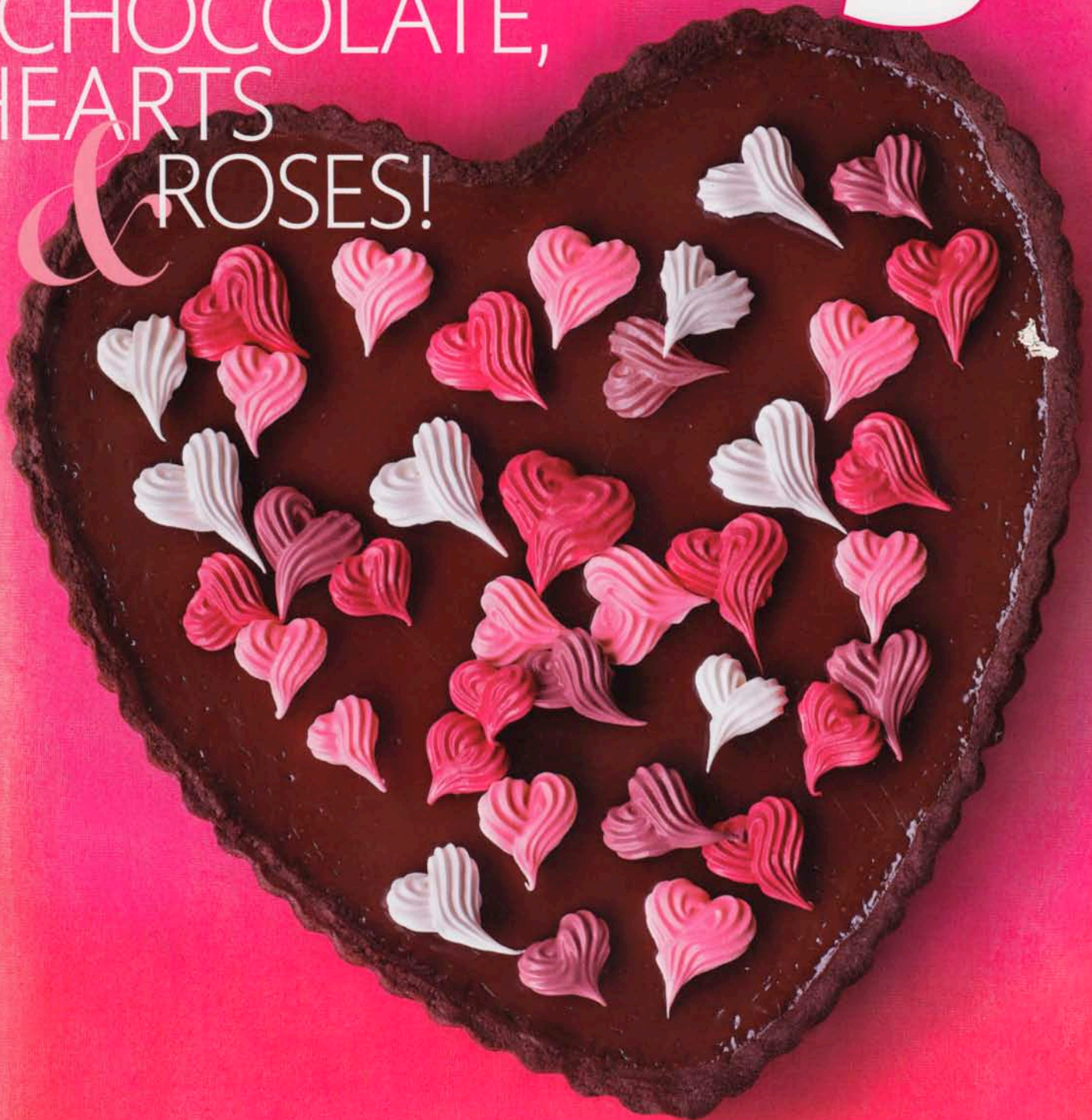


MARTHA STEWART

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FRESH FROM THE OVEN

One simple recipe is all you need to bake four types of bread, each one hearty, wholesome, and delicious.

TEXT BY ADEENA SUSSMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCUS NILSSON



THERE'S SOMETHING UNDENIABLY irresistible about a loaf of warm, homemade bread in all its fragrant, yeasty goodness. Turning a few basic ingredients into one of the world's most beloved and elemental foods may seem magical, but the process of baking bread is surprisingly easy to master—and it's enjoyable, too.

Kneading and shaping a pliant, springy ball of dough is a tactile pleasure far more satisfying than unwrapping the plastic from a store-bought package, and you don't need special equipment or skills or even a lot of time to pull it off. Using our recipe, you can start in the morning and have fresh bread for lunch.

OUT OF ONE, MANY Our white bread recipe is the starting point for each of these homemade loaves. They are all excellent sliced for sandwiches and toast.

CLASSIC WHITE BREAD

MAKES 2 LOAVES

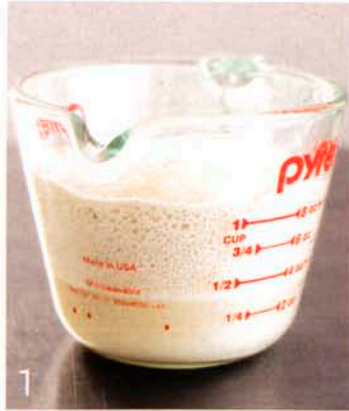
- 1 tablespoon plus 1½ teaspoons active dry yeast (two ¼-ounce envelopes)
- 2¼ cups warm water (110°)
- 3 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons honey
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for bowl, pans, and brushing
- 7 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for surface and dusting
- 2 tablespoons coarse salt

1. Sprinkle yeast over ½ cup water. Add 2 teaspoons honey. Whisk until yeast dissolves. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes. Transfer to the bowl of a mixer fitted with the paddle or dough-hook attachment. Add butter and remaining 1¾ cups water and 3 tablespoons honey. Whisk flour with salt; add 3 cups to yeast. Mix on low speed until smooth. Add remaining 4 cups flour, 1 cup at a time, mixing until dough comes away from sides of bowl and forms a ragged, slightly sticky ball. Butter a large bowl.

2. Knead dough on a floured surface until smooth and elastic but still slightly tacky, about 5 minutes. Shape into a ball. Transfer to prepared bowl; cover with plastic wrap.

3. Let dough stand in a warm place until it doubles in volume (it should not spring back when pressed), about 1 hour. Punch down dough; divide in half.

4. Shape 1 dough half into an 8½-inch-long rectangle (about ½ inch thick). Fold long sides of dough in to middle, overlapping slightly. Press seam to seal. Transfer dough, seam side down, to pan. Repeat with remaining dough. Brush each loaf with butter, or dust with flour for a rustic look. Preheat oven to 450°. Drape loaves with plastic. Let stand until dough rises about 1 inch above tops of pans, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Reduce oven temperature to 400°. Bake, rotating pans after 20 minutes, until tops are golden brown, about 45 minutes. Transfer to wire racks. Let cool slightly; turn out loaves. Let cool completely before slicing.



TASTY VARIATIONS

Here's how to modify the recipe on page 54 for three new flavors.



Multigrain

For the ingredients: Replace 4 cups of the flour with 3 cups **WHOLE-WHEAT FLOUR** and 1 cup **RYE FLOUR** (kingarthurfLOUR.com).

In **STEP 1**: Soak $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **BULGUR** in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **WARM WATER** for 20 minutes; set aside. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water instead of $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups. Before the second addition of flour, mix in soaked bulgur, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rolled **OATS**, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup **FLAXSEEDS**, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup **RAW SUNFLOWER SEEDS**.

In **STEP 4**: Brush tops of loaves with **EGG WASH** (beaten egg white mixed with water), not butter, and sprinkle with oats and sunflower seeds. Dab tops with egg wash to help adhere.

Cinnamon-Raisin

In **STEP 1**: Before the second addition of flour, mix in 1 cup **RAISINS**.

In **STEP 4**: Combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **SUGAR** and $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons **GROUND CINNAMON**. Roll out each dough half into a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick rectangle (about 8 by 10 inches); lightly brush with **WATER**, and sprinkle evenly with **CINNAMON-SUGAR** mixture, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch border around edge. Starting with 1 short side, tightly roll dough into a log. Seal edges with fingertips, and tuck ends under.

Rye

For the ingredients: Replace $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups of the flour with **RYE FLOUR**.

In **STEP 1**: Before the second addition of flour, mix in 2 tablespoons **CARAWAY SEEDS**.

In **STEP 4**: Brush tops of loaves with **EGG WASH** (beaten egg white mixed with water), not butter, and sprinkle with **CARAWAY SEEDS**.

tips To make bread without a stand mixer, stir together ingredients with a wooden spoon in a large bowl. All the loaves can be stored at room temperature for three days or frozen for up to three months.