

Simit (Turkish Sesame Bread Rings)

Turkish · Snack · Medium · 98 min total · Serves 8

Simit is a Turkish sesame bread ring with a chewy crust, made from dough dipped in grape molasses water and rolled in sesame. Sold from street carts, it is best warm; the dough needs about an hour of hands-off rising.

Ingredients

- 4 cup all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled (about 500 g))
- 2 tsp instant yeast
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1.25 cup warm water (about 105 to 110°F (40 to 43°C))
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 0.25 cup pekmez (grape molasses) (for the dip; 2 tbsp honey plus 1 tbsp molasses or date syrup is a substitute)
- 2 cup water (for the pekmez dip)
- 1 cup sesame seeds (white or mixed; the classic coating)

Method

1. Stir the sugar and yeast into the warm water and let it stand for 5 minutes, until foamy.
2. Whisk the flour and salt in a large bowl, add the yeast water and olive oil, and mix until a shaggy dough forms, then knead by hand for 8 to 10 minutes until it is smooth, elastic and slightly tacky and springs back when pressed.
3. Cover the bowl and leave the dough in a warm spot for about 1 hour, hands-off, until it has doubled in size.
4. Divide the dough into 8 equal pieces, roll each into a rope about 14 inches (35 cm) long, and join the ends into a ring about 4 inches (10 cm) across, pinching the join firmly.
5. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Stir the pekmez into the 2 cups of water until fully dissolved, dip each ring briefly in the liquid, then press it into the sesame in a shallow dish until coated on all sides.
6. Place the rings on a parchment-lined baking sheet about 2 inches apart and rest them uncovered for 15 minutes, until slightly puffy.
7. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, rotating the sheet halfway, until the simit are deep golden-brown and the sesame is toasted; a tapped bottom should sound hollow.
8. Cool on a rack for 5 minutes and serve warm, while the crust is still crisp.