

New Orleans Beignets: Authentic Puffs of Sweetness at Home

The History of New Orleans Beignets



OVEN
360°F

TIME
5-10 min

METHOD
Air fryer

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups warm water (105-115°F / 40-46°C)
1 (0.25 ounce) package active dry yeast (about 2 1/4 teaspoons)
1/2 cup granulated sugar, divided
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup evaporated milk
1/4 cup vegetable shortening, melted and slightly cooled (or unsalted butter)
6-7 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
3-4 cups vegetable oil or cottonseed oil, for frying
Confectioners' sugar (powdered sugar), for dusting (a LOT!)

DIRECTIONS

1. Making beignets is a rewarding process. Here's how to do it:
2. Activate the : Yeast: In the bowl of a stand mixer (or a large mixing bowl), combine the warm water, yeast, and 1 teaspoon of the granulated sugar. Stir gently and let it sit for 5-10 minutes until it becomes foamy. This "proves" the yeast, ensuring it's active.
3. Make the : Dough: Add the remaining granulated sugar, egg, salt, evaporated milk, and melted shortening (or butter) to the yeast mixture. Mix lightly to combine. Gradually add 4 cups of the all-purpose flour, mixing with the paddle attachment (or by hand with a sturdy spoon) until a sticky dough forms.
4. Knead the : Dough: If using a stand mixer, switch to the dough hook attachment. Gradually add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, kneading on medium-low speed for about 5-7 minutes, until the dough is smooth, pliable, and tacky but not excessively sticky. If mixing by hand, turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth.
5. First : Rise (Cold Ferment): Lightly grease a large bowl with vegetable oil. Place the dough ball in the bowl, turning to coat all sides. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or preferably overnight (up to 24 hours). This slow, cold rise develops a deeper flavor and makes the dough easier to handle.
6. Prepare for : Frying: When ready to fry, remove the dough from the refrigerator. Lightly dust a clean work surface (and your rolling pin) generously with flour. Roll out the dough to about 1/4-inch thickness. Using

a sharp knife or a pizza cutter, cut the dough into approximately 2 1/2-inch squares.

7. **Second : Rise (Optional, but Recommended):** Place the cut beignet squares on a lightly floured baking sheet. Cover loosely with a clean kitchen towel and let them rest at room temperature for 20-30 minutes. This allows them to puff up slightly before frying.
8. **Heat the : Oil:** In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, pour in 3-4 inches of vegetable or cottonseed oil. Heat the oil over medium-high heat until it reaches 350-360°F (175-180°C). Use a deep-fry thermometer to monitor the temperature; maintaining the correct oil temperature is crucial for proper puffing and browning.
9. **Fry the : Beignets:** Carefully lower 3-4 beignet squares into the hot oil at a time, being careful not to overcrowd the pot. Fry for about 1-2 minutes per side, flipping once, until they are golden brown and puffed up.
10. **Drain and : Sugar:** Using a slotted spoon or spider, remove the fried beignets and transfer them to a paper towel-lined plate to drain excess oil for just a few seconds. Immediately transfer the hot beignets to a large bowl or paper bag filled with a generous amount of sifted confectioners' sugar. Toss or shake vigorously to coat them completely.
11. **Serve : Immediately:** Arrange the sugar-dusted beignets on a platter and serve while they are still warm.

SWAPS & NOTES

Yeast: Make sure your active dry yeast is fresh and properly proofed (foamy) before proceeding.

If it doesn't foam, your yeast might be old, and you should start over.

Warm Water: The temperature of the water is crucial for activating the yeast.

Too hot, and it kills the yeast; too cold, and it won't activate properly.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Accurate Oil Temperature: This is the single most important factor for fluffy beignets.

Too low, and they'll be greasy; too high, and they'll brown too quickly on the outside and be raw inside.

Invest in a good deep-fry thermometer.

Don't Overcrowd the Pot: Frying in batches is essential.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/new-orleans-beignets-authentic-puffs-of-sweetness-at-home/>