



## Cinna-Buns

With all the arresting talk about cloning in the news these days, it's refreshing to hear the term applied to baking, rather than animals or humans. There's something really special about closely duplicating a dish you've enjoyed at a restaurant, or a pastry or bread from a bakery; it's very empowering to think that you, in your regular old home kitchen, can "bake like the pros."

I'm usually most tempted by "store-bought" baked goods on the rare occasions when I find myself in either an airport terminal, or a shopping mall. When you're traveling, and you've just stepped off an airplane where you were treated to a) a very small bag of peanuts, or b) a cold, stiff sandwich, there's something unbelievably enticing about the smell of hot cinnamon buns wafting through the terminal. Likewise, when you're shopping at the mall, and you've had just about enough of the gum-snapping, shrieking, jostling teenage crowd all around you, isn't it nice to turn the corner and spot a Cinnabons(r) or Auntie Anne's Pretzels shop? The smell of warm dough, fresh from the oven, is enough to rejuvenate even the most shopped-out soul.



Now, I live about 65 miles from the nearest mall, and 75 miles from the airport, so I can't just run out and buy one of those warm, squishy, totally over-the-top Cinnabons whenever I want. Thus my interest was piqued by a recent posting on [bakingcircle.com](http://bakingcircle.com), where a thread detailing a Cinnabon(r) clone was developing. Author Todd Wilbur has written a series of books in which he clones "top secret" recipes from restaurants and food manufacturers. "Secret" formulae for Oreo(r) cookies, McDonald's(r) Big Mac(r) burgers, Hostess(r) Twinkies(r) and more are detailed in Wilbur's books (and on his Web site, [www.topsecretrecipes.com](http://www.topsecretrecipes.com); check it out). The following recipe originally came from More Top Secret Recipes, from which it traveled a circuitous route to [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com), then to [bakingcircle.com](http://bakingcircle.com), where I found it. Here's what the person posting the recipe wrote:

"This is an absolutely fabulous recipe. It actually came from [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com), where it's called Clone Of A Cinnabon. It had over 300 five-star ratings :) You can go read them if you like... some add nuts to the cinnamon/sugar as well. I just can't say enough about them :) Have made them several times-especially at holiday time. Love :) sbdeveney"

Later on in the thread, after folks had had time to try the recipe, they expressed universal approval. Wrote Maddie, "I had to report in that these buns were a hit! They were so easy to make and they came out picture perfect. My family loved them; they were devoured. Even my fussy little nephew who doesn't like cinnamon ate them! This recipe is a keeper!"

Without further ado, let's get to the recipe. These sweet, tender (some would say squishy) cinnamon buns, crowned with a thick dollop of rich cream cheese icing, make a trip to the mall or the airport unnecessary.

**Note:** There was some discussion on [bakingcircle.com](http://bakingcircle.com) about whether or not these buns should be refrigerated, due to the cream cheese in the icing. We made them in the morning and nibbled at them all day with no ill effects; refrigerate them if you're worried, although be advised refrigeration will adversely affect their texture. Better you should just eat them warm from the oven...

### Dough

1 cup (8 ounces) lukewarm milk  
 2 large eggs, room temperature  
 1/3 cup (2 5/8 ounces) unsalted butter, cut up  
 4 3/4 cups (20 ounces) Mellow Pastry Blend OR 4 1/2 cups (19 1/2 ounces) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour

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1 3/4 teaspoons salt  
1/2 cup (3 1/2 ounces) sugar  
2 1/2 teaspoons instant yeast

**Filling**

1/3 cup (2 5/8 ounces) unsalted butter, softened  
1 cup (7 1/4 ounces) brown sugar, packed  
3 tablespoons (3/4 ounce) ground cinnamon

**Icing**

one 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened  
1/4 cup (2 ounces) unsalted butter, softened  
1 1/2 cups (6 ounces) glazing or confectioners' sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

*Manual/Mixer Method:* Combine all of the dough ingredients in a large mixing bowl, stirring till the mixture becomes cohesive. Transfer the dough to a lightly oiled work surface, and knead it for 5 to 8 minutes, till it's smooth. Or knead it in an electric mixer, using the dough hook, for 4 to 7 minutes at medium speed. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, turn to grease all sides, cover the bowl with a proof cover or plastic wrap, and let it rise for 60 minutes, till it's nearly doubled in bulk.

*Bread Machine Method:* Place all of the dough ingredients into the pan of your bread machine in the order recommended by the manufacturer (usually, liquids first, yeast last). Program the machine for dough or manual, and press Start. After about 10 minutes of kneading, check the dough's consistency; it should be fairly smooth, not too sticky, not dry and "gnarly." Adjust its consistency with additional flour or water, if necessary, and allow the machine to complete its cycle.

*Assembly:* Transfer the dough to a lightly greased work surface, and roll it into a 16 x 21-inch rectangle. Spread the dough with the 1/3 cup butter. Mix the brown sugar and cinnamon, and sprinkle it evenly over the dough.

Starting with a short end, roll the dough into a log, and cut it into 12 slices. Place the buns in a lightly greased 9 x 13-inch pan. Cover the pan with a proof cover or plastic wrap, and let the buns rise until they're nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.

Bake the buns in a preheated 400°F oven until they're golden brown, about 15 minutes. While the buns are baking, make the icing.

*Icing:* In a small bowl, beat together the cream cheese, butter, sugar, and vanilla. Spread the icing on the buns while they're warm. *Yield: 12 big buns.*

Nutrition information per serving (1 bun, 146g): 502 cal, 18g fat, 8g protein, 37g complex carbohydrates, 40g sugar, 2g dietary fiber, 84mg cholesterol, 364mg sodium, 200mg potassium, 181RE vitamin A, 1mg vitamin C, 4mg iron, 71mg calcium, 101mg phosphorus.

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