

Cranberry and Cointreau hot cross buns

Makes 12

Ingredients

7.5g (1 1/2 teaspoons) instant dried yeast (or 15g fresh yeast)
175ml (6 fl oz) lukewarm milk
350g strong plain white bread flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon mixed spice, ground
1 teaspoon cinnamon, ground
1 teaspoon nutmeg, freshly grated
50g (2oz) butter, diced
zest of a lemon, grated
zest of an orange, grated
25g (1oz) soft, light brown sugar
75g (3oz) dried cranberries
1 egg, beaten

For the glaze: Measure a level amount of caster sugar in a 50ml cup and put in a small saucepan with 50ml fresh orange juice. Heat gently to dissolve sugar then raise the heat and bring to the boil until thickened but not brown. Leave to cool and add 15ml Cointreau.

For the crosses: approx 50g shortcrust pastry or 1 tablespoon of plain flour mixed to a loose paste with 1 tablespoon of water.

Method

1. Stir the yeast into the warm milk and leave for 5 minutes (unless you are using easy-blend yeast). Sift the flour and spices into the bowl of your mixer, add the salt and rub in the butter (I used the paddle on my KitchenAid). Stir in the lemon and orange zest, sugar, cranberries. (If you are using easy-blend yeast, add this in now.)
2. Add the yeast/milk mixture and egg to form a soft dough (I use the dough hook). Knead for 10 minutes by machine or hand. Remove the dough, wash and dry the bowl and lightly oil it, then return the dough, cover with cling film and leave in a warm place for about 2 hours or until doubled in size.
3. Knock back the dough (removing the air), lightly knead again for a few minutes then cut it into 12 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball (I do this by tucking the edges underneath) and put on a baking sheet lined with baking paper.
4. Cover with cling film and leave to rise again in a warm place for around 30 minutes (alternatively you can put them in the fridge overnight and bring to room temperature in the morning). Roll out the pastry and cut into even strips, brush the back of each strip with a little water and lay two pieces over each bun to form a cross. Alternatively use a piping bag (or plastic bag with the corner cut off) with the flour and water paste to make the crosses.

5. Bake in an oven preheated to 190C (325F) for 15-20 minutes. Make the glaze while they are cooking and brush this over the top while the buns are still warm. Cool on a wire rack. Serve with butter and jam.

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