

SHIBARI BREAD

(slightly modified from [BakeStreet](#))

600 g of all-purpose flour
300 g of whole milk at room temperature
36 g of cocoa powder + 45 g of whole milk
5 g of instant yeast
1 egg L (55 g)
75 g of unsalted butter at room temperature
40 g of honey
3/4 teaspoon of natural chocolate extract (I used Nielsen Massey's)
10 g of salt
olive oil for brushing bread
1 egg yolk
2 tsp milk
pinch of salt

Make the dough. In the bowl of a Kitchen Aid mix the flour along with the milk, the egg and the dry yeast. Mix with the kneading hook for 5 minutes on low-speed, until it is homogeneous.

Add the honey and salt, continue mixing for at least 5 more minutes, until very smooth and silky. Add the butter little by little, in small pieces, waiting for each piece to be incorporated before you add more. Continue kneading the dough until gluten development is complete (it will not tear when you stretch a small portion of the dough, instead it will form a thin membrane).

Divide the dough in two pieces, a small one with 200g, and a second one with the remaining portion, around 870g. Shape the small portion as a ball and place inside an oiled container. Cover and reserve. To the second portion, add the cocoa powder with the milk and chocolate extract. Knead to incorporate them well, and make a dough with homogeneous color. I find it easier to place back in the Kitchen Aid and let the machine do some of the work, then finish it by hand. Form as a ball and place in a second oiled container. Proof the two balls of dough for about 3 hours at room temperature. It should double in size.

Shape the bigger ball of dough as a batard, after de-gassing it lightly. Reserve, covered with plastic film as you work on the other ball of dough. Roll the smaller ball as a rectangle of approximately 14 by 10 inches. Cut parallel strips with a thickness of 0.4 inches (1 cm). You will need 15 strips, but you will have more than that, which is good, in case you get in trouble.

Place 3 strips laying horizontally on the center of the bread, as shown in the composite picture. Place 6 strips laying on top, forming a C shape facing one side of the bread. Use other 6 strips to form a bundle held in the center by the C-shaped group of strips you just placed. Braid according to the video.

Once the braiding is done, brush the surface of the bread with olive oil. Cover with plastic film and let it proof at room temperature for 2 to 3 hours. It will almost double in size. Meanwhile set the oven to 350 F.

When ready to bake, brush the surface with egg yolk whisked with milk and salt. Make sure to cover all the parts of the bread. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until internal temperature is about 195 F.

Cool completely before slicing.