

Morning buns

WITH CINNAMON
BUTTERMILK GLAZE

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It is difficult for me to imagine a more perfect breakfast than a morning bun (aka a cinnamon bun). What with its sweet and spicy cinnamon brown sugar swirl and its perfect size (not too small, in other words) and it's slightly tangy buttermilk glaze – cinnamon buns are nothing short of my idea of a good time. And if said buns call for chemical leaveners (baking powder and soda), rather than yeast, to help them rise, then so much the better. Yes, yeasted buns have a fluffiness and rich buttery flavor all their own, but buns leavened with baking powder and soda are so easy and fast to throw together – and yet still delicious. Therefore, in this instance, at least for me, speed trumps yeast. Apologies to those members of the slow food movement...

Baking soda/powder vs. yeast

I first started making chemically leavened buns when I worked at Baked, the bakery where I got my start. I loved preparing the dough, spreading it with melted butter and filling, rolling it into a log and slicing away. It should come as no surprise that I love a thick sugary glaze, and I loved pouring it over the still-warm-from-the-oven buns and watching it drip down the sides. Cinnamon buns was one of the first bakery recipes I mastered and even back then I considered it a flawless breakfast treat.

Now, I won't lie: when I eventually learned how to make yeasted cinnamon buns, I summarily rejected the chemically leavened version, and went on a whole yeast-bun binge. But I'm back! I have come full circle – yes: a cinnamon bun leavened with yeast is super special, but these baking powder/soda ones will please the masses

– I promise. Not to mention the fact that if the masses give you any lip, I fully support eating them all yourself. Sharing is overrated anyway.

For the buns:

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon table salt
1 stick unsalted butter, cold
3/4 cup heavy cream, or you can substitute buttermilk

For the filling:

1/2 stick unsalted butter, melted
3/4 cup light brown sugar
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon table salt

For the egg wash:

one egg
1/8 teaspoon salt

For the Glaze:

This makes a lot of glaze – feel free to prepare only half...
2 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
4 tablespoons buttermilk
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

To make the buns:

Grease an 8-in-by-2-in round cake pan with non-stick cooking spray or softened butter. Line with parchment paper and grease again.

Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt to the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade and pulse until combined. Cut the butter into small cubes and add to the processor. Pulse until coarse crumbs form.

Slowly add the cream, while pulsing the machine, and pulse until the dough comes together in a large



clump or, until you can squeeze a bit between two fingers, and it stays together.

Dump the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and using your hands, bring it together into a large mass. Knead the dough once or twice. And then pat it, or roll it out, into a rectangle, with the long side closest to you, lightly flouring as necessary.

Now, fold the dough like you would a business letter. This fold makes for flaky layers. Lift one of the short ends of the rectangle and fold it about 2/3 of the way over the rectangle. Lift the other short end and fold that over in the other direction. Rotate the rectangle so the long side is closest to you again, and roll it out into a 14-inch-by-9-inch rectangle. Let it rest while you make the filling.

To make the filling:

Brush the melted butter onto the dough and then combine the remaining butter with the sugar, cinnamon and salt, stirring to combine. Spread the filling over the dough, almost all the way to the edges.

Starting from the long edge of the rectangle closest to you, begin rolling up the dough, until a tight log is formed. Pinch the dough with your fingers to seal-in the filling along the

length of the log. Cut the dough into eight equal pieces and place them cut side-up in the prepared pan. Place in the freezer for one hour.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350-degrees. When ready to bake-off the buns, combine the egg and salt for the wash, and brush it on the tops of the buns. This is for shine and color – and although the glaze covers the tops of the buns, they poke out a bit, and so I call for egg washing despite the glaze...

Bake the buns for 25 to 30 minutes until the tops of the buns are nicely browned and if you stick a toothpick between two of the buns, it comes out clean. Invert the buns right side up onto a serving plate and make the glaze.

To make the glaze:

Whisk the sugar, buttermilk, and cinnamon in a small bowl. Once smooth and thick, spoon over the buns, spreading the glaze so it drips (decoratively) down the sides of the buns. Serve immediately. ●

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.