

Sally Lunn Buns

Solange Luyon, a young Huguenot refugee, came to Bath in 1680 after escaping persecution in France. She found work in the kitchen of the bakery on the street known in those days as Lilliput Alley, and originally sold the baker's wares from a basket in the lanes around Bath Abbey. Solange, who, due to her colleague's unfamiliarity with French pronunciation, became known as Sally Lunn, began baking a rich, generous brioche bun similar to the French festival breads that she would have been so familiar with before she fled France.

The bun, which can be enjoyed with either sweet or savory accompaniments, quickly became a very popular delicacy in Georgian England. Customers were soon visiting the Lilliput Alley bakery specifically requesting the Sally Lunn bun. Today, Sally's original creation has earned legendary status around the world.

Ingredients

1 ¼ cup whole milk
6 tablespoons of butter at room temperature
¼ cup sugar
3 ¾ cup of bread flour (or all purpose)
7g instant yeast or active dry yeast.
2 eggs (Plus an extra egg for the egg wash)
The zest of 1 lemon
1 ½ teaspoons of salt

Utensils

Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Mixing bowl
Small cookpot
Wooden spoon
Whisk
Flour sifter
Lemon zester
Stand mixer
2 Small bowls
Basting brush
Towel
Parchment paper
Baking sheet
Instant read thermometer
Wire rack

Warm the milk over in a cookpot on the stove over low heat.* Add the sugar and dissolve. Once warm, add the butter and let it melt. Set the mixture aside to cool to 110°F or cooler before adding it to the other ingredients.

*If you are using instant yeast, heat the full amount of milk. If you are using active dry yeast, warm only 1 cup on the stove. Take the other 1/4 cup and mix it with the yeast in a bowl and a sprinkle of sugar to activate the yeast.

Sift flour into a large bowl or a stand mixer. If using instant yeast, whisk in to flour. Once milk mixture is cooled to 110°F add to flour and mix. Zest the lemon. Add lemon zest, 2 eggs, and salt. Mix well. If you are using active dry yeast, add that last. Work dough until it comes together and forms a smooth sticky dough. (About 8 minutes on medium speed) It will not form into a ball.

Cover the dough with a towel and let rise for 60-90 minutes or until it has doubled in size. Line the baking sheet with parchment paper.

Once the dough has doubled in size, punch it down and place it onto a lightly floured surface. Separate the dough into 3 or 6 pieces, depending on the size bun you would like. Form dough into balls and place on lined baking sheet. Using your hand, slightly flattening into a cake. Cover with the towel and let rise for another 45-60 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400°F, and in a small bowl whisk the remaining egg. Using a basting brush, brush on the egg wash.

Bake buns for 15 minutes, tenting them with aluminum foil if they begin to brown too much. An instant read thermometer should read 190°F-200°F when done. Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool. Serve warm with butter, jam, or clotted cream.