

Make a Pretzel Torc

To make your Torcs, you will need:

500g strong white bread flour
7g sachet fast-action dried yeast
25g caster sugar or muscavado sugar
50g unsalted butter
1tsp salt
Plain flour, for dusting
Oil, for greasing
3tbsp bicarbonate of soda
1 egg, lightly beaten, for glazing
Rock salt

Makes 4 large pretzels



Method

1. The slightly odd first step is to bake your bicarbonate of soda in the oven; don't ask me why! Pop it on a baking tray and cook at 120°C for 30 minutes.
2. Put the flour, yeast, sugar and salt in a large bowl and mix together to combine. In a large jug, mix together 300ml lukewarm water and the butter (the water should be warm enough to melt the butter). Make a well in the dry mixture and pour in the water, mixing together with a knife to form a dough.
3. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead well for 10 minutes. Put the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with cling film and then leave in a warm place for about an hour, until the dough has doubled in size.
4. Once risen, briefly knead the dough again to knock out the air bubbles. Divide into 4 equal pieces.
5. Taking your first quarter, divide it into two smaller pieces. Roll each piece into a long snake about 50-60cm long. Lay the two snakes side by side, join them together at one end, then twist them into a rope and join at the other end.
6. Prepare two baking sheets covered in baking parchment. Lay your rope onto the baking sheet in a C shape, then curl in the ends.

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7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 with the remaining dough. Heat oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Cover the Torcs lightly with cling film and set aside for 20-30 mins until puffy.
8. Fill a large pan with boiling water and add the baked bicarbonate of soda, then reduce to a simmer. Carefully lift the first Torc and lower it gently into the simmering water. I did this with two slotted spoons. Cook for 20 seconds, then flip over to cook the other side. Gently remove your Torc from the water and return it to the baking sheet. You'll probably improve your technique so that the last one is perfect! You can reshape them slightly once on the baking sheet.
9. Lightly brush with egg and sprinkle with sea salt. I crushed my rock salt first with the back of a spoon so that pieces weren't too huge.
10. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes or until a rich, dark brown. Allow to cool first on the baking tray, then transfer to a wire rack.

Enjoy!



Thanks to BBC Good Food for the original pretzel recipe which inspired the Torcs.