

Cleo Coyle's Coffeehouse Beignets

Text & photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi, who writes the [Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini

Once in your life, you should give yourself the treat of making beignets from scratch. Our step-by-step recipe will take you through the process with tips to help you make these French market donuts like a pro. This recipe, which Marc and I perfected in our kitchen, makes light, tender, slightly chewy, and absolutely addictive beignets. It's the same recipe we published in our 15th Coffeehouse Mystery [Dead to the Last Drop](#). And don't miss our latest (21st!) title, [No Roast for the Weary](#), featuring a brand-new Coffeehouse Mystery with uniquely delicious recipes. Now let's get our beignets on! ~ Cleo

Makes about 30 beignets, depending on size

Ingredients:

3/4 cup lukewarm water

1/4 cup granulated sugar

1-1/2 teaspoons RapidRise active dry yeast *(a little more than half of a 1/4-ounce envelope)*

1 extra-large egg, slightly beaten

1 small (5-ounce) can of evaporated milk *(a little more than 1/2 cup)*

2 tablespoons canola, vegetable, or another neutral-tasting oil

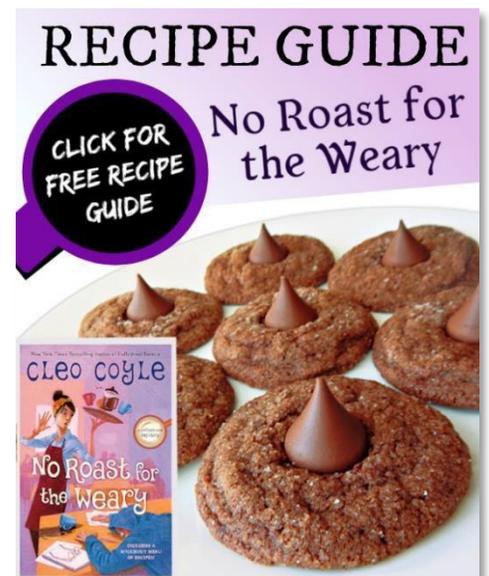
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt *(or 1/4 teaspoon table salt)*

3-1/2 cups bread flour

A little extra bread flour for dusting and rolling

Vegetable oil for deep-frying

1-1/2 cups powdered sugar *(approximately)* for coating beignets



Free Recipe Guide to
Cleo's new culinary mystery
No Roast for the Weary:
[click here.](#)

Step 1—Make the yeast mixture: Combine the water, sugar, and yeast in a container. Allow to sit for 15 minutes. The mixture should appear active and produce foam. If not, the yeast is dead. Trash the mixture and begin again with fresher yeast.



Step 2—Create the dough: In a large mixing bowl, fork-whisk the egg. Whisk in the evaporated milk, oil, and salt. Pour in the yeast mixture that you made in Step 1.



Whisk in 1 cup of the bread flour until dissolved. Continue to add the rest of the flour (*2-1/2 more cups for a total of 3-1/2 cups*), stirring as you add.



Tip: No mixer needed if you use a simple grilling fork. As you add flour to yeast dough, it becomes thick and sticky. Instead of pulling out a mixer, I pull out my large grilling fork and use it like a dough hook. While adding flour, I continue to work the dough with the fork, until it becomes stiff enough to knead by hand...

Step 3—Knead the dough: Flour your hands and knead the dough within the bowl until smooth. If you need to add more flour in this process, sprinkle on more. If you need to see what kneading looks like, click [here](#) and see the brief video in my original recipe post.



Step 4—Rise the dough: Remove the dough from the bowl. Clean the bowl, lightly grease it with oil or coat with nonstick spray. Place the dough back into the bowl and....



Place the bowl inside a plastic shopping bag and tie the handles. (This is a very effective method for coaxing dough to rise—and my favorite.) Or you can cover the top with a towel. Allow the dough to rise in a warm place for at least 2 hours or until double in size.

Step 5—Roll and cut the dough: Divide the dough in half and work with one half at a time. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to a thickness of about 1/4 inch.

Rolling Tip A: When rolling dough, be sure to turn it for even rolling in all directions. If more flour is needed to prevent sticking, sprinkle it on your board, your hands, and on your rolling pin. See a brief video in my original recipe post, [here](#).

Rolling Tip B: If your dough is very elastic, you may have trouble rolling it. If that's the case, carefully pick it up and gently stretch it in your hands as you would pizza dough. It will become more pliable and you can return to rolling it on the board. Once again, see a video in my blog post [here](#).

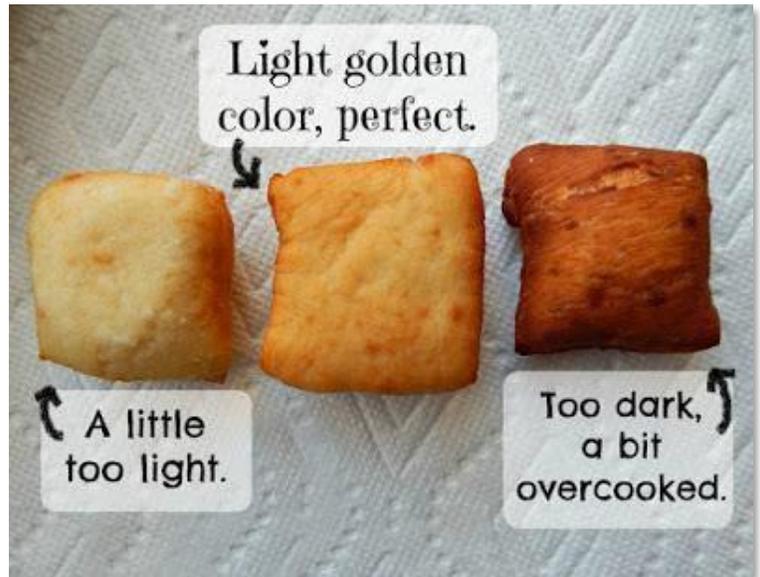
Once the dough is rolled out, cut it into squares 2-by-2-inch in size, but you can make them smaller or larger, your choice. I use a sharp pizza cutter to cut my dough...



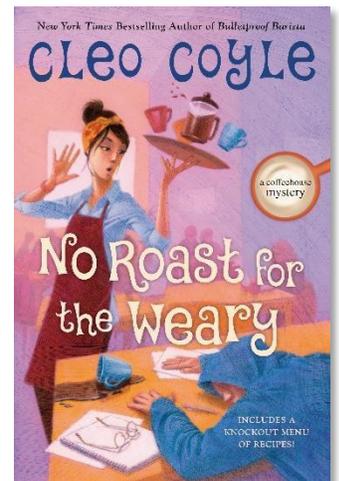
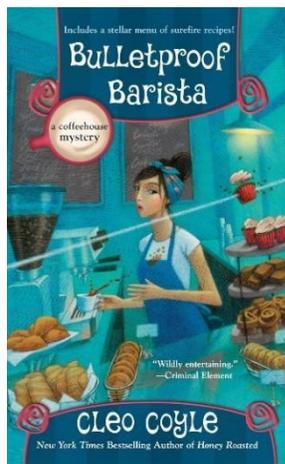
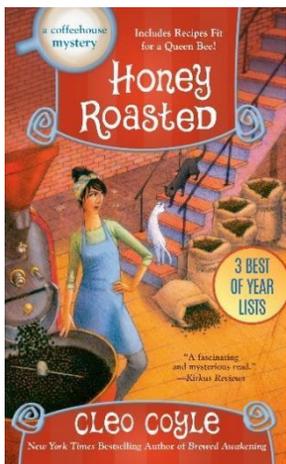
Step 6—Fry the beignets: If not using a fryer, pour oil (about an inch in depth) into a skillet or cast-iron pan. Preheat the oil to 350°F—the oil must be very hot and remain hot. Don't crowd the pan. When you crowd the pan, the oil temperature drops, giving you greasy beignets. So keep the oil hot, but not so hot that the beignets burn. Use your judgement during the cooking and adjust the heat as you fry.



Remove the fried beignets with a slotted spoon and allow to drain on paper towels. While still warm, dust generously on both sides with powdered sugar and...



Eat with joy! ~ Cleo



The [Coffeeshouse Mysteries](#) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeeshouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes.

To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeeshouse at

www.CoffeeshouseMystery.com

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www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com

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