Shawarma Wrap Bread | The Overnight Yogurt Dough Method for Extra-Soft Wraps



A wrap is only as good as the bread holding it together. You can build the juiciest, most carefully spiced filling, but if the flatbread is dry, stiff, or tears at the first fold, the meal falls apart in your hands.

This guide shows you how to make Shawarma Wrap Bread with an overnight yogurt dough. You mix it in about 15 minutes, let the refrigerator do the slow work, and cook fresh wraps the next day in minutes. The cold rest builds flavor and makes the dough remarkably stretchy, so rolling is easy and the finished bread bends without cracking.

We've written this for home cooks of every level. If you've never baked with yeast, the steps are forgiving. If you've baked plenty, you'll find tips for fine-tuning thickness, heat, and texture.

How Do You Make Soft Wraps with Overnight Dough?

Stir flour, instant yeast, salt, sugar, plain yogurt, water, and olive oil into a soft dough, knead for 5 minutes, and refrigerate in a covered, oiled bowl for 8 to 24 hours. Let it warm up for 30 minutes, divide into 8 balls, rest 20 minutes, and roll each into a thin 9-inch circle. Cook in a hot,

dry skillet for about 1 minute on the first side and 30 seconds on the second, then stack the wraps under a towel to keep them soft.

The rest of this post explains each step so you can adapt it to your kitchen.

What Is Shawarma, and What Should Its Bread Do?

Shawarma is a Middle Eastern dish of marinated meat, traditionally roasted on a vertical spit, shaved into thin slices, and rolled up with pickles, vegetables, and sauce. Garlic sauce, tahini, and pickle brine are all moist, so the bread has three jobs:

- Hold together under a heavy, saucy filling.
- Stay flexible so it can be rolled tightly without splitting.
- Taste good on its own, with a gentle, slightly tangy bread flavor that complements spices.

Good wrap flatbread is thin (about 1/8 inch), lightly blistered, and chewy without being tough. The overnight yogurt method hits all three targets reliably.

How It Differs from Pita, Tortillas, and Lavash

- Pita is thicker and puffs into a pocket. It’s designed for stuffing rather than rolling.
- Flour tortillas are typically unyeasted and made with fat and baking powder. They’re flexible but milder in flavor.
- Lavash is very thin and can dry out quickly, which makes it prone to cracking.
- Yeasted wrap flatbread sits in between: thin like lavash, soft like a tortilla, with the flavor of real bread.

Why Homemade Shawarma Wrap Bread Beats the Packaged Kind



Packaged flatbread is convenient, but Homemade Shawarma Wrap Bread offers advantages you can taste and feel:

- Freshness: Bread eaten within minutes of cooking is far more tender than anything that has sat in a bag.
- Flavor: Cold fermentation develops subtle, slightly tangy notes that packaged bread can’t match.
- Control: You choose the size, thickness, and seasoning.
- Simple ingredients: No preservatives, dough conditioners, or long label.
- Cost: A full batch costs only a few cents per wrap.
- Flexibility: The dough can be made ahead and cooked on demand.

The overnight method also solves a common problem: time. Most of the work happens while you sleep or are at work, so fresh bread fits into even a packed schedule.

Why Yogurt and a Cold Rest Make Softer Bread

Two small choices make this recipe stand out.

Yogurt adds mild acidity, which relaxes gluten so the dough stretches thinly without snapping back. It also adds a touch of fat and moisture, which keeps the baked bread tender.

Cold fermentation slows the yeast and gives enzymes time to break down starches and proteins. The result is a dough that's easier to roll, more flavorful, and more resistant to drying out in the pan. It also lets you divide the work: mix on one day, cook on another.

Ingredients for an Easy Shawarma Wrap Bread Recipe

This Easy Shawarma Wrap Bread Recipe makes 8 wraps, each about 9 inches wide.

The Ingredient List

- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast
- 1½ teaspoons fine salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ cup (120 g) plain whole-milk yogurt
- ⅔ cup (160 ml) cool water
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus a little for the bowl
- Melted butter or olive oil for brushing (optional)

What Each Ingredient Does

Flour builds the gluten that lets the dough stretch thin. Yeast provides lift and flavor. Salt strengthens the dough and sharpens taste. Sugar feeds the yeast and encourages light browning. Yogurt softens and tenderizes. Olive oil coats the gluten strands, which is one of the main reasons the finished wraps bend instead of cracking.

Equipment

- Large mixing bowl
- Rolling pin
- 10- to 12-inch cast iron or heavy non-stick skillet
- Clean kitchen towels
- Bench scraper
- Kitchen scale (helpful, not required)

Step-by-Step: Mixing and Chilling the Dough

Step 1: Combine the Dry Ingredients

Whisk the flour, yeast, salt, and sugar in a large bowl. Whisking spreads the yeast evenly so the dough ferments uniformly.

Step 2: Add the Wet Ingredients

Add the yogurt, water, and olive oil. Stir with a wooden spoon until a shaggy dough forms and no dry flour remains.

Step 3: Knead Briefly

Turn the dough onto a lightly floured counter and knead for about 5 minutes. It should feel smooth and slightly tacky. Because the cold rest does much of the gluten development, you don’t need to knead as long as with a same-day dough.

Quick test: Press a finger into the dough. If it springs back slowly, it’s ready.

Step 4: Refrigerate

Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, turn it once to coat, and cover tightly with a lid or plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours and up to 24. The dough will rise slowly and may not double, and that’s fine.

Step-by-Step: Shaping and Cooking

Step 5: Bring the Dough to Room Temperature

Remove the bowl from the refrigerator and leave it on the counter for 30 minutes. Cold dough is stiff and harder to roll, so this short wait pays off.

Step 6: Divide and Rest

Turn the dough out and divide it into 8 equal pieces (about 70 g each). Shape each into a tight ball by tucking the edges underneath. Cover with a towel and rest for 20 minutes. This rest lets the gluten relax, so the dough rolls out without shrinking back.

Step 7: Roll Thin

Lightly flour the counter. Roll each ball into a circle about 9 inches wide and 1/8 inch thick, rotating a quarter turn after each pass. Keep the remaining balls covered. A few small irregularities are fine, since rustic edges are part of the charm.

Step 8: Cook in a Hot, Dry Skillet

Heat the skillet over medium-high heat until a drop of water dances and evaporates quickly. Do not add oil. Lay one circle in the pan and cook for about 1 minute, until bubbles form and the surface looks dry. Flip and cook for 30 seconds, until golden freckles appear. The wrap should puff in places, which means steam pockets have formed inside.

Step 9: Stack and Steam

Transfer each wrap to a towel-lined plate and cover the stack. The trapped steam softens the bread as it cools. Brush with butter or olive oil if you want extra richness.

Tips for Soft Shawarma Wrap Bread Every Time

For truly Soft Shawarma Wrap Bread, small habits matter more than fancy tools:

1. Preheat the pan thoroughly. A cool pan cooks slowly and dries the bread out.
2. Keep flour to a minimum. Extra flour on the counter gets cooked into the surface and stiffens it.
3. Keep cooking time under two minutes. Longer cooking turns wraps crisp.
4. Cover finished wraps immediately. Bread exposed to air dries out in minutes.
5. Weigh your flour. A scooped cup can vary by 30 grams or more, which changes hydration noticeably.
6. Roll evenly. Thin spots burn and thick spots stay doughy.
7. Keep unrolled dough covered. A dry skin on the dough causes tearing.

Troubleshooting Common Problems



The Wraps Crack When I Fold Them

- They were likely overcooked or left uncovered. Shorten the cooking time and cover them right away.
- They may have been rolled too thin. Aim for roughly the thickness of two stacked coins.
- The dough might have been too dry. Add a teaspoon of water next time.

The Bread Is Tough

- The dough may have been under-rested. Don’t skip the 20-minute rest after dividing.
- Too much flour may have been worked in during rolling.
- The pan may have been too cool.

The Dough Is Hard to Roll

- It may still be cold. Give it the full 30 minutes at room temperature.
- It may be springing back. Cover it and rest it for another 5 to 10 minutes.

The Wraps Don’t Puff

- Raise the heat slightly.
- Check that the thickness is even, since steam escapes through thin spots.

The Dough Barely Rose in the Fridge

Some rise is normal, but a flat, lifeless dough can mean old yeast. Check the expiration date next time. If the dough smells pleasantly yeasty, it will still cook up well.

Cooking Methods Compared

- Cast iron skillet: Best for blistering and puffing. Preheat well.
- Non-stick skillet: Gentler, with paler bread. Good for beginners.
- Electric griddle: Cooks several at once at about 450°F (230°C).
- Outdoor grill: Adds a smoky note. Cook about 1 minute per side.
- Oven: Bake on a preheated stone or inverted sheet pan at 475°F (245°C) for 3 to 4 minutes.

Fillings and Serving Ideas

Classic fillings include thinly sliced marinated chicken or beef, garlic sauce or tahini, pickled cucumbers and turnips, tomatoes, red onion, parsley, and a pinch of sumac.



For a sweet-savory twist, slice some honey garlic chicken thighs and tuck them into a warm wrap with shredded cabbage and a spoonful of yogurt sauce. If you like a crunchy finish, borrow the pan-crisping technique from our crispy tortilla beef wraps: roll your filled wrap and toast it seam-side down for about a minute until golden.

Leftovers also work well here. Last night's chicken stir-fry becomes a quick lunch wrap when paired with cool cucumber and a drizzle of garlic sauce. For a more indulgent meal, shred the meat from our fall-off-the-bone oven-baked pork ribs and roll it up with pickles and slaw.

How to Roll a Wrap That Stays Closed

1. Warm the bread so it's flexible.
2. Spread sauce down the center, leaving a 2-inch border.
3. Add meat first, then vegetables, to keep moisture away from the bread.
4. Fold the bottom edge up over the filling.
5. Fold in both sides.
6. Roll tightly away from you.
7. Wrap the bottom half in foil or parchment for easy handling.

Using the Dough Beyond Wraps

This dough is versatile. Roll it to about 1/4 inch and cook a little longer, and you have a Fluffy Shawarma Bread Recipe that's ideal for dipping into hummus, baba ganoush, or a bowl of lentil

soup. You can also cut cooked flatbread into wedges, brush with garlic butter, and crisp them in the oven for chips, or use the dough as a quick pizza base.

Many cooks like to keep a batch of Homemade Shawarma Flatbread dough in the refrigerator all week. It gives you fresh bread on demand, with no planning on the day.

Short on Time? Same-Day Shortcut

If you didn't plan ahead, use this approach for an Easy Shawarma Flatbread Recipe you can finish in about 90 minutes. Use warm water (about 105°F or 40°C) instead of cool, increase the yeast to 2 teaspoons, knead for 7 minutes, and let the dough rise at room temperature for 45 minutes. Then divide, rest, roll, and cook as above. You'll lose a little flavor depth, but the texture will still be soft and pliable.

Variations to Try

Whole Wheat

Replace up to half the flour with whole wheat and add 1 to 2 tablespoons more water. The bread will be nuttier and slightly denser.

Garlic and Herb

Mix 1 teaspoon of dried oregano or za'atar into the flour, and brush finished wraps with garlic butter.

Dairy-Free

Use a plain unsweetened plant-based yogurt, or replace the yogurt with an extra ¼ cup of water and an extra tablespoon of olive oil.

Seeded

Press sesame or nigella seeds onto the rolled circles just before cooking.

A Note on Gluten-Free

This dough depends on gluten for its stretch, so swapping the flour won't work. Look for a dedicated gluten-free flatbread recipe built around psyllium husk or xanthan gum.

Storage, Freezing, and Reheating

Storing Cooked Wraps

- Room temperature: Up to 2 days in an airtight bag, with excess air squeezed out.
- Refrigerator: Up to 5 days. Reheat before serving, since chilled bread stiffens.

- Freezer: Up to 3 months, with parchment between each wrap.

Reheating

- Skillet: 15 to 20 seconds per side over medium heat.
- Microwave: Wrap in a damp paper towel and heat for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Oven: Wrap a stack in foil and warm at 300°F (150°C) for 8 to 10 minutes.

Storing the Dough

Keep the dough in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours, or portion and freeze it in balls for up to 1 month. Thaw frozen dough overnight in the refrigerator, then rest it at room temperature for 30 minutes before rolling.

Nutrition and Ingredient Notes

Each wrap contains roughly 200 to 230 calories, depending on thickness and how much oil or butter you use. Most of the energy comes from carbohydrates, with modest protein from the flour and yogurt. Values vary, so use a nutrition calculator if you're tracking precisely.

Practical notes:

- Sodium: Making your own gives you control over salt.
- Fiber: Whole wheat flour increases it.
- Allergens: The recipe contains wheat and dairy. See the dairy-free variation if needed.

Why This Method Works

- Hydration: With liquid from both the water and yogurt, the dough sits around 68% hydration, which is soft but still rollable.
- Acidity: Yogurt relaxes gluten, so the dough stretches thinner with less effort.
- Time: Cold fermentation improves flavor and workability.
- Heat: A very hot pan turns the water in the dough into steam quickly, puffing the bread and setting its structure before it dries out.
- Steam: Stacking the wraps traps moisture and finishes the softening process.

Final Thoughts

Mix the dough in a few minutes this evening, tuck it into the refrigerator, and tomorrow you'll have warm, soft flatbread ready to wrap around almost anything. The method asks very little of you, and the cold rest does the heavy lifting. Once you've watched the first wrap puff in the pan, it's hard to go back to packaged bread.

Whether you're filling it with spiced chicken, leftover stir-fry, or tender ribs, a stack of fresh Shawarma Wrap Bread makes the whole meal feel more special. Make a double batch, freeze half, and you'll always be a few minutes away from a great wrap.

If you try this recipe, leave a comment and a star rating below and tell us what you filled yours with. We read every note, and your feedback helps other home cooks.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the best flour for wrap flatbread?

All-purpose flour is the best everyday choice because it gives a soft, tender result. Bread flour adds chew and strength, which suits very juicy fillings. Avoid cake or pastry flour, which doesn't have enough gluten.

Can I skip the overnight rest?

Yes. Use the same-day shortcut above with warm water and a 45-minute rise. The bread will still be soft, though with a little less flavor.

Why did my wraps harden after cooling?

They were probably overcooked or left uncovered. Cook each wrap for under two minutes total, then stack and cover with a towel immediately.

How thin should I roll the dough?

About 1/8 inch, or roughly the thickness of two stacked coins. That's thin enough to roll but sturdy enough for sauce.

Can I freeze Shawarma Wrap Bread?

Yes. Cool the cooked wraps completely, separate them with parchment, and freeze in a sealed bag for up to 3 months. Reheat in a dry skillet for 15 to 20 seconds per side.