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Easy, Do-Ahead Dinner Rolls

Makes 24 rolls

These dinner rolls have been part of many family dinners for decades! We time them to be piping hot, straight from the oven when they hit the table. Everyone knows to pass the breadbasket immediately, and to follow it, pronto, with butter dish! This recipe rates high on the “do-ahead strategy” scale. Once mixed and the initial rise accomplished, the dough will patiently wait in the refrigerator until its time. With a stand mixer these rolls are a cinch to assemble. We predict that they will join your family celebrations, too!

Ingredients:

3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour (420 g)
3 cups whole wheat flour (360 g)
1 tbsp. sugar
2 tsp. salt
2 pkgs. dry active yeast
1/2 cup butter, softened
2 cups warm water (about 115°F)
1 egg, beaten
Olive oil for coating dough
2 tbsp. butter, melted for brushing

Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer (outfitted with the paddle) or large bowl, place the all-purpose flour (reserve the whole wheat until Step 3), sugar, salt, and yeast. Stir the dry ingredients together to mix evenly. Add the softened butter and mix together on the lowest speed.
2. With the mixer going, gradually add the warm water. Once combined, add the beaten egg. Increase the speed to medium and beat for 3 minutes, or a smooth consistency forms.
3. Add 1 cup (120 g) of the whole wheat flour and continue to beat for an additional 2 minutes. The dough will have the consistency of a thick batter.
4. Add the remaining whole wheat flour a cup at a time while the mixer continues to run until a soft dough forms scraping down the sides as needed.
5. If using a stand mixer, change the paddle to the dough hook and knead for 7 minutes on a low speed. A nice dough ball will form. The dough may be sticky, but will firm up and be manageable when it chills.
6. Grease a large bowl with a light coating of olive oil. Place the dough ball into the bowl and turn to coat the top of the dough. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise undisturbed in a warm kitchen until doubled in bulk, about 1 – 1-1/2 hours.

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7. Punch the risen dough down, cover again, and place in the refrigerator for a minimum of 3 hours or up to 3 days. While refrigerated, punch down the dough occasionally to keep it in check.

8. After the dough is chilled thoroughly, or up to 8 hours before serving time, remove the dough from the refrigerator. Divide the dough into 24 pieces. Form each piece of dough into a small ball and place seam side down in a large, greased baking pan (18 x 11 x 32) or (2) smaller baking pans (9 x 13 x 2). Cover and return to the refrigerator. An hour before baking, remove the formed rolls and allow the rolls to rise one last time for about 45-60 minutes.

9. Bake in a 425°F oven for 15-18 minutes or until the tops are a lovely golden brown and the bread has reached an internal temperature of 180°F. Remove from the oven and brush the tops with melted butter. Serve while warm.