

Soft Pretzels

Total time required to make these is about 3 hours (more than half of which is for rising).

This recipe was tested in the Treasure Chambers kitchen and produces a wonderful authentic-tasting pretzel with very little fuss.

$\frac{2}{3}$ cups (160 ml) warm water (115 °F/46 °C)
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (160 ml) warm milk (115 °F/46 °C)
3 Tbsp (60 mg) warm melted butter
1½ tsp (7 mg) or 1 envelope instant yeast
1 Tbsp (20 mg) granulated sugar
3½ cups (875 mg) all-purpose flour
1 tsp (5 mg) fine salt
3½ Tbsp (70 mg) baking soda
1 egg yolk whisked with 1 Tbsp (20 ml) water, for brushing
Coarse salt, for sprinkling



1. Stir the water, milk, melted butter, yeast and sugar together. Add the flour and salt and stir until the mixture becomes too dense to do so (and it is a dense dough), then turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead the dough by hand until it feels elastic and smooth, about 5 minutes.
2. Return this to the mixing bowl, cover the bowl with plastic wrap and set aside to rise for 90 minutes.
3. Turn the dough out onto your work surface and divide it into 16 equal pieces. Using as little flour as possible, roll each piece of dough into a length of 'rope' about 18-inches (30 cm) long. Drop the rope onto the table as an elongated "U", then twist the dough around twice and place the ends over the bottom curve of the "U" to create the signature pretzel shape. Once you are happy with the shape, press the ends gently down to secure and lift the pretzel onto a parchment-lined baking tray (coated steel, NOT aluminum). Once all assembled, cover the pretzels with a damp tea towel to rise again for 20 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 350 °F (180 °C). Fill a large stainless steel 4 qt/litre pot with 2 qts/litres of water and bring it to a full rolling boil. Add the baking soda (the water will foam briefly) and then carefully drop in 4 to 5 pretzels into the water. Boil the pretzels for 90 seconds without turning. Lift them out with a slotted spoon back onto the baking tray. Repeat with the remaining pretzels, in batches.
5. Brush the boiled pretzels with the egg wash and sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake the pretzels for 20-25 minutes, until they are an even rich brown.

Best eaten after they have cooled for at least an hour! Should be eaten the same day. Leftover pretzels make great toast the next day.