

CHICAGO-STYLE POPPY SEED HOT DOG BUNS



In *My Grandfather's Trunk*, Moshe excitedly introduces Esther to the Chicago Hot Dog (which I grew up loving). He explains that its secret is the “invention” of the poppy seed bun. I wanted a photograph of an *actual* Chicago hot dog, but all my relatives there are vegetarians. I looked for a prototype when I was in New York. Alas, their buns do not have poppy seeds!

INGREDIENTS

1 cup lukewarm water
2 ½ teaspoons instant yeast
1 T sugar
¼ cup instant mashed
potato flakes
1 teaspoon salt

2 cups bread flour
¼ cup semolina flour
1 T olive oil
Poppy seeds
Egg wash (mix an egg add 1
T water)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix the water, yeast, sugar, and instant potatoes in the bowl of your stand mixer. Let stand for about 15 minutes until it is bubbly and frothy.
2. Add the salt, bread flour, and semolina, and knead until the dough is smooth and is becoming elastic. Cover the bowl and let the dough rest for 20 minutes, then add the oil and knead until it is fully incorporated and the dough is shiny and elastic.
3. Cover the bowl and let the dough rise until doubled in size.
4. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and sprinkle some cornmeal on a sheet pan.
5. Flour your work surface, and knead the dough briefly, then divide it into 8 equal pieces. Form each piece into a log 5-6 inches long, depending on how big your hot dogs are. Keep in mind that the buns will expand in length as they rise and bake.
6. If you want poppy seeds or other toppings, brush the buns with an egg wash (one egg beaten with a tablespoon of water). Sprinkle poppy seeds liberally.
7. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes-ish, until the rolls are golden brown. You can steam them over a double boiler or wrap them in a paper towel and zap them in a microwave for about 15 seconds.