

Honey Butter Milk Buns

These soft, pillowy Honey Butter Milk Buns use the same technique as Japanese milk buns, but with a twist. Each bun is baked with a spoonful of honey butter right in the center, giving you tall, plush buns that pull apart in the most satisfying way. While I used a separated pan, you can use any pan for this, from a cast iron to a 9 by 9-inch baking dish.

Prep Time: 45 mins Cook Time: 30 mins Chilling and Proofing Time: 3 hrs

Course: Appetizer, baking, Side Dish, Snack Cuisine: American, Fusion, Japanese

Keyword: dinner rolls, honey butter, honey butter buns, milk buns, rolls, yeast, yeasted bread

Servings: 8 rolls

EQUIPMENT

- 1 Stand mixer
- 1 bench scraper
- 1 10-inch skillet or 9 by 9-inch baking dish
- 1 half sheet pan

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE TANGZHONG:

- 23 grams bread flour see Note*
- 120 grams water

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 8 grams active dry yeast

- 45 grams granulated sugar
- 120 grams whole milk between 100-110°F
- 42 grams unsalted butter melted
- 2 large eggs divided, one for the dough, one for the egg wash
- 350 grams bread flour
- 5 grams Diamond Crystal kosher salt

FOR THE HONEY BUTTER:

- 113 grams salted butter softened
- 60 grams honey
- Flaky salt for finishing

INSTRUCTIONS

1. A few hours before you would like to begin the recipe, make the tangzhong (this is a prep step that makes the most soft and tender rolls). Add the 23 grams of bread flour and 120 grams of water to a small pot. Put the pot over medium heat. Stirring often, bring this mixture to between 150-160°F or until thickened and gluey. If you can lift up your spoon and the tangzhong pulls down from it like a ribbon, it is ready.
2. Transfer this to a bowl, cover the surface with wax paper or cling wrap to prevent a film from forming, and let this cool to room temperature. This will take an hour or two at room temperature, or 15-30 minutes in the fridge. This also keeps well in the fridge for up to 4 days.
3. When the tangzhong has cooled to room temperature, you may begin the dough. In the bowl of a stand mixer add 8 grams of yeast, 45 grams of sugar, and 120 grams of milk that's between 100-110°F. Whisk so the yeast and sugar are dissolved.
4. In a separate small bowl, whisk together 42 grams of melted butter and the egg until pale yellow, then add those into the bowl as well. Add in all of the tangzhong (it should be about 120 grams of the mixture). Whisk this all together until smooth.
5. Using the hook attachment, add the 350 grams of bread flour and 5 grams of salt. Mix the dough on medium speed for 12-15 minutes, or until the dough is pulling away from the sides of the bowl. If you can take out a golf ball size piece of dough and stretch it until you can see light shine through it, then it's ready.
6. Transfer this dough to a bowl to proof for 1 hour, it won't double in size, but it will grow by about a third and look "puffy."
7. While the dough is rising, use a spatula to combine 113 grams of softened butter with 60 grams of honey to make the honey butter.
8. Move the dough to a work surface. Dust the dough with flour if needed, but I find it never needs any. Use a bench scraper to cut the dough into eight pieces. Pull and flatten them out widely with your hands, then put a scant tablespoon of the honey butter in the center of each piece. Working around the edges of the dough, fold the edges over to seal in the honey butter. Pinch the bottom seam of the dough and gently roll the dough seam-side-down on the counter a few times. Use the traction from the counter to help

seal the dough up even more and ensure the honey butter is fully encased. You should have 1/4 cup of honey butter remaining. Save this for finishing the buns.

9. Grease a 10-inch skillet or a 9-by-9-inch baking pan with butter. Place the dough balls seam-side down in the pan. Cover and let them proof another hour until they have grown another third in size.
10. Preheat the oven to 375°F convection.
11. In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining egg for egg wash. Right before you put the dough in the oven, brush them with egg wash.
12. Place the baking dish on top of another sheet pan (just to avoid any butter spilling and smoking up your oven). Bake the buns for 25-28 minutes or until nicely golden brown.
13. When the buns are out of the oven, brush them with the remaining honey butter and sprinkle on some flaky salt. Serve warm.

NOTES

Note* - for the sake of ease and accuracy of this recipe, all of the measurements are in grams. This is just because some measurements are too small to get an accurate cups or tablespoons conversion!