Prep Time: 30 minutes
Chill Time: 4 hours to overnight (minimum 4 hours)
Proofing Time: 1.5 to 2.5 hours
Bake Time: 35-40 minutes
Total Time: Approx. 7-8 hours (including inactive time)
Yield: 1 standard 9×5-inch loaf

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Ingredients

For the Dough:

- 3 ¼ cups (420g) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (50g) granulated sugar

- 2 ¼ teaspoons (1 packet, 7g) active dry yeast
- 1 ½ teaspoons (9g) fine sea salt
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons (30ml) whole milk, at room temperature
- 1 cup (226g) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature but still cool

For the Egg Wash:

- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon (15ml) water

Instructions

Part 1: Mixing the Dough (Time: 15 minutes | Intensity: Low to Medium)

1. Activate the Yeast: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, combine the warm milk (about 110°F/43°C) and a pinch of the sugar. Sprinkle the yeast over the top

and let it sit for 5-10 minutes until frothy. This confirms your yeast is active.

2. Combine Dry Ingredients: Add the flour, remaining sugar, and salt to the yeast mixture. Mix on low speed until just combined.

3. Add Eggs: Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. The dough will be very sticky at this stage. Continue mixing on low speed for about 5 minutes to develop the gluten.

4. Incorporate the Butter: This is the crucial step. With the mixer on medium-low speed, add the softened butter, one tablespoon at a time. Wait until each piece is fully incorporated before adding the next. This process should take about 5-7 minutes. The dough will look like it's falling apart, but keep mixing; it will come back together.

5. Develop the Gluten: Once all the butter is added, increase the mixer speed to medium and beat for 8-10 minutes. The dough should transform from a sticky mess into a smooth, glossy, and elastic dough that pulls away from the sides of the bowl. It will be quite soft.

Part 2: Chilling the Dough (Time: 4-12 hours | Intensity: Inactive)

1. First Rise: Transfer the dough to a large, lightly greased bowl. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let it rise at room temperature for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until it has doubled in size.

2. The Essential Chill: Once risen, gently deflate the dough by punching it down. Cover the bowl again and place it in the refrigerator for a minimum of 4 hours, or preferably overnight. This long, cold fermentation is non-negotiable for Brioche. It firms up the

butter, making the dough manageable, and develops a deeper, more complex flavor.

Part 3: Shaping and Proofing (Time: 20 minutes active, 1.5-2.5 hours inactive | Intensity: Medium)

1. Prepare the Pan: Grease a 9×5-inch loaf pan generously with butter.

2. Shape the Loaf: Remove the chilled dough from the refrigerator. It will be firm and easy to handle. Turn it out onto a lightly floured surface. Gently pat it into a rough rectangle. For a classic loaf shape, divide the dough into 3 or 4 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a tight ball. Place the balls of dough side-by-side in the prepared loaf pan.

3. Final Proof: Cover the pan loosely with a greased piece of plastic wrap or a clean kitchen towel. Let the dough proof in a warm, draft-free place for 1.5 to 2.5 hours. It’s ready when it has puffed up significantly and springs back slowly when gently poked. It should fill the pan nicely.

Part 4: Baking and Finishing (Time: 35-40 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

1. Preheat the Oven: About 30 minutes before baking, preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).

2. Apply Egg Wash: In a small bowl, whisk the egg and water together until smooth. Gently brush the risen dough with the egg wash, being careful not to deflate it. This is what gives Brioche its beautiful, shiny, golden-brown crust.

3. Bake: Bake for 35-40 minutes. If the top is browning too quickly, tent it loosely with aluminum foil after 20 minutes of baking. The loaf is done when it’s deep golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped on the bottom. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should register 190°F (88°C).

4. Cool: Let the Brioche cool in the pan for 10-15 minutes before carefully transferring it to a wire rack to cool completely. Slice and serve warm or at room temperature.

Recipe Notes & Tips

- Butter Temperature: The butter must be soft but not melted. If it’s too warm, it will separate from the dough during mixing. A good test is to press it with your finger; it should yield but still feel cool.

- Patience is Key: The two most important steps are the long mixing to develop gluten and the cold chill. Do not rush either of these.

- Flavor Variations: Feel free to add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract with the eggs, or fold in 1 cup of chocolate chips or raisins after the final chill before shaping.

- Storage: Store the cooled Brioche in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days. For longer storage, wrap it tightly in plastic and freeze for up to 3 months.

Nutrition Information (Per Serving)

Recipe makes 1 loaf, approximately 12 servings.

- Calories: ~280 kcal
- Total Fat: 18g
- Saturated Fat: 10g
- Cholesterol: 95mg
- Sodium: 210mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 24g
- Dietary Fiber: 1g
- Sugars: 4g
- Protein: 5g