

Nana's Cinnamon Rolls

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Ingredients - Dough:

4 1/4 to 4 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 package active dry yeast
1 1/4 cup milk
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup butter
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs

Ingredients - Cinnamon Filling:

10 Tbsp. butter, softened
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
4 tsp. cinnamon

Ingredients - Glaze:

1 cup powdered sugar
Maple syrup (or milk)
Maple extract or vanilla (optional)
1/4 cup chopped nuts (optional)

STEP 1:

In a large mixer bowl, combine 1 1/2 cups of flour and yeast. Stirring constantly, heat the milk, granulated sugar, butter and salt just until mixture is warm and the butter is almost melted (120-130 degrees). You can use a thermometer for this but you do not have to.

STEP 2:

Add milk mixture and eggs to the flour mixture. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed for 30 seconds, scraping sides of bowl frequently. Beat on high speed for 3 minutes. Using a spoon, stir in as much of the remaining flour as you can. (Dough will be soft.) Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead in enough of the remaining flour to make a moderately soft dough (3 to 5 minutes total). Shape dough into a ball.

STEP 3:

Place dough in a lightly greased bowl and turn once. Cover and let rise in a warm place until double (about 1 to 1 1/2 hours). The dough is ready for shaping when you can lightly and quickly press two fingers 1/2 inch into the dough and the indentation remains.

STEP 4:

Punch dough down. On a lightly floured surface, divide dough in half and shape each half into a smooth ball. Cover and let rise for 10 minutes.

STEP 5:

On a lightly floured surface, roll each half of the dough into a 12 x 10 inch rectangle. Spread with 5 Tbsp. softened butter. Combine cinnamon and brown sugar and sprinkle half over rolled dough. Roll dough from the short side and seal edges with fingers dipped in water. Make a second roll with the remaining dough, butter and sugar mixture.

STEP 6:

Slice each dough roll into pieces about 1 inch thick using dental floss. Slide the floss under the dough bring it up and tie it right through the dough. You'll get perfect slices without smashing the roll. Repeat to slice both rolls of dough. Arrange in a greased 13 x 9 inch pan. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled (about 30 minutes). Preheat oven to 350 degrees when you cover the rolls to rise.

STEP 7:

Bake rolls in a 350 degree oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until light brown. Invert immediately on a wire rack. Cool slightly and drizzle with the following glaze.

Maple Glaze:

Gradually whisk maple syrup into 1 cup of powdered sugar until drizzling consistency is achieved. If maple syrup is not available milk can be substituted and 1/4 cup chopped nuts can be added to either if desired. If using milk, maple extract or vanilla can be added for flavor.

NOTE:

If you want to make the rolls the night before, cover tightly and refrigerate once you've sliced them and arranged them in the pan. The final rise will take longer than 30 minutes when you take them out of the fridge and will depend on the temperature in the room. I take them out a couple hours before I want to bake them and bake once they've doubled in size.