

BRAIDED LEMON BREAD WITH BLACKBERRIES

(from [Karen's Kitchen Stories](#))

For the Sponge:

3 ounces warm water (95 to 105 degrees F)

1 teaspoon sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons instant yeast

30 grams unbleached all purpose flour

For the Final Dough:

All of the sponge

85 grams vanilla yogurt, room temperature (I used plain and added 1/2 tsp vanilla)

56 grams softened unsalted butter

1 large egg, beaten

50 grams sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon vanilla

300 grams unbleached all purpose flour

one beaten egg for the egg wash

pearl sugar for topping (optional, but nice)

For the Filling:

85 grams cream cheese, at room temperature

25 gram sugar

29 grams sour cream (I used creme fraiche)

1 tsp lemon juice

15 grams all-purpose flour

100 grams lemon curd

Handful of blackberries

Combine the sponge ingredients in a small bowl, stir, and cover with plastic wrap. Let it sit for 15 minutes.

In your stand mixer bowl, combine the sponge, yogurt, butter, egg, sugar, salt, vanilla, and flour. Mix with the dough hook for about 8 minutes. Place the dough in an oiled dough rising bucket or bowl, cover, and allow to rise for one to two hours, until doubled (mine took 2 hours and 30 minutes).

Mix the cream cheese, sugar, sour cream, lemon juice, and flour until smooth. Cover and set aside. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Place the risen dough not the parchment, and press or roll it into a 10 inch by 15 inch rectangle. Mark the dough lengthwise into thirds by pressing a ruler into the dough. Spread the cream cheese mixture onto the middle third, leaving about an inch uncovered at the top and the bottom. Spread the lemon curd on top of the cream cheese mixture. Top with the blackberries.

Cut the outer sides into strips. Cut off the strips from the four “corners” of the dough, leaving a flap at the top and bottom. Fold up the bottom flap and fold the strips over the filling alternating in a braid pattern. Fold the flap over the top before finishing the braid. Cover loosely with oiled plastic wrap. Preheat the oven to 360 degrees F.

Let the dough rise for about 45 minutes. When the dough is ready, brush it with the egg wash and sprinkle it with the sugar. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until a deep golden brown. Cool on a cooling rack for at least 20 minutes. Slice and serve.