

Italian Easter Bread (Pane di Pasqua)

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There are recipes that feel like home—and Pane di Pasqua is one of them. Soft, lightly sweet, and scented with citrus, this traditional Italian Easter bread is as symbolic as it is beautiful. The braided dough represents unity and celebration, while the colorful eggs nestled inside are a sign of new life and renewal.

This is the kind of recipe that fills your kitchen with warmth. The smell alone—yeasty, buttery, with a hint of orange—feels like Easter morning before you even take a bite.

Across Italy, every family has their own version of Pane di Pasqua—some add anise, others keep it simple with citrus. No matter the variation, it always comes back to the same idea: gathering, sharing, and celebrating.

Things to know about this Italian Easter Bread (Pane di Pasqua) recipe

- The eggs bake right in the oven—no need to boil first.
 - Orange zest is traditional, but lemon works beautifully too.
 - The texture should be soft and rich, similar to brioche.
 - You can shape this into individual mini breads for gifting.
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Serving Suggestions

This bread is perfect:

- With espresso on Easter morning
- Lightly toasted with butter
- Served alongside ricotta and honey

Storage

Italian Easter Bread is best enjoyed fresh, but it stores beautifully with a few simple tips.

☐ Room Temperature

- Store covered or in an airtight container for up to **2–3 days**
- Keep it in a cool, dry place
- For best texture, wrap in plastic wrap or foil to prevent it from drying out

☐ Refrigerator

- Not recommended—this will dry the bread out faster

❄️ Freezing

- **Do not freeze with the eggs in the bread** (remove them first or bake without)
- Wrap the bread tightly in plastic wrap and foil, or place in a freezer-safe bag
- Freeze for up to **2 months**

Reheating

- Thaw at room temperature
- Warm in a **300°F oven for 10–15 minutes** to refresh the texture

Final Thoughts

If you've never made Italian Easter bread from scratch, this is your year. It's simple, deeply traditional, and incredibly rewarding. Once you pull that golden braid out of the oven, you'll understand why this recipe has stood the test of time.

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Italian Easter Bread (Pane di

Pasqua)



Soft, lightly sweet, and beautifully braided, this classic Italian Easter Bread is flavored with citrus and topped with colorful eggs—an easy, traditional recipe perfect for your holiday table.

- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 package active dry yeast (2-3 tsp.)
- 1 cup milk (warmed)
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup butter (melted)
- 1 Tbsp orange zest
- 4 -6 medium eggs (raw and dyed)
- 1 medium egg (for egg wash)
- 1 Tbsp. sprinkles (Optional)

1. **Activate the Yeast**

In a small bowl, combine warm milk and yeast. Let it sit until foamy—about 5–10 minutes.

2. **Make the Dough**

In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, and salt. Add eggs, melted butter, vanilla, orange zest, and the yeast mixture. Stir until a soft dough forms.

3. **Knead**

Turn onto a floured surface and knead for 8–10 minutes, until smooth and elastic.

4. **First Rise**

Place in a greased bowl, cover, and let rise until doubled in size (about 1–1.5 hours).

5. **Shape the Bread**

Divide the dough into ropes and braid. Form into a round wreath or loaf. Gently nestle the dyed eggs into the dough.

6. **Second Rise**

Cover and let rise again for 30–45 minutes.

7. **Bake**

Brush with egg wash, add sprinkles, and bake at **350°F (175°C)** for 25–30 minutes until golden brown.

Dessert

Italian

Easter, bread, Italian