

Hot Cross Buns

Makes 12

625g strong white flour, plus extra for dusting
1 tsp salt
2 tsp ground mixed spice
45g unsalted butter, cubed, plus extra for greasing
85g caster sugar
1 unwaxed lemon, finely grated zest only
1½ tsp dried fast-action yeast
1 free-range egg
275ml tepid milk
125g dried mixed fruit of your choice

For the cross

plain flour
cold water mix to form a firm smooth
paste

Method

1. For the buns, sieve the flour, salt and mixed spice into a large mixing bowl, then rub in the butter using your fingertips. Make a well in the centre of the mixture, then add the sugar, lemon zest and yeast. Beat the egg and add to the flour with the tepid milk. Mix together to form a soft, pliable dough.
2. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Carefully work the mixed dried fruit into the dough until well combined. Knead lightly for 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.
3. Grease a large, warm mixing bowl with butter. Shape the dough into a ball and place into the prepared bowl, then cover with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour to prove.
4. Turn out the proved dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knock back the dough. Shape into a ball again and return to the bowl, then cover again and set aside for a further 30 minutes to rise.
5. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and divide into 12 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then flatten slightly into a bun shape using the palms of your hands. Place on a baking tray, cover the buns again and set aside in a warm place for a further 40 minutes to rise.
6. Preheat the oven to 240C/220C Fan/Gas 8.
7. Meanwhile, for the topping, mix the plain flour to a fairly thick smooth paste with 2 tablespoons cold water (you may need to use slightly less or more water to get the right consistency). When the buns have risen, spoon the flour mixture into a piping bag (or a plastic food bag with a corner snipped away) and pipe a cross on each bun.
8. Transfer the buns to the oven and bake for 8–12 minutes, or until pale golden brown. As soon as you remove the buns from the oven, brush them with the hot golden syrup, then set aside to cool on a wire rack.



PROJECT FOOD

A helping hand to healthy eating



You can also use finely grated zest of ½ orange or 1 tangerine/satsuma

Gluten free bread flour will also work well

This recipe also works well with non-dairy alternatives