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Phone (631) 543- 8608

www.bakingcoach.com

Cell: (631) 885 - 4683

Italian Bread

Here is what you need to make one loaf:

- 1 tablespoon dry yeast
- 1 ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 cup warm water (100° to 110°)
- 2 to 3 cups bread flour or all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon table salt

Here is how you do it:

Add yeast, sugar, and water into a large mixing bowl. Gently mix to dissolve; let it stand for 5 minutes until foamy. Mix in 2 cups of flour, oil, and salt using a rubber spatula. After combining ingredients, slowly add in the remaining flour using one hand until a dough forms. The dough should no longer stick to your fingers.

Turn dough out to a lightly-floured surface and knead until it's smooth (don't clean up yet, you'll need the surface area to shape bread). Return the dough to the bowl cover with plastic wrap and a towel. The microwave is a great place to put it. Let the dough rise for 45 minutes; it should double in size.

Remove dough from bowl; place dough on a lightly floured surface and shape into a 14-inch loaf. Transfer onto a greased cookie sheet, then cut 3 slits on top of the bread, spacing them apart. Loosely cover the bread once again with plastic wrap. Let the dough rest for another 30 minutes before baking.

Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees.

Place bread in the center rack of the oven and bake for 15- 20 minutes, or until it turns golden brown.