

Hot Cross Buns

For the Dough

1 cup milk
1 package (8 grams) active dry yeast
1/2 tsp white sugar
3 1/2 - 4 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 cup light brown sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1/4 tsp ground allspice
1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp salt
5 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1/3 cup candied fruit mix
(or more as desired)
1/3 cup currants or raisins
(or more as desired)



For the Cross on the Buns

3 tbsp all-purpose flour
1/2 tbsp confectioners (powdered or icing) sugar
2 tbsp water, or more as needed

For the Sugar Glaze

2 tbsp confectioners (powdered or icing) sugar
2 tbsp boiling water

Directions

In a small saucepan heat the milk on medium-low until it reaches 100F or 38C. Gently stir in the packet of yeast and 1/2 tsp sugar to combine. Set aside for about 10 minutes or until the yeast is foamy on top of the milk.

Meanwhile in the bowl of your electric mixer, with the paddle attachment, combine only 3 1/2 cups flour (set 1/2 cup aside), sugar, spices, and salt. Turn on the mixer and blend all of the dry ingredients together.

Once the yeast is foamy, with the mixer on a low speed, gradually pour it into the flour mixture and continue to beat until the dry ingredients are moistened. Then add the melted butter and egg and beat on low until incorporated.

Clean the dough off the paddle and change to the dough hook. With the mixer on medium low speed, gradually add the candied and dried fruit and continue to mix until the dough comes together into a ball, adding any of the remaining 1/2 cup of flour as needed. Turn the dough ball off the hook and onto a counter scantily floured counter. Continue to knead and add flour as required until the dough isn't sticky to touch and can be easily kneaded. Knead until the dough becomes silky smooth and elastic. **When making the second batch I barely added any of the remaining 1/2 cup of flour and the dough was easier to handle and lighter when baked.*

Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, turning the dough once, so the top is lightly greased. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm spot to rise until it has almost doubled in size (about 1 1/2 - 2 hours). **Mine took about two hours. I placed a heating pad on low, covered it with a tea towel and placed the bowl on top of this. It worked like a charm. Be sure not to have the heating pad on a high temperature!!*

When the dough has doubled in size, gently punch or press it down with your fingers to release the air, and divide into 12 equal pieces or 15 smaller.

Form each piece into a small round ball and place on a parchment lined baking sheet (Place three buns to a row, four rows altogether. They should be spaced so they have enough room to double in size.

Make an egg wash of one beaten egg with 1 tbsp milk, and brush the tops of the buns with the wash. Lightly spray a piece of plastic wrap with a nonstick cooking spray, and place lightly over the buns. Place in a warm spot until almost doubled in size (about 60 minutes). *I placed them back on the heating pad set-up and covered lightly with a tea towel as well.*

Preheat oven to 400 F (205 degrees C). Brush the tops of the buns again with the egg wash, and with clean kitchen shears (or a sharp, lightly greased knife), cut a small 'cross' in the center top of each bun.

In a small bowl, stir together the plain flour, confectioner's sugar and water until a smooth consistency is acquired, adding more water as needed. Try not to make this too runny or lumpy. Using a pastry bag with a small tip (#2) or snip a corner of a ziploc bag, pour in the Cross Glaze and pipe large crosses over each bun. **The first batch was so runny it went everywhere, I had to "open and close" the top to move from bun to bun. Had I put them closer together, I could have just "run" straight across all of the buns one way and then straight down the other! The second time around, I made the right consistency that worked well with the #2 tip.*

Bake in the oven for approximately 10 minutes, turn the pan and bake for 2-3 minutes more until the tops are golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Move the buns to a wire rack with a piece of parchment paper underneath for quick cleanup. Mix together the sugar glaze ingredients together and brush over the tops of the cooled buns. Let dry then brush over a second time.

Makes 12 large or 15 smaller buns.

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