

## Hot Cross Buns

Prep Time: 15- 20 min    Cook Time: 20-25 min

### Ingredients:

1 sheet puff pastry (one sheet makes 6-7 rolls)  
Craisins, raisins, or similar dried fruit for filling  
Cinnamon  
Nutmeg  
Ground Ginger  
Vanilla  
Favorite liquor (brandy, bourbon, Frangelico, Amaretto, etc.)  
White sugar (I used Splenda baking mix; but can be any)  
2-3 T. unsalted butter  
Powdered sugar (for icing)

### Instructions:

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees

In a small bowl put about  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. of craisins (or whatever craisin/ raisin combo you like) and add a couple shots of your favorite liquor. Set bowl aside to let craisins plump up. If you don't want to use liquor, you can just use hot water. That will work just fine. Take a baking sheet (used for prep only; will transfer buns to a small square or round baking tin) and lay your puff pastry onto it. Next, brush a thin layer of butter all over the puff pastry, edge to edge. In a small bowl mix together approx.  $\frac{1}{4}$  c. of sugar, and enough cinnamon (around 2 tsp or so) to make an even mixture of cinnamon and sugar. Then add about  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp of nutmeg and about  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp of ground ginger to the mix and combine. Sprinkle the cinnamon spice mixture evenly over the buttered puff pastry. Next drain the fruit and distribute evenly over the top of the pastry. Take one end (the slightly shorter end) and begin to roll pastry. Don't worry if it's not perfect, or doesn't roll up "tight"; it will be fine. Next, take a sharp knife and cut sections of about an inch or so, all the way down the rolled pastry. Carefully place the sections, cut side up, into a buttered or sprayed square or round baking tin. Spray the tops with just a bit of cooking spray to give them a beautiful golden color. They will unwind a bit as they puff up and cook, so you want them to be a bit crowded, as this helps to hold them together. TIP: Place them with "tail" side facing toward the edge of the pan, or toward another roll. This helps to hold them in place as they bake. Put the rolls into your preheated 400 degree oven for 20 minutes and check them. It could take 25-30 minutes, depending on your oven. You want them to be puffed up and golden brown on top. Once cooked, remove from oven and let cool before icing. You may want to remove them from the pan to a cake

plate while they are still a little warm, as they are easier to remove from the pan at this point. They need to be COMPLETELY cooled before you pipe the icing crosses onto them. Icing recipe below.

Icing:

You can use the powdered sugar to make a simple icing (water and sugar) or you can make a really rich buttercream frosting to pipe the crosses with (recipe below). I prefer the buttercream frosting, but it will have a slight discoloration, due to the butter and vanilla. Either way, you want it to be a fairly thick icing, so it shows up nicely on the buns; plus it's yummiier that way! ☺

If you want to make a butter cream frosting, here is the recipe:

Whip together approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. powdered sugar, 2 T. unsalted melted butter, and 1 tsp. vanilla. Once combined, mixture will be slightly thick, but still a bit runny. This is perfect. Cover and leave sit at room temperature while buns are cooling. The icing will thicken to a beautiful creamy consistency, and you can then transfer it to a piping bag and make your crosses.