

Whole Wheat Cinnamon Rolls

1/2 cup warm water
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons yeast

1 1/2 cups warm milk
2 tablespoons honey
2 teaspoons salt
2 cups whole wheat flour, sift the bran
2-3 cups unbleached flour
3 tablespoons butter, in chips

1 stick melted butter
1/4 cup cinnamon
1/4 cup white sugar (optional)
2/3 cup brown sugar
4 tablespoons butter

Dissolve the yeast in warm water and honey until foamy, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the rest of the ingredients. Stir the salt, whole wheat flour and unbleached flour together. Beat the honey into the warm milk. Pour the milk mixture into the yeast.

Gradually add the flour, a cup at a time until you have a shaggy dough. The dough should be soft and damp, but not sticky. Make sure the dough is not too stiff, you should be able to easily press your hand into it.

Knead the dough for 5-10 minutes, until you it becomes a smooth ball. Add the butter little by little until dough is quite silky. Roll the bread in a ball and let rise, about 1 1/2 hours. Test for readiness by pushing your index finger into the dough. It should leave an impression, and not push back. Press down the dough and let rise again, about 45 minutes. In high altitudes, the rising might be faster, so use your judgment about when it is risen enough.

Melt a stick of butter in a small bowl. This is to brush on the cinnamon rolls. Then, to make the topping, put the 2/3 cup of brown sugar and the 4 tablespoons of butter in a sauce pan. Heat the sugar until melted and then pour the syrup in the bottom of a half sheet pan.

Divide the dough in half and keep one half under a damp towel. Take the remaining dough and roll into a rectangle that is 6" wide by 24". Brush with melted butter and sprinkle with cinnamon. If desired, you can also sprinkle with a bit of white or brown sugar. Roll up tightly like a jelly roll and cut into 1 1/2" pieces. Place them so that they are just touching in the sheet pan. Do the second half of the dough the same way. Let the rolls rise again until very soft (about 20 minutes). Bake in a 325 oven for 20-30 minutes, until rolls are done.

-written by Gigia Kolouch