



NORWEGIAN VANILLA CUSTARD BUNS

(Skoleboller or Skolebrød)

A delicious vanilla custard-filled cardamom drizzled with powdered sugar icing and coconut. A Norwegian favorite!

Nevada Berg, Norwegian Baking



PREP TIME
3.5 HRS



COOK TIME
20 MIN



SERVINGS
16-18 BUNS

Instructions

Make the Tangzhong:

Combine water, milk, and flour in a medium saucepan. Whisk until combined and no lumps remain. Place the saucepan over medium heat and cook the mixture, whisking constantly, until it thickens, about 1-2 minutes. Set a side to cool.

Make the Dough:

While the Tangzhong is cooling, begin preparing the rest of the ingredients for the dough. Combine yeast, cardamom, salt, sugar, and flour in the bowl of a stand mixer. Whisk briefly by hand to combine.

Attach the dough hook to the mixer. Add melted and cooled butter, milk, egg, and the cooled Tangzhong (it can be slightly warm to the touch) to the dry ingredients. Mix on medium-low until fully combined.

Increase mixer speed to medium and knead mixture for 3-4 minutes or until dough is slightly tacky but not sticky and clears the side of the bowl. It's okay if it's sticking to the bottom of the bowl slightly. Add an extra tablespoon of flour as necessary if your dough seems too sticky. You can also mix and knead the dough by hand, but it will take longer, more like 8-10 minutes.

Cover bowl with plastic wrap and allow the dough to rise for an hour to an hour and a half or until 1 ½ or 2 times its original size. The time will largely depend on the temperature of your kitchen.

Meanwhile, make the Vanilla Custard Filling. Whisk egg yolks, butter, cornstarch, half and half, sugar, and salt together in a medium saucepan. Place pan over medium-low heat and whisk constantly until mixture is smooth and thick, about 3-5 minutes. Strain mixture through a fine mesh strainer into a clean bowl. Stir in vanilla. Place a piece of parchment paper directly on top of the pastry cream, followed by a layer of plastic wrap (this prevents the custard from forming a skin). Refrigerate until you are ready to use. (The Vanilla Custard Filling can be made 1-2 days in advance.)

Once the dough has risen, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Remove the dough from the bowl and place it onto a clean, unfloured countertop. Using a rolling pin, roll the dough until it is about ½ inch thick. Cut circles out of the dough using a 3-inch biscuit cutter. Place the buns on the prepared baking sheets, leaving 2 inches of space between each bun. Cover and let the buns rise for 30 minutes at room temperature. (Feel free to gather the scraps and roll them a second time to cut out more buns).

Using your thumb and fingers, create a defined well in the center of each bun. Fill each well with a heaping teaspoon of Vanilla Custard Filling.

Whisk the egg and water together for the egg wash. Brush the outside of each bun with the egg wash, taking care to avoid the custard center. Transfer buns to the oven and bake until golden brown, rotating the pans halfway through, after about 18 minutes. When done, remove the buns from the oven and allow them to cool to room temperature.

Meanwhile, make the Icing. Whisk all ingredients together in a medium bowl until smooth. Drizzle the icing on each bun and sprinkle with coconut, if desired. Serve warm.

TANGZHONG:

This extra step, known as the Tangzhong method, is deceptively simple, but the results are downright magical. A small amount of the flour and liquid (water, milk, or a combination of the two) is cooked on the stove for a very short period of time, creating a roux-like mixture. This process gelatinizes the starches in the flour, allowing them to absorb more liquid. This roux-like substance is then cooled to room temperature and added to the rest of the ingredients when mixing the dough. This results in a higher rise and a more tender, moist bun that stays that way for a longer period of time. As I said, this 5-minute extra step is WELL worth it for the soft, billowy buns that are the result!

Ingredients

For the Tangzhong:

- 5 tablespoons water
- 5 tablespoons whole milk
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

For the Dough:

- 5 tablespoons melted unsalted butter, cooled
- ½ cup whole milk, slightly warm
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- ½ teaspoon ground whole cardamom seeds ½ teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon fine salt
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 3 cups + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 large egg

All of the Tangzhong, cooled

For the Vanilla Custard Filling:

- 2 large egg yolks
- 1 ½ tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 cup half and half
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the Egg Wash:

- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon water

For the Icing:

- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 1 ½ tablespoons milk or water
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- Shredded coconut for sprinkling