



## “The Pretzels Twisted History Started with European Monks”

by Jeanette Settembre, New York Daily News

Some New Yorkers like to think the city is the center of the culinary world, but the pretzel was actually created in 610 A.D. by European monks – and the shape was meant to resemble the crossed arms of a person in prayer.

More than any other people, the Germans have made the pretzel their own – and the name “brezel” may have been derived from the Latin word for bracelet or little arms. The pretzel might never have made it out of the Middle Ages had it not been embraced by the Catholic Church because it was suitable to be eaten during Lent, when breads with eggs was banned.

By the 17th century, the pretzel was so much a part of German culture that children wore pretzel necklaces as a symbol of good luck and prosperity in the new year. Eventually, German immigrants introduced the pretzel to America when they landed in Pennsylvania, opening the first commercial pretzel bakery in 1861 in Lititz, a Lancaster County town.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/eats/pretzel-twisted-history-article-1.1543835>

Here’s a recipe for German-style pretzels that your culinary students might want to tackle, and then sell during lunch periods to raise money for a charity or social cause your school has embraced.

### How to make Pretzels, just like Oma

<http://www.quick-german-recipes.com/german-pretzel-recipe.html>

#### Ingredients:

- ½ cup lukewarm water
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. active dry yeast
- ¾ cup milk, lukewarm
- 4 tsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 4 tbsp. baking soda
- coarse salt to sprinkle



#### Instructions:

- Using a large mixing bowl (mixer with dough hook), dissolve sugar in water. Add yeast. Mix. Let stand about 5 - 10 minutes until bubbly.
- Mix together milk and oil and add to bowl.
- Mix salt and whole wheat flour together and add to bowl and mix.
- Add 2 cups all-purpose flour and mix. Add more flour as needed until ball forms. Let dough hook knead ball for a few minutes.

- Let dough rise about 30 - 60 minutes, covered, in a warm, draught-free area, until about double in size.
- In the meantime, prepare "soda bath". Put 2 quarts of water in pot and add 4 Tbsp baking soda. Mix. Bring to boil and keep hot until needed.
- Preheat oven to 425° F. Cover two baking sheets with parchment paper.
- Divide dough in half and then each half into 12 pieces. Roll each piece into a rope about 14 - 16 inches long. Form into pretzel shape by forming into a circle with the ends extending about 2 inches. Twist these ends twice and fold up into circle, pressing the ends to the circle.
- Place pretzels onto baking sheets.
- Cover and let rise about 10 minutes.
- Gently place pretzels into boiling soda water, without crowding. When they rise to the surface, remove with slotted spoon and place back on baking sheets.
- Slit with a sharp knife or razor blade.
- Sprinkle with coarse salt.
- Bake about 15 minutes until golden brown. Remove onto rack to cool slightly.
- Eat while still warm!!!