Cinnamon Rolls

Holiday · Make-ahead · Makes 12 rolls

Ken's note: TBD

Big, soft cinnamon rolls from scratch, with a buttery brown-sugar filling and cream cheese icing. Roll and cut them the night before, refrigerate, and bake them in the morning.

Ingredients

Dough

- 1 cup whole milk
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, cut up
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2¼ tsp (1 packet) active dry yeast
- 2 eggs
- 3½–4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt

Filling

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, very soft
- ⅔ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp ground cinnamon

Cream cheese icing

- 4 oz cream cheese, softened
- 3 Tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1–2 Tbsp milk
- Pinch of salt

Method

1. Warm the milk and butter together until the butter melts and the mixture is just warm, about 110°F. Stir in the sugar and yeast and let stand 5–10 minutes, until foamy. In a mixer bowl, combine with the eggs, 3½ cups of the flour, and the salt, and mix with the dough hook 6–8 minutes, adding flour a spoonful at a time until the dough is soft, smooth, and slightly tacky. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1½ hours.
2. Roll the dough on a floured counter into a rectangle about 12×18 inches. Spread it with the soft butter, leaving a ½-inch border on one long edge, then sprinkle with the brown sugar and cinnamon. Roll up from the long edge, ending at the clean border, and pinch the seam closed. Cut into 12 slices (a length of thread or unflavored dental floss slides through cleanly). Set them cut-side up in a buttered 9×13-inch pan, cover, and let rise until puffy, about 45 minutes.
3. **To make ahead:** after cutting and arranging the rolls in the pan, cover tightly and refrigerate overnight (up to 18 hours). In the morning, let them stand at room temperature 45–60 minutes, until puffy, before baking.
4. Heat the oven to 350°F. Bake 25–30 minutes, until golden and cooked through in the center. While they bake, beat the icing ingredients together, adding just enough milk to make it spreadable. Let the rolls cool 10 minutes, then spread with the icing and serve warm.