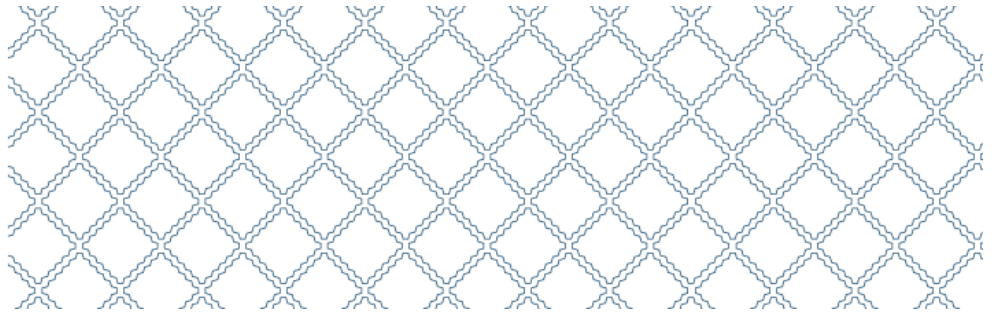


Classic Hot Cross Buns

SERVES 12

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup milk
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup sugar
- ⅔ cup warm water
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 2¼ teaspoons dry instant yeast
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- 1 egg
- ½ cup candied citrus peel
- ½ cup raisins
- Canola oil
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 4 teaspoons milk



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the milk, butter and sugar in a small pot and heat over low until butter and sugar melt. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature.
2. Combine the sugar and warm water in the bowl of a mixer (or any large mixing bowl). Stir in the yeast. Let stand to "proof" for 10 minutes.
3. Combine the flour, cinnamon, salt and allspice in a small bowl.
4. Pour the cooled butter mixture into the yeast mixture. Add the egg and stir until well-mixed. Add about half of the flour mixture and stir until very well combined. Add the peel and raisins and stir well. Gradually add the remaining flour, mixing well until it forms a smooth dough (use low speed on a stand mixer with the paddle).
5. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured counter and knead until smooth and elastic (about 1 minute if you used a stand mixer for the dough; about 5 full minutes if you stirred the dough by hand).
6. Add a few teaspoons of canola oil to a large clean bowl. Add the dough and turn it over a few times so that the entire ball is covered with a thin layer of oil. Cover the bowl and let rise in a warm place (I like the oven with the light on!) until doubled in size, about 90 minutes.
7. Grease a 9X13-in baking dish with canola oil. Punch down the dough and knead it a few times. Divide it into 12 equal portions (a digital scale helps so much!). Roll each portion into a smooth, even ball and place evenly in the prepared dish. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 45 min.
8. Preheat the oven to 375F. Bake the buns for 25 to 30 min or until they are dark golden brown. Meanwhile stir the milk into the icing sugar until smooth. After taking the pan out of the oven, brush a very thin layer of glaze over the buns. Let cool in the pan for about 15 minutes, then transfer the buns (I try to move them in one big piece by using a large flexible spatula) to a cooling rack and cool completely.
9. Drizzle a cross onto each one with the remaining icing.

TIP: I use half whole-wheat flour with no adverse effects. The glaze should be quite thick -- better too thick than too thin.