

Stella Parks' Spiced Vanilla Hot Cross Buns

Blog post: <http://korenainthekitchen.com/2018/03/31/stella-parks-spiced-vanilla-hot-cross-buns>

Adapted a tiny bit from Stella Parks on [Serious Eats](#). Makes 15 buns.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, rub together with your fingers until fragrant:

70 g granulated sugar
seeds scraped from 1 vanilla bean

Whisk in:

1 1/2 tsp instant yeast
1/2 tsp kosher salt
340 g all purpose flour

In a saucepan over medium-low heat, melt **85 g unsalted butter** and heat until it starts to bubble. remove from the heat and stir in:

85 g milk
170 g plain Greek yogurt

Add the yogurt mixture to the dry ingredients in the stand mixer bowl and stir with a wooden spoon (or a nifty dough whisk) until a ragged dough forms. With the dough hook, knead on low speed for about 7 minutes, then increase the speed to medium-low and continue kneading until the dough cleans the sides of the bowl and is very soft and elastic (about 10 more minutes) - you should be able to stretch the dough thin enough to see light through without tearing.

Add:

30 g finely chopped candied orange peel
55 g chopped dried apricots
55 g chopped dried cherries
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp ground coriander
1/8 tsp grated nutmeg
1/8 tsp ground allspice

Mix in on low speed until combined (or use your hands to knead it in, which I found much more effective). Remove the dough hook and gather the dough into a ball in the bottom of the bowl. Cover with plastic and let rise at room temperature until about doubled in size or until your fingerprint remains in the dough when pressed, about 1 1/2 hours.

Turn the risen dough out onto an unfloured surface and gently pat it into a circle. With a dough scraper or large knife, divide the circle into thirds, then cut each third into 5 roughly equal pieces, to make 15 portions total. It's OK if they're not exactly the same size - try not to cut and recut, as this will deflate the dough and cause the finished buns to be dense. Gently pinch each portion into a ball in the palm of your hand, then roll it on the unfloured surface to tighten it into a ball. Place the shaped dough in a 9"x13" pan lined with parchment paper. Cover loosely with plastic and let rise at room temperature for about 1 1/2 hours, until the buns are puffy and light and just touching each other. Your fingerprint should remain in the dough when pressed.

(Alternatively, if you want to let the buns do a slow rise overnight to bake in the morning, let them proof for 1 hour at room temperature, refrigerate overnight or up to 48 hours, then continue with the recipe.)

Preheat the oven to 350°F (325°F convection). Whisk together an egg wash of **1 egg yolk + 1 1/2 tsp milk** and brush it gently over the risen buns. With a very sharp knife, slash a shallow cross in the top of each bun.

Bake the buns for 30-35 minutes in the preheated 350°F (325°F convection) oven, until deeply golden brown on top and about 210°F in the centre. Cool in the pan on a rack for about 20 minutes.

With a rubber spatula, mix together the vanilla frosting:

57 g powdered sugar

pinch salt

1 tsp milk

1/4 tsp vanilla

Add a little more milk or sugar as needed to make a thick piping consistency. Scrape the frosting into a piping bag, snip off the tip, and pipe it on the buns to make a cross on each one.

The buns can be served slightly warm or at room temperature, and are best the day they are baked but will keep a few days at room temperature in an airtight container.