



Makes 1 loaf
Preparation Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 3 hours 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

4½ cups (540 grams) white whole wheat flour

¼ cup pure cane sugar

1 package (2¼ teaspoons) active dry yeast

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon mahleb (optional)

1½ cups warm water (120°F to 130°F)

¾ cup mashed white sweet potato, such as Japanese or Boniato (see tip, recipe intro)

3 tablespoons aquafaba (liquid from canned no-salt-added chickpeas)

1 tablespoon pure maple syrup

Vegan Challah Bread

If you're tapped to bring something to a **potluck**, this vegan challah bread, with its classic braided appearance, is a showstopper! Mashed white sweet potato adds extra sweetness to the dough. Mahleb (a Middle Eastern spice also called mahlab or mahlepi) is optional, but it's worth hunting down if you can, as it adds gentle almond-like notes that work well with the sweet dough. The recipe includes instructions for a three-strand braid, but if you're feeling adventurous, try the six-braid configuration using the directions below. If you're bringing it to a gathering, wait until the loaf is completely cooled before placing it in a resealable plastic bag for transport. Bring along a towel-lined basket for serving. Challah bread goes well with **soups**, stews, or your favorite jam or other sweet or savory spread.

Tips

Sweet potato swap: If you can't find white-fleshed Japanese sweet potato, regular sweet potato will do. It will just create a more orange loaf.

Mahleb: This aromatic seasoning is made by grinding the kernels extracted from pits of a Middle Eastern cherry variety. It can be found at a spice store or Middle Eastern grocery store.

Six-braid challah bread: Divide dough into six equal portions and roll into 16-inch-long ropes. Arrange ropes side by side and pinch together the six ends at the top. Starting with the rope on the far right, cross it over to the left side, first going over the two nearest ropes, then under the third nearest rope, then over the two farthest ropes. Start again with the far right rope and go over two, under one, and over two. Repeat this process, always starting from the right, until the entire loaf is braided. Pinch the ends and tuck them under the end of the challah; straighten the loaf. Using your hands, carefully transfer the loaf to a parchment-lined baking sheet, placing it diagonally if necessary. Continue as directed.

For more inspiration, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Seed Bread with Wild Rice and Herbs](#)
- [Vegan Potato Bread](#)
- [Buckwheat Bread](#)
- [Classic Vegan Cornbread](#)

By Kathryn Johnson, RDN, LD

- 1 In a large bowl stir together the first five ingredients (through mahleb, if using). Add the warm water and sweet potato; stir with a fork until combined. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead until slightly sticky but pliable and fairly smooth (8 to 10 minutes). Cover dough with the bowl and let rise until double in size (1 to 1½ hours).
- 2 Uncover and punch down dough. Form dough into a ball. Cover with bowl again and let rise again until double in size (40 to 60 minutes).
- 3 Uncover and punch down dough again. Cut dough into three equal portions. (Use a kitchen scale if you have one.) Roll each portion into a ball. Roll each ball into a 16-inch-long rope that is evenly thick. Arrange ropes side by side 1 inch apart on a

parchment-lined baking sheet. Starting at the midpoint of the ropes, braid them by lifting the center rope and bringing the left rope under it; lay it down. Lift the new center rope and bring the right rope under it; lay it down. Repeat braiding to the end of the ropes. Starting in the middle again, braid the other ends of the ropes. (Braid the ropes loosely, so they have room to rise.) Pinch the ends together and tuck them underneath the loaf. Cover and let rise until double in size (35 to 40 minutes).

- 4** Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375°F. In a small bowl stir together aquafaba and maple syrup.
- 5** Before baking, brush loaf with half of the aquafaba mixture. Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until bottom of loaf sounds hollow when tapped. Remove from oven and brush with remaining aquafaba mixture. Transfer loaf to a wire rack and cool completely.