

Classic Sourdough Brioche

Recipe by The Sourdough Baker

Sweet Starter Build:

- 30 g active starter
- 150 g milk
- 10 g egg yolk (*or extra milk*)
- 160 g white flour (*bread or all-purpose*)
- 25 g sugar

Main Dough:

- 500 g high-protein bread flour (*protein 12-13%; I use King Arthur Bread Flour*)
- 60 g sugar
- 10 g salt
- 125 g cold milk
- 250 g cold egg (*5 large eggs*)
- All of the sweet starter
- 225 g unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

Directions:

- 1) **Make the sweet starter.** Twelve hours before you plan to mix the dough, mix all ingredients for the sweet starter in a quart-size container. Cover and rest at room temperature (73 F; 23 C) for 12 hours.
- 2) Optionally, give the sweet starter one set of stretch-and-folds 60 minutes and 120 minutes into fermentation.
- 3) **Mix the dough.** In the bowl of your Ankarsrum stand mixer, scale and whisk the high-protein bread flour, sugar, and salt. Add the milk, egg, and sweet starter. Roughly mix, then transfer to the base of the stand mixer.
- 4) Using the dough roller and scraper attachments, knead the dough on a medium-low speed, 2-3 o'clock, for about two minutes, until all ingredients are well incorporated and form one cohesive mass of dough.
- 5) Increase the speed to medium, 3-4 o'clock, and knead the dough until it builds some strength, but is not at a complete windowpane, about six minutes. You should be able to pull up on a section of dough without it tearing. Be sure to position your roller close enough to the side of the bowl that it works the dough against the bowl, but far enough



away that it is not rolling the dough completely upwards or that the roller is not being forced aggressively into the middle of the machine.

- 6) Reduce the mixing speed back down to medium-low, 2-3 o'clock. Drop the butter, one pat at a time, into the center of your mixer, aiming for the very bottom of the dough roller. Mix each pat of butter until it absorbs into the dough before adding the next. It should take about 20-25 minutes to add all the butter in this manner. Pause mixing and scrape down the dough roller and scraper as necessary.

NOTE: Check the dough temperature using an instant read thermometer and make sure it does not exceed 78 F. By the end of mixing, my dough temperature has never exceeded 75 F when using my Ankarsrum. Cold ingredients are important to keeping the dough temperature down during this long mixing time.

- 7) After all the butter has been incorporated, check your dough for a windowpane. If you can easily stretch the dough to a see-through consistency without it tearing, you are finished mixing the dough. If the dough tears easily and will not stretch, increase the mixing speed to medium, 3-4 o'clock, and knead a few more minutes until you have achieved a clear windowpane (checking the dough every 1-2 minutes).
- 8) **Bulk ferment the dough.** Scrape down the sides of the mixer and perform a few coil folds to gather the dough into a cohesive mass. Transfer the dough to a 3.75 quart glass bowl or plastic container with a lid.
- 9) Let the dough rest until it reaches the top of the container (almost triple in size). The time it takes to bulk ferment this dough is 8-9 hours at 70 F (21 C).

NOTE: Be mindful of fermenting temperatures. The temperature needs to be warm enough to ferment the dough properly, but cool enough that the butter does not begin to melt or become greasy. 70-73 F (21-23 C) is ideal for this dough.

- 10) **Refrigerate the dough.** Place the dough in the refrigerator for two, or up to twelve, hours. Cooling the dough is necessary to keep the butter manageable during shaping.

NOTE: The longer the dough is in the fridge, the more complex the flavors of your brioche become. To avoid a sour flavor in this recipe, I recommend no more than twelve hours of refrigeration time.

- 11) Prepare two (1 lb) loaf pans by brushing all over with softened or melted butter.
- 12) **Shape the dough.** Remove the dough from the fridge and divide it into two sections, approximately 735 g each. Place one section back in the refrigerator while you shape the first loaf.



13) There are many options for shaping brioche. Below are simply my two favorites.

- *Option 1:* Divide the dough into eight sections, 90-92 g each. Shape each section into a round, adding each round to the greased loaf pan as it is formed.
- *Option 2:* Lightly flour a working surface. Roll the dough out into a rectangle and divide into 15-18 sections. The sections will be more like rectangles, not squares, and it is okay if they are not exactly the same size, as I think it adds character to the final bake. Place one of the greased loaf pans vertically next to your working surface. Stack each piece (one on top of the other), making sure the long side of each rectangle is in line with the bottom of the loaf pan. Turn the loaf pan back to its normal, horizontal position and give it a little shake, if needed, to ensure the sections are evenly spaced.

14) Cover the pans and let the dough proof until the dough reaches the top of the pan (about double in size). This takes about 5-7 hours at 70 F (21 C), depending on how long the dough was left in the fridge.

15) When the dough is nearly ready to bake, preheat your oven to 400 F.

16) **Bake** the brioche loaves for 35-40 minutes; the internal temperature should register 200 F.

17) Optionally, brush with butter after baking.

18) **Enjoy!**

19) **How to store:** Cool the loaves completely before storing. Store at room temperature in a bread bag or ziploc bag for up to five days.

