

This challenge intrigued me for a few reasons. One, I am the only person on the planet that does not like cinnamon rolls. It makes no sense, because I love cinnamon, love rolls, hate cinnamon rolls. But coconut almond rolls? That I can do. Sweet potato, chorizo, cheese rolls, get outta my way!

Anyway, reason number two: I've recently moved from Colorado Springs to Monument, CO. Monument has an elevation of 7343 feet, which makes baking a bit exciting. Heck, you can't pop microwave popcorn where I live because the altitude is too high. "What exactly would yeast dough do on Monument Hill?" I wondered.

Reason three, it sounded kind of fun. I don't innovate, so I thought I would try something different.

The first thought I had was pumpkin. yuuuum, pumpkin. Gotta do pumpkin something. I watched your video and decided pumpkin butter would work, but I was worried it would be too runny. Then I thought, cream cheese. Well actually, it was more like creeeeeaaamm cheese. Pumpkin cheesecake. I picked myself up off the floor and googled pumpkin cheesecake. What I found knocked me back on the floor. GINGER pumpkin cheesecake. Now we're talking. A new google search and up it came, the magic ticket, Crunchy ginger pumpkin cheesecake with toffee topping. SOLD! I grabbed a bag of Heath toffee bits at the store that day, still not sure what I was doing yet.

My concern was making the rolls too sweet, I like my desserts to taste more like butter than like sugar. I decided to use the toffee bits as the main source of sweet. In that case, the filling had to be minimally sweet, and I was worried about the sauce, because most that I was seeing used sweetened condensed milk, yuck. Finally, Martha Stewart to the rescue. Martha's toffee sauce used heavy whipping cream instead of S.C.M. I love her. We were in business.

Toffee Ginger Pumpkin Cheesecake Rolls

Willowbird Rolls:

1 package (2 1/4 teaspoons) active dry yeast
1/4 cup warm water (100-110 degrees F)
2 tablespoons white vinegar
2 cups milk minus 2 tablespoons, room temperature
2/3 cup cold shortening (I use butter flavored Crisco)(I used butter!!!)
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda (only 1/2 a teaspoon at 7000 feet)
1 teaspoon baking powder
5 cups flour
2 tablespoons butter, melted, for after baking

One bag of toffee chips (I used Heath)

Filling :

8 oz cream cheese (softened)
1 stick butter (softened)
1 can pumpkin (not pie filling)
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons ginger
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 Tablespoon crystallized ginger

Martha Stewart's Toffee Sauce:

- 16 tablespoons unsalted butter (2 sticks)
- 1 cup heavy cream

- 1 cup packed light-brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

<http://willowbirdbaking.com/2012/04/05/buttery-coconut-almond-morning-buns/>

Prepare roll dough the night before according to directions(see the link above) . The next morning roll out dough on floured surface to 1/8 inch.

Cream together cream cheese, butter, pumpkin, brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, vanilla. Gently mix in crystallized ginger.

Spread pumpkin mixture evenly over dough, sprinkle with 3/4 cup toffee bits.

Roll, slice, place in greased pan, let rise according to directions 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees, bake rolls 12 to 15 minutes, until dark golden.

In the meantime, melt butter in saucepan. Add sugar, heavy cream and salt - bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Simmer about 10 minutes while rolls cook.

When rolls are done ladle the toffee sauce evenly over both pans while they are still hot. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup toffee bits on each pan. Cool until you can barely scoop them in your mouth without giving yourself severe burns, then eat!