

Hot Cross Buns

A hot cross bun is a spiced bun usually made with fruit, marked with a cross on the top, which has been traditionally eaten on Good Friday. The bun marks the end of the Christian season of Lent and different parts of the hot cross bun have a certain meaning, including the cross representing the crucifixion of Jesus, the spices inside signifying the spices used to embalm Him at his burial and sometimes also orange peel to reflect the bitterness of His time on the cross.



Make the Dough: **Sugar Syrup**

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 Cups Milk, Whole
- 1/2 Cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 Tablespoon Instant Yeast
- 4 1/4 Cups Flour, All-Purpose
- 1/2 Teaspoon Salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon Nutmeg
- 1/2 Teaspoon Cinnamon
- 2 Large Eggs
- 4 Tablespoons Butter, Unsalted, softened ● 1 cup Raisins
- 1 1/2 Cups Water
- 1 Teaspoon Baking Soda

- 1/4 cup Water
- 1/4 cup Granulated Sugar

Cream Cheese Icing

- 3/4 Cup Powdered Sugar
- 2 ounces Cream Cheese, plus 2 Tablespoons, softened ● 1 Tablespoon Butter, Unsalted, softened
- 1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 Tablespoon Water

Instructions

1. In a small saucepan over medium low heat, add the milk to scald it. This is done by gently warming the milk until it becomes frothy around the edges. You may notice a thin layer appear on the top of the milk, just remove from the heat and stir a little to remove it. 2. Pour the milk into a bowl or glass measuring cup.
3. Allow the milk to cool to warm. I like to put ours in the fridge for a few minutes to help it along, but don't use cold milk so don't forget it! 4. Meanwhile, heat the water, baking soda and raisins in a small saucepan over medium heat until boiling. Allow to boil gently for 2 minutes, the raisins should be big and plump, and drain in the sink, leaving the raisins in the strainer to cool. Give them a gentle rinse very quickly under water to help speed up the process but do not thoroughly rinse them.
5. In a small bowl combine the lukewarm milk, sugar and yeast. Stir gently and let it rest until the yeast activates and it begins to look foamy.
6. In the bowl of your mixer add 4 cups of flour, salt, nutmeg and cinnamon. Mix until combined.
7. Add the eggs and butter to the yeast mixture and stir until the butter is melted.
8. Pour the yeast mixture over the flour mixture, and using the dough hook attachment, mix for about 5 minutes at medium speed. Add up to 1/4 cup more flour if you notice time is almost up but the mixture is still clinging to the sides.
9. Add raisins & continue mixing for another minute.

Let the Dough Rise:

1. In a large bowl add a bit of oil, now place the dough in the bowl, rolling it around so that it gets oil all over. The dough is extremely sticky.
2. Cover the bowl with a towel. Let the dough rise for a couple hours until doubled in size, about 2 hours.

Shape and Bake the Buns:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a 9x13-inch pan with parchment paper, then spray with nonstick spray.
2. Punch down the dough, and cut it into 12 equal pieces and roll each one in your hands quickly to make a dough ball. Place the rolls in the pan and cover with a clean towel and let them rest for another 30 minutes until doubled in size.
3. Bake for about 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown.
4. While baking, make the sugar syrup by heating the sugar with the water in a sauce pan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Continue to boil the syrup for about another minute or until syrup thickens very slightly. Set aside. 5. Remove the rolls from the oven and set aside for 5 minutes.
6. Brush the tops with the sugar syrup and let rest for 5-10 minutes.
7. Using the icing, pipe down the center of each row and then across each row to create a cross on each bun. Serve warm!

For the Icing:

1. Whisk all the ingredients together and spoon into a piping bag with a round tip and refrigerate until ready to use. You want the icing to be a little thick so it holds shape on the rolls.

Lazarakia Bread 20 SERVINGS

Lazarákia ("Little Lazaruses") are small, sweet spice breads, made by Greek Orthodox Christians on Lazarus Saturday, the Saturday that begins Holy Week. They are eaten to celebrate the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. They are shaped like a man wrapped in a shroud, supposedly Saint Lazarus of Bethany, with cloves for eyes. They contain several sweet spices and are a fasting Lenten food, meaning that they do not contain any dairy products or eggs.



Ingredients

Mixture 1

- 1 ½ C lukewarm water
- 1 T dry yeast
- 1 T sugar
- ½ cup all purpose flour

For the Dough:

- 5 C flour
- 7 T sugar
- ½ t ground cloves
- 2 t ground cinnamon
- 2 t mahleb (powder, optional)
- ½ C olive oil
- 1 T sugar (dissolved in ¼ C water for coating) 40 whole cloves

Instructions

1. To prepare this Lazarakia bread recipe, start by adding all the ingredients from the "mixture 1" into the bowl of a stand mixer. Mix to combine. Set aside for 10-15 minutes to allow the yeast to work.
2. In a separate bowl add the flour, spices, salt and sugar and mix with a spoon to combine.
3. Add this mixture in the stand mixers bowl along the yeast mixture from step 1. Pour in the olive oil and vegetable oil. Use a dough hook to knead the dough until smooth and not sticky for about 10 minutes.
4. Cover the bowl with a towel and let it rise in a warm environment for about 1 hour, until it doubles its size.
5. Gently deflate the dough with your hands and divide into 20 balls. Shape each ball like shown in the pictures.



To shape the Lazarakia breads you just need to pinch a bit of the dough and shape separately the hands and the body. Roll the dough into a string and then place under the body and fold in front so that the hands are crossed in front of the belly. Then place 2 whole cloves for the eyes and you are done!

6. Dissolve the sugar in the water and brush the top of the breads.
7. Bake in a preheated oven at 320-350F for about 20 minutes until golden and cooked through.

Resurrection Cookies

(To be made Saturday night, the night before Easter morning. These cookies are “empty” like the tomb!)

Makes 12 - 24 depending on size

(This recipe is everywhere on the internet, but compiled here for ease of use!)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup pecans (*or mini chocolate chips if you have nut allergies*)
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 3 eggs whites (*with no specks of egg yolk, or they won't whip correctly*)
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup white sugar

EQUIPMENT:

- Gallon-sized zip-top bag
- Wooden spoon
- Mixing bowl
- Electric mixer
- Cookie sheet lined with wax paper or parchment paper
- Tape (*blue painters tape is good for a visual reminder, but any will work*)
- Bible (*these verses are from the KJV*)

Read the corresponding scripture verses as you make the cookies.

1	Preheat oven to 300°F. (It is important that the oven is hot by the time you reach the end of the recipe.)		
2	John 19:1-3	Explain that after Jesus was arrested, the Roman soldiers beat him. ●Place 1 cup pecans in zip-top bag. Let the children beat the pecans into small pieces with the wooden spoon.	
3	John 19:28-30	Let the children smell the vinegar. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, this is what He was offered to drink. ●Add the 1 teaspoon vinegar to the bowl.	
4	John 10:10-11	Explain that eggs represent life, and that Jesus gave His life in order to give each of us eternal life. ●Add the 3 egg whites to the bowl.	
5	Luke 23:27	Put a few grains of salt in each child's palm and let them taste it. Explain that the salt represents the salty tears of Jesus's followers. ●Add the pinch of salt to the bowl.	

6	<i>Psalms</i> <i>34:8</i>	So far these ingredients are not very appetizing. Put a few grains of white sugar in each child's palm and let them taste it. This is the sweetest part of the story because Jesus died for our sins because He loves us!	
7	<i>John</i> <i>3:16</i> <i>Isaiah</i> <i>1:18</i> <i>John</i> <i>3:1-3</i>	•Add the 1 cup sugar to the bowl. •Beat the mixture on high speed for 12-15 minutes or until stiff peaks form. <i>(Have an Easter activity for children to do while waiting—coloring page, word search, etc.)</i> The mixture will be pure white. Explain that the white symbolizes Jesus's purity because He never sinned, and the purity we can experience when we repent and are born again.	
8 9	<i>Matth</i> <i>ew</i> <i>27:57-</i> <i>60</i> <i>Matth</i> <i>ew</i> <i>27:65-</i> <i>66</i>	•Carefully fold in the beaten pecans. Drop by spoonful onto a cookie sheet (lined with wax paper or parchment). They don't spread, so you can place them fairly close together. These lumpy mounds represent the rocky tomb where Jesus's body was laid. •Put the cookie sheet in the hot oven and turn the oven OFF. (If you have a gas oven, leave it on for 8-10 minutes at this point, before turning it OFF.) Give each child a piece of (blue painters) tape to "seal" the oven.	
10	<i>John</i> <i>16:20, 22</i>	Explain how the disciples were in despair to leave Jesus's body in the tomb. Explain that we must leave the cookies in the oven overnight, even if it makes us feel sad. •Go to bed.	
11	<i>Matth</i> <i>ew</i> <i>28:1-2,</i> <i>5-6</i>	•Open the oven on Easter morning and give everyone a cookie. The cookies are hollow (empty), just like Jesus's tomb was on Easter morning!	

Warm and Sticky Figgy Pudding

Figgy Pudding is traditionally a Christmas dish, but ties in nicely with a Holy Week celebration, reminding us of the cursing of the fig tree early in the week. It traditionally had 13 ingredients, which represented the 12 apostles and Jesus Christ. The cake was also adorned with a holly sprig on top, representing the crown of thorns Jesus wore when he was crucified.

Recipe adapted from <https://bakeitafterall.com/warm-sticky-figgy-pudding-revisited/>

Makes 4 1-cup ramekin sized puddings, or 4-6 mega-muffin-tin sized puddings

INGREDIENTS:

For the Pudding/Cake:

3/4 cup dried pitted dates (chopped) (about 115 g)

1/4 cup dried figs (chopped) (about 50 g)

1 cup water

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

3 1/2 Tablespoons butter (softened)

1/2 cup white sugar

1 egg

1 1/4 cup self-rising flour (=1 1/4 cups flour + 1/4 tsp salt + 1 1/2 tsp baking powder)

1 1/4 ounces dark chocolate (grated or chopped bittersweet chocolate chips)

Butter for the ramekins, or pan spray for the muffin tins



For the Caramel Sauce:

1 cup brown sugar

1 cup heavy cream

7 tablespoons butter (salted or unsalted) pinch of kosher salt or flaky sea salt (optional)

For Serving:

Vanilla ice cream or whipped heavy cream (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Prepare the Puddings:

Add the dates, dried figs, and water to medium saucepan and bring to boil over medium heat. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the baking soda. It will fizz. Let it cool for 5 minutes, then add to a blender and puree. Using a hand or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar in a large bowl. Add the egg and beat well. Fold in the flour, the pureed date mixture (mix well—it's thick!), and the chocolate.

Divide the batter equally among four 1-cup buttered ramekins or 6 mega-sized muffin cups. At this point, you may bake immediately, or cover each ramekin with plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to several hours if you prefer to serve them warm after a meal.

Bake the cakes for 20 – 25 minutes until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.

Prepare the Caramel Sauce:

To prepare the sauce, stir the sugar and cream in a medium saucepan over low heat. Simmer until the sugar dissolves.

Raise the heat to a boil, then reduce and simmer 5 minutes.

Add the butter and stir until incorporated. Add salt if desired.

If using immediately, keep sauce warm. You may refrigerate the sauce and reheat later when serving the dessert.

Assemble the Dessert:

Remove the ramekins from the oven and let stand for 10 minutes. Serve in the ramekin or unmold each cake onto a serving plate. With a paring knife, cut a cross in the center of each cake. Pour the warm caramel sauce over the pudding.

and allow it to soak in slightly, then top with more sauce as desired. Serve warm, topped with ice cream or whipped cream.

(Other traditional fig pudding recipes call for cinnamon, nutmeg, orange zest, vanilla, and/or walnuts. The above recipe is pretty basic for less-adventurous eaters, but you may also prefer to spice it up a bit.)

RESURRECTION ROLLS

Ingredients

- 1 (10-ounce) can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 8 large marshmallows
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with a parchment or silicone liner. Open the crescent roll package and separate the rolls into eight triangles. In a small bowl, whisk together the cinnamon and sugar. Dip each of the marshmallows in the melted butter, then roll in the cinnamon sugar mixture.

Place a marshmallow in the middle of each dough triangle, then roll the dough tightly around the marshmallow, pinching to close all of the seams.

Place the rolls on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 10-14 minutes, or until golden brown.



The different steps represent the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. For example: ● Rolling the marshmallow in the cinnamon and sugar is like when Jesus' friends prepared his body for burial with fragrant spices.

- Wrapping the dough around the marshmallow is like wrapping Jesus' body in linens. ● Since Jesus was inside the tomb for 3 days let the children sit in front of the oven and watch them bake. You can talk about how His friends and family must have felt and share your own feelings as well. ● As the rolls are cooling, read the account given in Matthew 28:1-6. You can also find the account written in John chapter 20.
- Allow the children to eat the Resurrection Rolls and see that the center is empty just like the tomb.