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Homemade Cinnamon Rolls
with Orange-Almond Cream Cheese Frosting

Makes 12 large rolls

We find that many cooks are intimidated by bread making and avoid attempting trying their hand at it. We're out to change all that with this step-by-step recipe that makes homemade cinnamon rolls easy and successful! You'll find these cinnamon rolls just like the classic favorites that everyone loves right down to the complementary flavors in the cream cheese frosting. Second to the enjoyment of eating these delicious rolls, are the fabulous aromas that will fill your house. Master these rolls and you'll be the most popular person around!

Dough Ingredients:

1 cup of warm water (110-115°F)
1 pkg (2-1/4 tsp) active dry yeast
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup plain yogurt
2 teaspoons Kosher salt
2 eggs
6 tablespoons butter, melted
5 - 5.5 cups all-purpose flour, divided
Vegetable oil for greasing bowl

Filling Ingredients:

4 tablespoons butter, softened
1 cup brown sugar
1-1/2 tablespoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon cornstarch

Orange-Almond Cream Cheese Frosting

6 oz cream cheese
2 tablespoons butter, softened
1-1/4 cups powdered sugar
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 teaspoon pure almond extract
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
Zest of one orange

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Directions:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, or large mixing bowl, pour the warm water and sprinkle the top with the yeast granules. Allow the yeast to dissolve and bloom without stirring or disturbing the bowl. (If you like, add a pinch of the sugar into the warm water prior to adding the yeast – this provides some food for the yeast.)
2. In a separate, small bowl, stir together the sugar, yogurt, salt and eggs until evenly combined. Melt the butter, allow it to cool slightly, then add to the yogurt-egg mixture. Pour into the bowl with the yeast and combine on a low setting using the mixer's paddle.
3. Add 3 cups of the flour and beat on a low setting until a thick, even batter is formed. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the remaining flour a cup at a time until a shaggy dough forms.
4. Change the mixer's attachment to the dough hook and knead on the mixer's low setting for 5 minutes. The dough will be a rather sticky one, but becomes less so as it kneads and the glutens form.
5. Remove the dough from the mixing bowl and form into a smooth ball using your hands. Place the dough in a well-oiled large bowl, roll it around so that all surfaces of the dough ball become oiled. Cover the bowl and allow to rise until doubled in size – about 1 – 1.5 hours depending on the ambient temperature.
6. After the dough's first, full rise, punch down the dough in the bowl. Gather the dough together and with a couple quick kneading motions, reform a compact dough ball. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for 8 hours, overnight, or up to 48 hours. This refrigeration step allows the yeast fermentation to continue and flavors to deepen. As well, chilled dough is much easier to handle. (It also allows for a quick, do-ahead preparation of the dough and baking at a later time).

To Assemble:

7. An hour prior to serving, remove the dough from the refrigerator and knead a few times to eliminate any air bubbles. Dust the working surface with a small amount of flour to keep the dough from sticking. Press, stretch, and roll the dough into a large rectangle, approximately 16" x 20".
8. Prepare the cinnamon filling by stirring together the brown sugar, cinnamon, and cornstarch until evenly combined. Ensure that the butter is softened and easily spreadable. Spread the softened butter on the rolled rectangle of dough leaving about an inch margin free of butter. Sprinkle the brown sugar mixture evenly on top of the butter.

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9. Beginning on one of the dough rectangle's long edge, begin rolling the dough. Place the rolled dough seam-side down.

10. Mark the dough with the edge of knife at the halfway point, then the quarter point, etc. until twelve even pieces are marked. With a serrated blade, cut the roll into pieces. Place each piece in a 9" x 13" pan that's well-greased or lined with a sheet of parchment paper.

11. Allow the rolls to rise for about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake the rolls for 20-25 minutes or until nicely golden brown and the internal temperature of the bread reaches 180°F. Cool on a wire rack.

To Frost:

12. While the rolls bake, mix the frosting by combining the powdered sugar with the softened cream cheese and butter. Add the extracts, salt and fresh orange zest and whisk together. Set aside until the rolls have cooled (at least partially), then generously slather on top of the rolls. (If frosting later, store the frosting in the refrigerator.)