity for the year ahead. Whoever finds it gets a year of good luck!

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup warm water, between 100-110F
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
2 teaspoon instant or dry active yeast
500 grams all-purpose flour (about 4 cups)
6 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
4 tablespoons honey
1/2 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Add yeast and sugar to warm water, stir and allow to sit for about 15 minutes. In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, add the flour. Add the yeast/water mixture, the 2 tablespoons of the honey, 4 tablespoons of the oil and salt. Mix the dough until it comes together, adding a bit more water or flour, as necessary, then knead by hand or with your dough hook, into a soft, smooth dough. Place the dough into a greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let it rise in a warm place until it has doubled in size, about 60-90 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400F.

When the dough has doubled, place on a lightly floured surface and knead for a minute or so. Cut out and set aside a fist-sized piece of dough (to be used to make the top decorations). Knead the fortune coin into the remaining dough and then roll into a flat round shape. Place onto a silpat or parchment lined baking sheet.

Using the reserved piece of dough, cut small pieces and shape into the various elements to decorate the top of the bread. Decorate the bread with ears of wheat, apples, grapes or flowers. Once all your shapes are placed on the bread round, press down lightly over the top of them to flatten slightly and ensure they stick. In a small bowl, combine the remaining honey and oil and brush liberally over the entire top of the bread. There should be a little of the oil/honey mixture left.

Bake in a preheated oven at 400F until golden and baked through, about 25-30 minutes. Check the bread regularly after 15 minutes and cover the top with a piece of aluminum foil if the top is browning too much. Immediately after taking the bread out of the oven, brush with the remaining oil and honey.