

05.21.2021:  
MASA MADRE

M A S A M A D R E



**Tamar and Elena**  
**Masa Madre Owners/Bakers**

A blend of Mexican flavours and Jewish recipes are at the soul of Masa Madre's custom-made delicacies. Created by Mexico-City natives, Elena and Tamar, the online-based bakery brings together the best of both worlds. Specializing in babka and challah, layers of soft-pillowy dough encase a mix of flavours from their youth; memories from their grandmother's kitchens; and the creative palate of every-day food enthusiasts. Each and every order is artisanal and custom-made in a conscious kitchen that prides itself on being sustainable and using only high-quality ingredients. We partner with local Chicago businesses to act as pickup locations around the city, but we also deliver and ship nationwide.



- **What inspired you to open a bakery business?**

*Elena and I have both grown up in baking families, and also in a city sweetened by thousands of bakeries. When we moved to Chicago, from Mexico City, we really started craving that homeliness that our bread brought. We were also craving community and family, and this all came together as Masa Madre.*

- **What keeps you going?**

*During the pandemic, it was hard for us to consider ourselves an essential business. But we never closed. We actually grew a lot. Mostly because of people sending bread to their loved ones. We transformed from being a bakery to a provider of comfort and good thoughts around the country. This, and our lovely clients really keep us going.*

- **What challenges have you overcome as a baker?**

*So many challenges! For one, learning to be more than a baker. An accountant, delivery driver, packaging specialist, website designer, marketing, dishwasher, sales personnel... everything! Aside from that, learning every single day from our mistakes and learning all about food science, mostly through trial and error.*

- **What advice would you give to someone considering a baking career?**

*Baking requires passion, love, and so much work. But the return is so much greater. Very few careers are meant to give people instant enjoyment and happiness. If you're into that, go for it.*

- **What does 2021 hold for you?**

*Hopefully growth. We've always grown very organically and mainly by saying yes to whatever opportunity came our way, but we think this is the year when we might have to really decide what's best for the business and work really hard to make it happen. We want to reach more people and also be closer to our customers. Storefront? Maybe.*

**From Elena:** *I asked my mom for this recipe that we used to make a lot when I was little. It belonged to my great-grandmother and we only had it on a handwritten piece of paper that was very hard to read! So we called my grandmother and she was able to read it and explain it to us. The recipe is a bit unconventional, but I promise the result is amazing. They are so good!*

## Buñuelos

1 1/8 cups of Coke

1/2 kg all-purpose flour

2 eggs

90 g butter

Grated piloncillo or brown sugar and cinnamon for sprinkling

- Mix all the ingredients with your hands until you get a very soft dough. Knead it until the dough is not sticking to your hands (my grandmother suggests adding some butter or lard to your hands to help you knead)
- Let the dough rest covered for at least one hour.
- Divide the dough into small pieces and roll them out into a tortilla shape.
- Sit down and place a rag in your knees and continue pulling and shaping the Buñuelos with your hands over the rag and place them on a table.

Once you have all of them shaped, start frying them one by one starting with the ones that are drier until they are lightly golden brown and sprinkle them with either grated "piloncillo" or brown sugar and cinnamon