



## **FARMERS MARKET**

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### **Cheddar and Sage Soft Pretzels**

**Serves 6**

#### **Ingredients**

For pretzels:

- 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp white sugar
- 2 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1 1/2 tsp rapid rise or instant yeast
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped fresh sage
- 1 1/2 cups lukewarm water
- 1 Tbsp olive oil

For boiling:

- 8 cups water
- 1/4 cup baking soda

For topping:

- 1 tsp egg, lightly beaten with 1 tsp. water
- 1 cup aged cheddar, grated
- Maldon sea salt or kosher salt, for sprinkling

Instructions are for rapid rise or instant yeast, which is added with the flour. If you are using active dry yeast, add to the water and allow to proof for 5 minutes instead). In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, fitted with a kneading hook, combine 3 1/2 cups of the flour, the sugar, salt, yeast and chopped sage. In a measuring cup, combine the lukewarm water and olive oil. Add to the flour mixture and mix until combined. Start adding the additional cup of flour, as needed, until dough comes together in a soft, smooth but not sticky dough. Remove to a greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap and allow to rise until doubled.

Remove dough to a lightly floured surface and divide dough in to 10 equal pieces (about 3 oz each). Form in to balls, cover and allow to rest for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare 2 baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.

When dough has rested, take a ball of dough and using your fingertips, roll the dough, stretching a bit as your roll, until you have a strand of dough about 12 inches long. Place on the prepared baking sheet and continue with the remaining dough balls. Once all the strands are rolled, return to the first strand and roll some more until it is 20-inches long. Continue with the remain dough.

To shape the pretzels, working with one strand at a time, shape in to a large "U", with the curve closest to you. Cross the 2 ends of the strand twice to make a twist, then fold the twist back down over the bottom of the "U" to form a pretzel shape. Place the shaped pretzels on the same parchment lined baking sheets. Continue until all are formed. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and set aside to rise until puffy, 20-30 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400 °F. and bring 8 cups of water to boil in a large pot (use your largest stock pot!)

When water is boiling and pretzels are puffy, add baking soda to water. Allow the baking soda to dissolve completely, then lower 2-3 pretzels in to the water and allow to boil 30 seconds, then flip over and boil the other side another 30 seconds. Remove to parchment lined baking sheets until you have 5 or 6 ready.

Brush pretzels with egg mixture, sprinkle with cheese and then top with some Maldon or Kosher salt.

Bake in the preheated oven for 17-20 minutes, or until deep golden brown. Remove to a cooling rack. Repeat the boiling/topping/baking process with the remaining pretzels. Serve warm or at room temperature with your favorite mustard.

***Credit: williams-sonoma.com***