



Chocolate Ganache & Candied Orange Babka (Updated)
One of the most popular new Babka fillings is chocolate

Ingredients

Babka Dough:

4-1/4 cups all-purpose flour (630g/22.2oz)

1/2 cup white sugar (100g/3.5oz)

1 packet Platinum dry yeast (7g/1/4oz)

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 cup canola or vegetable oil

1 large egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1-1/4 cups warm water (120 degrees F. to 130 degrees F)

1/2 cup all-purpose flour for dusting

Chocolate Ganache Filling:

9 Tablespoons unsalted butter (130g/4.6oz)

1-1/2 cups (65% to 70% cacao) dark chocolate (250g/8.8oz)

7 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder (40g/1.4oz)

5 Tablespoons. confectioners' sugar (30g/1.1oz)

For the Orange Syrup

2 cups water

1 cup granulated white sugar

1 cinnamon stick

1-star anise

Orange peel from 1 orange, sliced into thin slivers

Additional Nuts for Filling

1/2 cup hazelnuts, unsalted, roasted & chopped

Egg Glaze and Garnish

1 egg and 1 Tablespoon water – for brushing bread

Rose petals (optional)

Directions

Before Baking Bread: Preheat oven to 375 degrees F; spray large baking pan with oil spray; line pans with parchment paper for easier removal; lightly spray again with oil.

Prepare Bread Dough: Place 4-1/4 cups flour in mixing bowl with stand mixer fitted with a dough hook attachment, stir in sugar and yeast on one side of bowl, add salt on opposite side of bowl; mix to combine. Beat in oil, egg, and vanilla. Mix in warm water a little at a time for about 5 minutes or until a dough forms a firm smooth ball. (You might have some water left over.) Place dough on lightly floured surface; hand knead until dough is smooth ball. Lightly oil large bowl; place dough in bowl; turn over to coat; lightly cover with plastic wrap or towel. Set in warm place to rise about 45 minutes. (It will become puffy but not doubled)

Prepare Chocolate Ganache Filling

Melt butter over medium heat in a saucepan; stir in chocolate; let it melt. Do not constantly stir it. When melted, stir in cocoa, and stir in confectioners'

sugar a little at a time until a thick chocolate filling form. Set aside to stay warm for easy spreading.

Sweet Spicy Orange Syrup:

In another saucepan over medium high heat, bring water to a boil; stir in sugar; add cinnamon stick and star anise; after 5 minutes, add thin orange slivers. Reduce heat to low; continue cooking to form an orange syrup. Keep orange glaze warm; remove star anise, spoon over baked hot bread.

Shape the Dough into Logs: Lightly sprinkle work surface and rolling pin with flour. Cut dough into two equal pieces. Place one piece of dough aside. On lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough into 50x30 cm or (20x12 inch) rectangle. Carefully spread half of chocolate ganache filling over dough, leaving about 1/2-inch edges without filling. Sprinkle chopped nuts over chocolate filling. Using floured hands, roll up the dough, with a little lift and roll motion, forming a long log. Cut small section from each log end to even the ends. (Place cut small rolls aside to bake in small greased pan as desired.) Place the log seamside down on the parchment lined pan. Repeat procedure with the remaining half of dough and filling. Place both logs in the refrigerator for 15 minutes or longer to chill filling and make cutting easier.

Braid the Dough: Place one log straight down on surface. With a sharp bread knife, carefully cut each log lengthwise into two long separated pieces. The filling will be exposed. Place one log (filling side up) straight down on surface; place remaining dough (filling side up) crossed over the center in an X pattern. Starting at the center, twist one half of the log over and under the first log; then twist the remaining dough in the same way, forming a braid. Place on prepared parchment lined baking pan. In a small bowl, whisk egg with water. Lightly brush the top of bread with egg glaze. Repeat this procedure with the remaining log of dough to form the second loaf.

Baking Bread: Bake on parchment lined baking pan in preheated 375-degree F oven for 30 minutes or bread is golden brown. Remove bread from oven.

Pour Syrup over Bread: Generously spoon orange syrup glaze over bread. Let bread cool. Remove from baking sheet. Yield: 2 bread loaves

Recipe Inspired by: Chef Shimi Aaron – Zoom Cooking Class

Cook's Note: I did a second proofing or rise on one section of the bread I baked, which was delicious and produced a lighter yeast coffeecake texture. The rising will make a difference in the final product.

About the Recipe: If you love chocolate, this is a babka that you will love. It doesn't have a final rise, which makes the layers of chocolate filling closer together, creating a thicker fudgy texture. The light orange flavor and bit of rose flavor from the added flowers make this an elegant dessert to serve and popular fancy yeast bread.

