

Pretzel Bread stick – Laugenstange

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There are many stories of where pretzels and pretzel bread sticks came from. One Swabian story, which supposedly goes back to 1477, tell of a master baker Frieder, who not only invented the pretzel bread stick out of necessity, but that a cat jumped on the baking sheet as he was baking and caused dough pieces to fall into a bucket of hot lye. The Bavarian version of this story is of baker Anton Nepomuk Pfannenbrenner, who worked in the royal coffee house in Munich in the 19th century. One day he made a fatal mistake in the bakery and accidentally used caustic soda on the pretzel bread stick instead of sugar water. His superiors were ecstatic about the result, so much so that they gave the Royal Württemberg ambassador Wilhelm Eugen von Ursingen a pretzel to taste.

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon baking soda
150 ml ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) water
3 tablespoons coarse salt
500 g (3 cups) flour
7 g (1 package) yeast
150 ml wheat beer
1 teaspoon salt
1 L (4 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups) water

Instructions:

Put flour in bowl and form small indentation in middle. Add yeast, placing it in flour indentation. Add warm (30°C (86°F)) wheat beer into flour indentation and mix thoroughly.

Cover bowl with kitchen towel and let stand in warm place for 20 minutes.

Add 150 ml ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) water and salt, then mix until air bubbles form in dough. Cover and let stand for further 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F).

Once risen, knead dough again and divide into 10 pieces. Form each of 10 pieces of dough into rod shape on floured surface.

Mix 1 litre (4 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups) water with baking soda and bring to a boil, then one by one time, dunk rod-shaped pieces of dough into water mixture for at least 30 seconds, making sure all of surface of dough is covered.

Complete this step for all pieces.

Lay dipped pieces of dough on cookie sheet and sprinkle coarse salt over top.

Bake at 200°C (400°F) for 20 minutes.

