



# SPICED EASTER LOAF

WITH HOT CROSS BUN BUTTER

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy | **SERVES:** 10 | **READY IN:** 3 hours 45 minutes

This spiced Easter loaf is filled with a cinnamon fruit swirl and served with deliciously moreish flavoured butter. An exciting, easy twist on hot cross buns that is just as good turned into French toast the next day!



## DOUGH

- 2 1/4 tsp active dried yeast (10g)
- 1/4 cup white sugar (55g)
- 1/2 cup cold milk (125ml)
- 1/2 cup boiling water (125ml)
- 70g butter, softened and divided (2.1oz) + extra for greasing
- 2 2/3 cups high grade flour (400g) + extra for dusting work surface
- 1 tsp salt

## FILLING

- 3/4 cup sultanas (120g)
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1/4 cup brown sugar (50g)
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp mixed spice

## HOT CROSS BUN BUTTER

- 80g butter, softened (2.8oz)
- 2 1/2 Tbsp golden syrup
- 2 Tbsp sultanas *optional*
- 1 Tbsp orange juice
- 1/2 tsp mixed spice
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon

## 1. PREPARE DOUGH

Mix yeast and sugar together in a large bowl (use the bowl of your stand mixer, if you have one). Combine milk with water, then pour over the yeast mixture. Whisk to combine. Cover loosely and leave for 10-15 minutes, until mixture is frothy.

2. Using a spatula or dough hook attachment on low speed, mix in butter until broken up a little. Add most of the flour and the salt. Mix, then add remaining flour as needed to form a soft dough that doesn't stick to the sides of the bowl. Knead by hand or with the mixer for 5 minutes, until dough is smooth but still soft.

3. Remove dough from the bowl and grease the bowl with a little butter. Shape dough into a ball and place back in the bowl. Cover with foil or cling film and place in a warm environment to rise until doubled in size (approximately 90 minutes).

## 4. PREPARE FILLING

Meanwhile, grease a 23cm x 13cm (9in x 5in) loaf tin with butter. Combine all filling ingredients in a small bowl.

## 5. ASSEMBLE AND BAKE LOAF

Punch dough down. Using a lightly floured rolling pin and surface, roll dough out into a 23cm x 46cm (9in x 18in) rectangle, short side towards you. Sprinkle filling over the top, leaving a 2cm (0.8in) border. Roll tightly into a log, pinch ends to seal and place in tin, seam side down. Place in a warm environment and leave until risen to the top of the tin (about 45 minutes).

6. Preheat oven to 180°C (360°F) bake, with oven rack positioned towards lower half of oven. Melt remaining 10g butter and gently brush over the top of the loaf. Bake for 35 minutes, until golden brown and loaf sounds hollow when gently tapped. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes before removing from tin.

## 7. MAKE HOT CROSS BUN BUTTER

While bread bakes, combine all ingredients for butter in a small food processor (or mash with a fork) until well blended.

## 8. SERVE

Slice loaf and serve warm, spread generously with hot cross bun butter.



**DRINK MATCH:** Coffee or English Breakfast tea.

## **SPICED EASTER LOAF RECIPE NOTES**

**GLUTEN-FREE OPTION:** Sorry! :( I haven't had a chance to try out a gluten-free version of this recipe yet (I feel like it could take a few attempts - let me know if you have any recommendations!).

**INGREDIENT NOTES / SWAPS:** The sultanas can be swapped for chocolate chips (and just omit them from the butter).

**TIPS ON A WARM ENVIRONMENT:** I like to place my dough in the airing cupboard to rise. A good alternative is the oven - preheat to 60°C (140°F), then turn oven off and place dough inside. You can also run the dryer for a few minutes, then place the dough in there.

**STORING AND REHEATING:** Loaf keeps well for a few days in an airtight container at room temperature. It is most delicious warm, either fresh from the oven, gently microwaved or lightly toasted. It's also great for making French toast with once it's a day or two old - spread with the hot cross bun butter or drizzle with maple syrup. Loaf freezes well too - you can pre-slice it and then toast individual slices as required.