



EASTER HOT CROSS BUNS

Classic Easter treats that are so worth the time to make. Plump mixed fruit and spice spiked buns are coated in an apricot jam glaze and perfect toasted with lots of butter.

Prep time 40 minutes plus 1 hour 45 minutes proving | Cook time 15-20 minutes | Serves 12

INGREDIENTS

500g strong white bread flour
10g fine salt
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons ground mixed spice
1 orange zest, finely grated
1 lemon zest, finely grated
300ml semi skimmed milk
60g unsalted butter
10g fast action yeast
1 large Clarence Court Hens egg, beaten
150g sultanas
50g dried cranberries
50g chopped mixed candied peel
Vegetable or flavourless oil
75g plain flour
100g Bonne Maman Apricot Conserve



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METHOD

Place the strong white bread flour in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the salt, mixed spice, ground cinnamon, orange and lemon zest. Make a well in the centre.

Gently heat the milk until lightly steaming and stir in the butter until melted. Pour the milk and melted butter into a jug, check that it's lukewarm and then stir in the yeast. Mix until frothy then pour into the well and add the beaten egg. Mix with a dinner knife at first bringing the flour slowly into the milk mixture and forming a rough dough. Transfer to a freestanding mixer with a dough hook, spoon in the mixed fruit and knead to a smooth dough for about 5 – 10 minutes. Tip into a lightly oiled large bowl and cover with clingfilm. Place in a warm cupboard or by a radiator for 1 hour or until it has doubled in size.

Meanwhile line two baking trays with greaseproof paper. When the dough is ready turn out on to a clean lightly floured work surface and 'knock back' divide the dough into 12 equal sized balls, using a weighing scale helps make sure they are all even. Place 6 balls on each tray fairly close to each other. Place each tray in a large food safe bag (large roasting bags work well) and secure with an elastic band making sure the bag doesn't touch the buns. Place the trays back in the warm place and allow the buns to double in size (about 45 minutes).

Pre-heat the oven to 200c/ Gas Mark 7. Mix the flour with 75ml water and spoon the paste into a small icing or piping bag.

When the buns are ready, remove them from the bags and pipe a cross over each bun. Place the trays in the oven and bake for 15 – 20 minutes or until golden brown. Turn the trays halfway.

Meanwhile, melt the jam in a pan and pass through a sieve. Once the buns are cooked remove from the oven, brush over the glaze and allow to cool a little. Serve fresh or toasted with butter. You can freeze the buns, just cool completely and glaze after defrosting and reheating.




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