

Classic Cinnamon Rolls with Cream Cheese Icing

For the Dough

- Warm milk 240 ml | 1 cup (about 40°C)
- Large egg 1 | 1
- Granulated sugar 60 g | 1/4 cup
- Salt 1 tsp | 1 tsp
- Instant yeast 7 g | 2 1/4 tsp
- Bread flour 500 g | 4 cups
- Unsalted butter 75 g | 1/3 cup (5 tbsp)

For the Cinnamon Filling

- Unsalted butter 100 g | 7 tbsp, softened
- Brown sugar 200 g | 1 cup
- Ground cinnamon 2 tbsp | 2 tbsp

For the Cream Cheese Icing

- Cream cheese 115 g | 4 oz, softened
- Unsalted butter 60 g | 4 tbsp, softened
- Powdered sugar 120 g | 1 cup
- Lemon juice 1 tsp | 1 tsp (optional)
- Vanilla extract 1/2 tsp | 1/2 tsp (optional)
- Milk 1–2 tbsp | 1–2 tbsp

Optional Pecan Topping

- Chopped pecans 100 g | 1 cup
- Unsalted butter 30 g | 2 tbsp
- Brown sugar 30 g | 2 tbsp

Optional Gooey Version

- Heavy cream 120 ml | 1/2 cup

Instructions

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the warm milk, sugar, salt, and yeast. If using active dry yeast, dissolve it in the warm milk with a pinch of sugar and let stand 5–10 minutes until foamy before continuing. Add the egg, bread flour, and butter. Mix until a dough forms, then knead for 8–10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
2. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and set aside in a warm place for 1–1 1/2 hours, or until doubled in size.
3. Mix the softened butter, brown sugar, and cinnamon together into a spreadable paste and set aside.
4. Roll the dough into a rectangle about 35 × 25 cm (14 × 10 inches). Spread the cinnamon filling evenly over the surface. Roll up tightly from the long side into a log and slice into 12 equal pieces.
5. Place the rolls in a greased 23 × 33 cm (9 × 13 inch) baking pan, leaving a little space between each one.
6. Cover the pan and let the rolls rise for 30–40 minutes, or until puffy and touching.

Instructions (continued)

7. Preheat the oven to 355°F (180°C) for 15 minutes.
8. For the pecan topping, cook the chopped pecans with butter and brown sugar until glossy, then spoon the mixture over the risen rolls before baking.
9. For the gooey version, pour heavy cream evenly over the risen rolls just before baking.
10. Lower the oven temperature to 340°F (170°C) and bake for 12–13 minutes, or until golden brown on top and cooked through in the center.
11. While the rolls bake, prepare the icing by beating the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar, lemon juice, vanilla, and just enough milk to create a creamy, spreadable consistency.
12. Spread the icing over the warm rolls. Serve as they are, or pair with a scoop of vanilla ice cream for an indulgent treat.

Note & Storage

- Optional pecan topping adds a caramelized crunch.
- Gooey version makes the rolls softer and richer.
- After baking, the middle of the rolls may rise up. You can gently press them down while still warm.
- Best enjoyed warm on the same day.
- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days.
- Refrigerate for up to 5 days.
- Reheat briefly in the microwave or oven before serving.
- Freeze unbaked rolls after shaping and rise before baking when ready to use.