



Makes: 16 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes plus rise time 2 hours 30 minutes

Carrot Focaccia with Honey & Thyme

Ingredients

For the Dough:

- 3 & 1/2 cups bread flour
- 2 & 1/4 tsp instant dry yeast
- 1 & 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 & 3/4 cups carrot juice, maybe a bit more
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

For the Carrots:

- 2 large carrots
- 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp seasoning salt

To Finish and Bake:

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp water

Instructions

For the Dough:

Place the carrot juice in a medium microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high power for 1 minute or until nice and warm (not hot).

Combine the flour, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Stir to combine. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and add the warm carrot juice and the honey. Stir well, until the dough is shaggy and there is no more dry flour. Add the olive oil and stir until combined. The surface will be a slick with oil.

Cover the bowl tight with plastic wrap or a large plate. Set aside for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, remove the cover and, using either a large spatula or slightly wet hands, pick up one side of the dough, stretch it, and then fold it over the dough, tucking it down on the other side. Turn the bowl one-quarter turn and repeat the stretch and fold. Repeat the stretch and fold 3-4 more times, turning the bowl one-quarter each time. (Don't skip this step! This helps aerate the dough which creates those beautiful artisan air pockets.) Cover the bowl and let the dough rise for one hour.

During the one-hour rise, use a piece of paper toweling and rub 1 teaspoon of butter over the interior of 2 9-inch round baking pans. Line the bottom of each pan with a round of parchment paper. Rub 1/2 teaspoon of butter over the parchment paper in each pan. Drizzle each pan with 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil. Set aside.

After the one-hour rise, divide the dough into the two prepared pans, flipping once to coat the dough with the oil. Use the same stretching and folding described above to form each ball of dough into a rough circle. Flip the dough so the folded sides are down. Flatten the dough with your hands in the pans. It won't cover the entire pan at this point but flatten it out as much as you can. Then cover the pans with the plastic wrap or 2 plates. Set aside to rise again for one more hour.

For the Carrots:

During this one-hour rise, prepare the carrots. Lay a carrot on your work surface with the pointy flip facing you. Starting at the top (stem end) use a vegetable peeler to thinly shave the first strip of carrot. I usually discard this first strip. Continue to shave the carrot into long strips until you can't go any further. Discard the remaining scrap of carrot.

In a medium-size microwave-safe bowl, combine 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and 1/4 teaspoon seasoning salt. Stir to combine.

Place all of the carrot strips in the bowl with the oil mixture and toss with your hand. Microwave the carrots on high power for one minute. Set aside to cool.

To Finish and Bake:

When the one-hour rise in the pan is completed, oil your fingers and start at the center of the dough, dimpling and gently pushing it towards one end of the pan. You're trying to evenly fill the pan to the edge and into the corners. Return to the center and dimple and push the dough out towards the opposite edge. If the dough seems resistant at any point, let it rest for a few minutes then try again. (Don't be afraid to be aggressive with your dimpling. You need to reach your fingers down to the bottom of the pan. Deep dimpling creates focaccia's signature peaks and valleys and prevents the texture from disappearing during the baking time.)

Once you've completed the dimpling, set the pans aside to rise for 30 minutes.

Add the carrot ribbons to the top of the dough in the pans, tucking them into the dough and arranging them in a decorative pattern.

With one rack in the center position, preheat the oven to 450°F. Once the oven reaches 450°F, drizzle each pan with 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil and one tablespoon of room temperature tap water. Gently tuck any errant carrots back into the dough.

Bake for 10 minutes then cover with foil and bake for another 10-12 minutes until the top is a nice golden color. Remove from the oven to a metal cooling rack for 5 minutes then remove the dough from the pans and continue cooling on the metal rack.

To Serve:

Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with fresh thyme leaves before serving.

Recipe from The Cafe Sucre Farine