

Hot Cross Buns

These Easter-famous breads trace back to ancient Egypt, Rome, and Greece, where they served as symbols of honor toward their goddesses. Later, these sweet breads became popular at Easter, especially in England where bakers were forbidden to sell spice breads except on special holidays, like the Friday before Easter.

Many English believed hot cross buns baked on Good Friday would never grow moldy; they were kept as good luck charms hanging in windows, accompanied sailors on a voyage, or buried in piles of grain to ward off rodents. Today, they're mostly representations of the Christian symbol of the cross as well as a sweet, buttery addition to an Easter meal.

Ingredients

2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast
2 cups warm whole milk (110° to 115°)
2 large eggs, room temperature
1/3 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
6 to 7 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup dried currants
1/2 cup raisins
1 large egg yolk
2 tablespoons water



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1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
4 to 6 teaspoons whole milk

Directions

- In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm milk. In a large bowl, combine eggs, butter, sugar, salt, spices, yeast mixture and 3 cups flour; beat on medium speed until smooth. Stir in currants, raisins and enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky).
- Turn onto a floured surface; knead until dough is smooth and elastic, 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- Punch down dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide and shape into 30 balls. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Cover with kitchen towels; let rise in a warm place until doubled, 30-45 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°.
- Using a sharp knife, cut a cross on top of each bun. In a small bowl, whisk egg yolk and water; brush over tops. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool slightly.

For icing, in a small bowl, mix confectioners' sugar and enough milk to reach desired consistency. Pipe a cross on top of each bun. Serve warm

Recipe credit: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/traditional-hot-cross-buns>