

Bavarian Style Soft Pretzels

Ingredients:

2 ½ tsp	Yeast, dry active
2 tsp.	Sugar
1 ¼ cups	Water, warm (100°F)
2 ½ cups	All-purpose flour, lightly packed
½ cup	Whole wheat flour, lightly packed
1 tsp.	Salt
6 cups	Water
2 Tbsp.	Baking soda
As needed	Cornmeal
1 tsp.	Water
1	Egg
1	Egg yolk
2 Tbsp.	Pretzel salt or rock salt



Method of Preparation:

1. In a large mixing bowl, dissolve the yeast and sugar with the water. Let sit for 5-10 minutes while the yeast 'blooms.'
2. Add both of the flours and the salt and knead until a soft dough begins to form; you may need to adjust with additional water. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until the dough becomes smooth and elastic, about 8-10 minutes. The dough should not be sticky.
3. Place dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap and put in a warm place. Let rise for 45 minutes or until dough doubles in size.
4. Remove dough from bowl and punch down. Pre-heat oven to 425°F. Prepare two baking sheets by spraying with pan spray, but sprinkle only one generously with cornmeal, set aside. Divide dough into 12 equal portions. Keep portions covered as you work with one at a time. Roll each portion into a 16" long rope with tapered ends. Form a 'soft' heart shape (rounded bottom, not the traditional point) and bring the tapered ends together. Twist the ends once then lay them over the bottom of the heart and press gently to adhere. Place pretzels on a lightly greased baking sheet to proof 10 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, heat the 6 cups of water with the baking soda over medium heat in a non-aluminum pot. Bring the water to a boil then reduce to a simmer. Gently lower each pretzel into the water and cook for 15 seconds. Remove pretzels and drain over a wire rack. Transfer pretzels to the prepared baking sheet coated with cornmeal. In a small bowl, whisk together the water egg and yolk. Brush each pretzel with the egg wash and sprinkle with the rock salt. Bake for 12-14 minutes depending darkness. Pretzels can also be baked with a small percentage of steam for a crispier exterior (if using a steam oven).