Pretzel Bread

Amount 2 loaves

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp salt, plus more for topping
- 1 1/2 cups warm water (110 to 115 degrees F)
- 1 package (2 1/4 teaspoons) instant yeast
- 22 ounces (about 4 1/2 cups) all-purpose flour
- Vegetable oil (nonstick) spray, for pan and bowl
- 10 cups water
- 2/3 cups baking soda
- 1 large egg yolk, beaten with 1 tbsp water (for egg wash)

Steps

1. Combine the butter, sugar, salt, and 1 1/2 cups warm water. Sprinkle the yeast on top.
2. Add the flour and mix. Knead for 4 to 5 minutes, until the dough is smooth.
3. Spray a bowl with oil and place dough inside. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place for approximately 45-50 minutes, or until doubled in size.
4. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F and adjust the oven rack to the lower third of the oven. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper and lightly spray with vegetable oil; set aside. (Alternatively, you can use a silicone liner with no spray.)
5. Turn the dough out onto a slightly oiled work surface or pastry mat. Divide into two equal halves. Shape into loaves and place side by side onto the lined baking sheet. Cover lightly with a clean kitchen towel and let rest for 10 minutes.
6. Bring the 10 cups of water to a boil in a large sauce pan or stock pot, then add the baking soda.
7. Carefully place one loaf in the boiling water for 30 to 40 seconds, turning once. Use a large slotted spoon or spatula to remove from the water and return to the pan. Repeat with second loaf. Brush the top of each loaf with the egg wash then sprinkle with kosher salt. Use a sharp knife to score a shallow "X" on the top of each loaf.
8. Bake in the preheated oven until dark golden brown and the sound of tapping the loaf is hollow (approximately 20 to 25 minutes.) Allow to cool on a wire rack for at least 10 minutes before slicing and serving.