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Foolproof Prosphora Recipe (Russian-Style Commemoratives)

Note: This is the **only** commemorative recipe I have experimented with that was a success on the first try and without modification. I highly recommend this recipe, which we use at the seminary.



Here's a shot of what I make using this recipe, usually about 100 at a time (tripling this recipe). I only lose 3-8 in a batch due to big air bubbles (a.k.a. the "Muppet Effect" since they end up looking like little armless people).

This recipe makes ~30 loaves.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp active dry yeast (*i.e. Fleischmann's*)
- 1 3/4 - 2 cups warm water (110-120°F)
- 7 cups flour (*preferably Gold Medal Globe A-1 bleached pre-sifted All Purpose Flour*)
- (*Special note: to modify this recipe, remember to increase or decrease the yeast in proportion, and remember the for every cup of flour you should need approximately 1/4 cup of water*)

Tools

- 2 large cookie sheets
- 2 biscuit cutters (large for bottom half and smaller for top half)
- Prosphora stamp
- large sewing needle (with medium point, or a straightened paper clip)
- rolling pin
- mixing bowl
- aluminum foil
- 2 dry towels (regular not paper)

Instructions

1. Combine yeast with the warm water until it foams a little.
2. In a bowl, mix 3 cups of flour with the yeast/water and mix with spoon or hands.
3. Keep adding one cup of flour at a time until all 7 cups have been added.
4. Knead dough until done - i.e. when dough feels "springy" (if using Kitchen machine, keep on lowest speed and split recipe in half in order not to ruin machine while kneading).
5. Roll dough out with rolling pin to 1/4 inch thickness.
6. Cut out 30 large pieces with large biscuit cutter and place them on a cookie sheet that is covered with aluminum foil, then cover with towel.
7. Cut out 30 small pieces with small biscuit cutter and place them on a cookie sheet that is covered with aluminum foil, then stamp them with prosphora seal and cover with towel.
8. Let both cookie sheets stand for 1 hour to let dough rise (either in oven or in an undrafted room. If the room is cold, they may need to rise longer).
9. After 1 hour, remove towels from over prosphora, fill a small cup with water and cover the tops of the large pieces with water (do not drench them) and the bottoms of the small pieces and affix to each other. Make sure there isn't an air bubble between the two pieces
10. Prick the prosphora seal (making the sign of the cross, then piercing the center) - make sure needle insertion goes through the bottom half.
11. Allow the loaves to rest (covered) for ten minutes so that the pieces "glue" together.
12. Place in an oven to bake at 340° F for 30 minutes or until lightly golden.