

Germany

Pretzels & Beer Flatbread

brezeln Fladenbrot - Forms crispy bubbles in the bread during baking

2-3/4 to 3 cups bread flour, divided
1 (.25 oz.) pkg. (2-1/4 tsp.) Premium active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water (120-130 degrees F.)
1 Tablespoon honey
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon fine salt
1/2 cup Lager amber beer
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 Tablespoon Lager amber beer
4 Tablespoons coarse chopped salted pretzels
1/4 cup seasoned smoked almonds, chopped
2 Tablespoons fresh coarse chopped rosemary
Olive oil as needed

Prepare the Dough:

- In a mixing bowl, combine 1 cup flour and yeast, whisk together; stir in warm water, honey, and olive oil; beat for 1 minute.
- Add 1 cup flour, salt, and beer; beat for 2 minutes.

Change dough paddle to dough hook attachment. Knead in remaining flour on medium speed adding remaining flour if needed, beat until dough pulls away from the sides of the mixing bowl and makes a soft dough about 5 minutes.

1st Raising:

- Place dough in lightly oiled bowl; turn to grease top. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, place in warm place, let rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

Shaping the Bread:

- Turn dough onto lightly floured surface, punch down. Shape into a ball; place in a well oiled 13x9-inch baking pan; press into an even rectangle. Using your finger, poke surface to dimple the bread.
- In a small bowl, mix the egg and 1 Tablespoon beer. Brush the top of dough; Sprinkle as desired with crumbled pretzels, chopped almonds, and rosemary.

Second Raising:

- Cover lightly with plastic wrap; set in a warm place; let rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

Baking the Bread:

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
- Before baking, drizzle lightly with olive oil.
- Bake in preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes or golden brown.

Cooling the Bread:

- Remove from oven; loosen sides of bread; remove from baking pan. Let cool on rack. Cut into squares to serve. Yield: one 13x9-inch flatbread
- Serve with olive oil for dipping.

About the Recipe: This is a light airy flatbread that can be served as a side dish or snack along with dipping olive oil. The beer in it adds a fantastic flavor and creates crispy bubbles during baking. I love the contrasting texture of the bread with a crispy top studded with rosemary, crushed salted pretzels, and smoked almonds and then inside it's cloud-soft crumb.

Pretzels Are Part of German Life

The crusty, doughy pretzel is an integral part of daily life in Germany. They can be picked up at a bakery for breakfast, lunch, or quick snack to enjoy with a glass of beer. Their production has evolved from small bakers, who sold them on the street, to big factory operations today.

The true origins of Germany's pretzels remain a mystery, though they do seem to have evolved from a ring-shaped Christian fasting dish that existed in Roman times. Some say the three holes twisted together symbolize the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit or arms in prayer. Perhaps, they were made as a convenient way to hang them up on baker's poles. For More Information See:

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/german-pretzel-history-4796280>