

Hot Cross Buns

Ingredients.

1 tbsp of dried yeast, active
1 tsp sugar
125ml of water, warm
350g of strong white flour
100g of strong wholemeal flour
1/2 tsp table salt
2 tsp mixed spice
50g of caster sugar
75g of sultanas
75g of dried chopped apricots
75g of mixed peel
125ml of milk, warm
50g of butter, melted
1 Free Range egg, beaten

To begin, combine the dried yeast and sugar in a bowl, then whisk in the warm water. Cover the bowl with cling film and leave in a warm place for approximately 10-15 minutes, until frothy

Sieve the flour into a large mixing bowl, then mix in salt, sugar, spice and fruits

Create a well in the middle of the ingredients and use your hands to mix in the frothy yeast mixture. Add the milk, butter and egg, then mix well to form a sticky dough.

Lightly flour over a work surface and place the dough on top. Knead with your hands for 5 minutes or so, until smooth.

Grease a bowl with a little oil and add the ball of dough. Top the bowl with cling film and allow to prove in a warm place for 1 hour, or until doubled in size

Lightly dust a work surface with flour and turn out the dough. Knead gently, then roll into a long sausage-shape. Split into 12 even pieces, using scales for accuracy. Roll each piece of dough into a ball

Arrange the balls on a lined baking tray, spacing out so they are close but not touching. Set aside to until doubled in size for 45 minutes in a warm place

Meanwhile, make the piping paste and preheat the oven to 220°C/gas mark 6

For the paste, simply mix the water, flour and sugar until smooth. Add to a piping bag with a thin nozzle.

To make the egg wash, beat together the milk and egg yolk.

When the buns have finished proving, use a blunt knife to make a cross-shaped indentation on each one. Use a pastry brush to coat with egg wash, then pipe the crosses into the indentations

Bake the buns for 20 minutes, until nicely golden and sound hollow when tapped

Meanwhile, make the glaze. Add the sugar and water to a pan and dissolve over a low heat. As soon as the buns are ready, remove from the oven and brush over the glaze. Allow to cool on a wire rack before pulling apart and serving