

What to prepare before class:

7. Vanocka 2024

Vanocka – Sweet Czech Christmas Bread

1 loaf (about 12 servings)

This recipe is written for 1 regular size Vanocka, but I would recommend that everyone prepare at least 3 separate doughs, so we have enough material to practice Vanocka assembly in the class.

Ingredients:

Leaven:

½ cup of lukewarm milk - about 90 to 100°F (preheat in a microwave)

½ cup of bread flour (or all-purpose)

1 TBSP of confectioners' sugar

1 TBSP of active dry yeasts

Dough:

½ cup of raisins

2 TSP of rum extract

2 eggs - room temperature (remove from the fridge about an hour before preparing the dough)

1 cup of granulated sugar

1 stick (¼ LB) of soft butter – room temperature but not melted (room temperature)

1 TSP of vanilla extract

Zest for 1 lemon

4 cups of bread flour (or all-purpose) + **extra** flour for flouring the surface

½ cup of lukewarm milk - about 90 to 100°F (preheat in microwave)

Egg brush:

1 egg

¼ cup of milk

Final touch:

Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar

Tools:

Measuring Spoons & Measuring Cups

2 Small Mixing Bowls (about 1 QT)
Whisk
Kitchen Mixer with Whisk and Hook Attachment
Plastic Wrap
Bowl Scraper or Silicone Spatula
Small Hand Grater or Zester
Measuring Pitcher or Small Glass/Ceramic Mixing Bowl
Silicone Brush
Medium Size Baking Sheet with Parchment Paper

Additional Preparation steps:

Aside from preparing the ingredients and tools listed above, please perform the following preparation steps before taking the class:

About 3 – 4 hours before class:

1. Leaven:

1.1. Place into a medium mixing bowl:

½ cup of lukewarm milk

½ cup of bread flour

1 TBSP of confectioners' sugar

1 TBSP of active dry yeasts

Thoroughly stir with a whisk until fully combined (about 1 - 2 minutes).

1.2. Cover with plastic wrap and using a knife, create 1 small hole to let the leaven breathe.

1.3. Set aside until it doubles in volume (about 15 – 20 minutes).

2. Raisin preparation:

2.1. Place into a mixing bowl:

½ cup of raisins

2 TSP of rum extract

Thoroughly stir.

2.2. Let it sit on a countertop until needed in a later step.

3. Dough:

3.1. Place into a kitchen mixer with a whisk attachment:

2 eggs - room temperature
1 cup of granulated sugar
1 stick (¼ LB) of soft butter
1 TSP of vanilla extract

Whisk on high speed until fully incorporated—the butter is fully incorporated, and a creamy texture is reached (about 2- 4 minutes).

3.2. Replace the whisk attachment with a hook attachment and add:

Leaven from step 1
Zest for 1 lemon
4 cups of bread flour
½ cup of lukewarm milk

Knead on slow speed until all ingredients are partially combined (for about 1 – 2 minutes).

3.3. Then increase the speed to medium-high and knead until nicely combined (about 1 - 2 minutes).

3.4. Then add:

Raisins from step 1 (including the rum residue)

Process it for an additional minute until incorporated.

3.5. The final dough is slightly sticky and can partially stick to the bottom of the bowl. Use a bowl scraper to release it from the hook and the bottom of the bowl.

4. Raise the dough:

4.1. Remove the mixing bowl from the mixer and cover with plastic wrap (make some holes to let the dough breathe).

4.2. Let it rise in a warm place until it has doubled in size (about 2 - 3 hours).