

Greek Easter Bread

6-6 ½ cups all purpose flour
½ cup Sugar
2 8 oz packages of active dry yeast
1 to 2 tsp ground cardamom
1 tsp salt
1 ½ cups whole milk
6 tsp butter cubed
4 eggs
3 to 6 hard boiled eggs

In large bowl combine 2 cups flour, sugar, dry yeast, ground cardamom and salt. In saucepan heat milk and butter to 120-130 degrees. Then add the milk and butter to the dry ingredients and beat just until moistened. Add 3 raw eggs and beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form soft dough.

Place dough on a floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until it doubles in size, about 45 minutes.

Dye hard boiled eggs by lightly rubbing with oil. Punch the dough down. Turn onto a lightly flowered surface. Then divide dough into thirds. Shape each portion into a 24 inch rope.

Place ropes on a greased baking sheet and braid, and bring the ends together to form a ring. Pinch the ends to seal. Gently separate the braided ropes and tuck the dyed eggs into the openings. Cover and let rise until it has doubled in size, about 20 minutes.

Beat water and remaining egg, and brush over dough. Bake at 375 degrees for 28-32 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack to cool. Refrigerate any leftovers.
Yield: 1 loaf