

**Date Olive Oil Challah with Salted Fig
(makes 2 loaves)**

For the challah dough:

1 1/3 cup water
1/3 cup olive oil
4 egg yolks
2 tsp salt
4 1/4 cup bread flour
1/3 cup dark brown sugar
1/3 cup date paste
1 Tbs instant or bread machine yeast (not rapid or quick rise)

For the salted fig filling:

Around 1/3-1/2 cup fig preserves
Coarse sea salt to taste

For the topping:

1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon water

Directions:

Add dry and wet ingredients to a bread machine in the order specified by the manufacturer. Set machine for "dough" cycle.

If not using a bread machine, combine all the ingredients in a large bowl, turn out on to a floured board and knead for 5 minutes. Allow to rise in a large bowl in a dark place, covered with a towel for 1 1/2 hours.

When the dough cycle is complete, remove dough from the bread machine and divide into 6 equal portions. On a floured surface, roll three portions into long ropes, and using a rolling pin, roll each portion into a rectangle approximately 12 inches long and 8 inches wide. Spread around 2 teaspoons of fig jam down the center of each rectangle, being sure to leave space around the edges, and then sprinkle lightly with sea salt. From the long edge of the dough, gently, but tightly, roll the dough up to the end. Repeat for all 3 rectangles. Carefully braid each of the rolls together, then place on a greased loaf pan or cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining dough.

Cover with a towel and let rise for 20-30 minutes in a draft-free place.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Beat egg yolk and mix in water to prepare the egg wash. Brush over each challah.

Bake challahs for approximately 35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans and allow to cool on a wire rack. Best served slightly warm.