

SEMLA BUNS WITH CREAM AND ALMOND FILLING



Ingredients

Makes 12

- 200 ml full cream milk
- 50 ml water
- 500 g tipo 00 or plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 100 g caster sugar
- 2 tsp ground cardamom
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 7g dry active yeast
- 3 eggs (2 for the dough + 1 for egg wash)
- 100g unsalted butter, softened

Almond Filling

- 150 g blanched almonds
- 125 g caster sugar
- 1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped
- 2-3 tbsp full cream milk, or as needed

To serve

- 600g firm whipped cream, to serve
- Pure icing sugar, to dust

Method

Warm the milk and water in a small saucepan (to about 38C on an instant-read thermometer). Place in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, along with the flour, sugar, cardamom, salt, yeast and just two of the eggs. Mix on low speed for about 1 minute to combine.

Increase the speed to medium-low and mix for 13-15 minutes, scraping down the side of the bowl every so often, until the dough is elastic and is beginning to come away from the side of the bowl. It should still be quite soft, but not overly sticky now. Add the butter, a tablespoon at a time, mixing well between each addition. Mix the dough for a further 4-5 minutes, until it is shiny, elastic and coming away from the side of the bowl.

Transfer the dough to a lightly buttered large bowl and fold the dough in on itself a few times to create a smooth ball, then cover and allow to rise in a warm place for about 1 hour, until doubled in size.

Line two trays with baking paper. Knock back the dough and turn out onto a work surface. If the dough is a little sticky, use a little flour to help you work with the dough as needed. Divide the dough into 12 pieces, about 90g each. Working with one piece at a time, roll the buns on your

work surface with your hand in a circular motion to make a smooth taut ball.

Place on the prepaed trays with enough room to allow for spreading. Cover with a clean tea towel and allow to rest for a further 1 hour, until puffy. After 30 minutes, preheat the oven to 190C. Whisk the remaining egg with 1 teaspoon of water and brush the egg wash onto the buns. Transfer to the oven and bake for 10-12 minutes, until golden all over and cooked through.

For the filling, blitz the almonds and sugar in a blender or food processor until it becomes a fairly cohesive, but stiff, paste. Transfer to a medium bowl, add the vanilla and enough milk to make a spoonable soft mixture.

Cut a triangle shape in the top of a bun with a sharp knife and carefully remove. Set aside. Scoop some of the bun innards out and add to the almond filling. Repeat with the remaining buns and mix the almond filling well so the bun filling is well-incorporated. Place a tablespoon of the filling into the cavity of each bun.

Fill a piping bag fitted with a star nozzle with the whipped cream and pipe a generous swirl of the cream onto the bun. Top with the reserved lids, dust with icing sugar and serve immediately.

