

CINNAMON SWIRL LOAF

[TWO LOAVES]

The cinnamon swirl loaf is always a delight to cut because it reveals a pretty brown sugar-and-spice layer jelly-rolled in the white bread.

One note of caution: make certain the dough is rolled tight and then secured by pinching the seam before placing it in the loaf pan. I have had it pull during the first rise so that the seam broke loose. If it does this, carefully turn out the offending loaf—pinch the seam closed, and again put the seam on the bottom of the tin. If the loaf should deflate with this handling, leave it for 30 minutes and it will rise again.

INGREDIENTS

4½ to 5½ cups all-purpose flour, approximately

¼ cup sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 package dry yeast

1¼ cups of milk

¼ cup (½ stick) margarine or vegetable shortening,
room temperature

2 eggs, room temperature

⅓ cup sugar

1½ teaspoons cinnamon

1 tablespoon melted butter

BAKING PANS

Two medium (8½ x 4½) loaf pans, greased or Teflon, glass or metal. If glass, reduce oven heat 25°.

PREPARATION

15 mins.

In a large mixing bowl measure 2 cups flour, sugar, salt and yeast.

In a saucepan combine milk and shortening. Heat

over a low heat until the liquid is warm. The shortening does not have to melt. Gradually add to the dry ingredients and beat with a wooden spoon 100 strong strokes—or 2 minutes at medium speed with an electric mixer. Add eggs and enough flour to make a thick batter. Beat for 3 minutes at high speed or with a spoon. Stop beater. With the spoon, finish working in the additional flour, a half cup at a time. The dough will be roughly formed but no longer sticky.

KNEADING
10 mins.

Turn the dough onto a lightly floured work surface—counter top or bread board—and knead with the 1-2-3 motion of push-turn-fold. The dough will become smooth and elastic, and bubbles will rise under the surface of the dough. Sprinkle more flour on the ball of dough if it is slack or moist, or continues to stick to the hands or work surface. (Knead 6 minutes with a dough hook.)

FIRST RISING
1 hour

Place the dough back in the mixing bowl and pat with buttered or greased fingers to keep the surface from crusting. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and move to a warm place (80°–85°) until the dough has risen to about twice its original size (judged as it expands up the sides of the bowl). You can test if it has risen by poking a finger in it; the dent will remain.

SHAPING
20 mins.

Meanwhile, combine the sugar and cinnamon.

Punch down dough, turn it onto work surface again, and knead for 1 minute to press out bubbles. Divide dough into two pieces. Roll each piece into a 12 by 8-inch rectangle. Brush lightly with butter, keeping it away from the edge of the dough where the seam will be formed. Sprinkle with half the cinnamon-sugar mixture. Roll tightly from the short side, as with a jelly roll. Seal edges firmly or they may come unsealed as I have warned. Seal ends of loaf and fold underneath. Place the loaf with the seam down in the pan. Repeat with the remaining dough.

SECOND RISING
1 hour

Cover the loaves with wax paper and return to the warm place until dough rises about 1 inch above the edge of the pan.

BAKING
350°
40 mins.

Preheat oven to 350°. Bake in the oven until the light brown loaves test done when a toothpick inserted in the center of a loaf comes out clean and dry. When tapping

the bottom crust yields a hard hollow sound, they are done.

FINAL STEP

Remove bread from the oven. This bread is delicious toasted, and fills the kitchen and the house with a wonderful sugar-and-spice aroma. Freezes well, too.