

HOT CROSS BUNS

MAKES 16 BUNS

This hot cross bun recipe comes from my Irish grandmother. The buns are proofed several times before baking, allowing the texture to be soft and airy. They are perfect for breakfast with a nice hot cup of coffee. **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** paper cornet (see "[Make Your Own Cornet](#)") or pastry bag and #2 plain tip (optional)

BUNS

- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 2 envelopes (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast (4 1/2 teaspoons)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, sifted, plus more for kneading
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1/4 pound (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup dried currants
- 1/4 cup finely diced citron
- Cooking spray
- Egg wash: 1 egg white beaten with 1 tablespoon water

ICING

- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon whole milk
- 1 teaspoon light corn syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Small pinch of kosher salt

MAKE THE BUNS: In a small saucepan or in the microwave, heat the milk just until it's warm. It should only just be warm, *not hot*, and it should definitely not come to a boil.

Transfer the warmed milk to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the yeast, sugar, and salt. Let the mixture sit for 5 minutes.

With the mixer on low speed, mix in one-third of the flour, followed by the eggs. Mix in the melted butter, cinnamon, and the remaining two-thirds of the flour. Beat in the currants and citron. Coat a large bowl with cooking spray and transfer the dough to it. Cover with a damp towel and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1½ hours.

Punch down the dough. Turn it out onto a floured surface and knead by hand for 1 minute. Return it to the greased bowl, cover again, and place in the refrigerator to slowly rise again for 2½ hours.

Coat the bottom and sides of a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Punch down the dough and turn it out onto a floured surface. Cut it into 4 portions. Cut each of the portions into quarters, creating 16 buns. Gently roll them into rounds. Place the buns in the greased baking pan in 4 rows of 4. Brush the tops of the buns with the egg wash. Cover with a towel and let the buns rise again at room temperature until doubled in size, about 1 hour. The buns will touch.

While the buns are rising, preheat the oven to 350°F.

Bake the buns until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Let the buns cool in the pan.

MAKE THE ICING: In a small bowl, whisk together the confectioners' sugar, milk, corn syrup, vanilla, and salt until smooth.

When the buns are cool, dip a knife in the icing (or fill a cornet or a pastry bag fitted with a #2 plain tip with the icing) and draw a continuous line of icing across the tops of all the buns down the rows in one direction. Then turn the pan and make perpendicular lines of icing across the rows in the other directions to make the traditional icing "cross" on each bun.