

Rum Raisin Sourdough Hot Cross Buns

Blog post: <https://korenainthekitchen.com/2019/04/23/rum-raisin-sourdough-hot-cross-buns/>

Recipe adapted slightly from the beautiful blog [my daily sourdough bread](#). Makes 12 buns.

My 3-day baking schedule for these buns was as follows - your schedule may vary, depending on the strength of your starter and ambient room temperature:

- *Day 1: macerate raisins in a jar with rum and vanilla*
- *Day 2, morning: mix levain and leave to rise all day*
- *Day 2, late afternoon: mix dough and leave to ferment a few hours*
- *Day 2, before bed: shape buns and chill in fridge overnight*
- *Day 3, morning: proof buns until doubled (several hours) and then bake*

A note on the flour: I used unbleached organic Canadian all purpose flour, which has about 13% protein content, meaning it is a fairly strong flour. Alternatively, you could use bread flour, which has a similarly high protein content / strength.

Rum-soaked Raisins (Day 1)

In a small jar, place **90 g raisins**. Pour over about **75 g dark spiced rum** to just cover them, along with **1 tsp vanilla extract**. Screw on the jar lid and give the raisins a shake. Let them sit and macerate for at least 24 hours, shaking occasionally.

Levain (Day 2, morning)

In a small bowl or medium-sized glass jar (so you can see the yeast activity), dissolve **20 g brown sugar** in **35 g room temperature water**. Stir in **25 g active sourdough starter** until dissolved, then stir in **80 g unbleached strong all purpose flour or bread flour**. The mixture will be quite stiff and dough-like. Cover the jar with the lid (not air-tight) and let ferment until the levain has doubled in size - anywhere from 4-12 hours, depending on the strength of your starter and the temperature of your kitchen.

Dough (Day 2, afternoon and evening)

In the bowl of an electric mixer, whisk together **110 g room temperature milk** with the **seeds from 1/2 a vanilla bean**. Add:

- 50 g brown sugar**
- 2 lightly beaten eggs, at room temperature**
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- 1/4 tsp grated nutmeg**
- pinch ground cloves**
- all of the levain, torn into little pieces**

Mix everything together with the paddle attachment to combine (don't worry of the levain is still in separate bits), then switch to the dough hook and add **350 g unbleached strong all purpose flour or bread flour** and **7 g fine salt (about 1 tsp)**. Knead on medium speed for 3-4 minutes until the dough comes together, then let rest for 20 minutes.

While the dough rests, measure out **85 g unsalted room temperature butter** and divide it in half. Knead half the butter into the dough - it will seem very messy at first but will eventually incorporate. Knead in the second half of the butter, then continue kneading for 8-10 minutes, until

the dough passes the window pane test (that is, you can stretch it thin enough to see through without tearing). Let the dough rest again for 5 minutes.

Drain the excess liquid from the **rum-soaked raisins** and add them to the dough, along with the **finely grated zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon**. Knead with the dough hook until thoroughly incorporated (I was worried that the raisins might get mashed into the dough, but they were fine) and then give a final few kneads by hand to make sure everything is evenly distributed throughout the dough.

Scrape the dough into a clean bowl, cover it with plastic wrap, and let it ferment at room temperature for 3-4 hours. It will look slightly puffed, but will be nowhere near doubled in size. After the dough has fermented, turn it out onto a slightly floured surface and divide into 12 even pieces, each about 80 g. Shape each piece into a ball and place them in a 9"x13" pan lined with parchment paper. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge overnight.

Baking/Assembly (Day 3, morning)

The next morning, place the buns (still covered in plastic) somewhere warm to finish proofing - this may take several hours. You want them to be puffed to nearly double their size, and when you poke them lightly with your finger, the indent springs back slowly.

Just before the buns are fully proofed, preheat the oven to 425°F (400°F convection).

In a small bowl, mix together **35 g all purpose flour** and **10 g vegetable oil**. Add **30 g water** and mix until smooth and pipeable (you may need a few extra drops of water). Place the paste in a piping bag, snip off the end, and pipe crosses on the proofed buns.

Bake the buns in the preheated 425°F (400°F convection) oven for 10 minutes, then lower the heat to 390°F (365°F convection) and bake until golden brown.

While the buns are baking, mix together in a small bowl:

1 tbsp boiling water
1 tbsp brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla or rum

Brush the brown sugar syrup over the buns as soon as they come out of the oven, and allow them to cool on a rack. Serve slightly warm or at room temperature.